



Parent Handbook

2024-2025

First Parish Preschool
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Norwell, MA 02061
School # 781-659-1333
Fax # 781-659-7939

info@firstparishpreschool.org
www.firstparishpreschool.org

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to First Parish Preschool! We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your children.

Many students will be embarking upon their first preschool experience. Some children will adjust quickly, and for others, the first few days will be a bit overwhelming. We hope our visiting days in September will help ease your child's adjustment to school.

If you have any questions about your child or First Parish Preschool, please feel free to stop by the school office or call me at any time. My door is always open.

The school phone number is (781) 659-1333. We have voice mail on this number. If you want to call the school before or after hours, please use this number and leave your message. This number can also be used for calling when children are sick and will not be in school. I can also be reached via our email address: info@firstparishpreschool.org, or you are also welcome to visit our website at www.firstparishpreschool.org.

To help you become more familiar with First Parish Preschool, we have prepared this handbook of our policies and procedures. Please read through the book, sign the parent acknowledgement on the last page, and return it with your child's forms.

***Please note, all policies and procedures are subject to change per order of the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Any changes will be brought to your attention in a timely manner.

I'm looking forward to a great year at First Parish Preschool!

Sincerely,

Tricia Fabrizio
Director, First Parish Preschool

First Parish Preschool is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. (NAEYC) You may learn more at <https://www.naeyc.org>.

First Parish Preschool is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Early Education and Care. They are located at 100 Myles Standish Boulevard, Suite 100, Taunton, MA 02780. The phone number is (508) 828-5025. Parents may contact EEC for information regarding First Parish Preschool's regulatory compliance history.

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Mission of First Parish Preschool

To facilitate and foster the growth and development of young children physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually in a safe and nurturing environment that encourages the child's self-discovery and cooperation, in respect to themselves, others, and their surroundings, through developmentally appropriate activities.

To provide support and education to our community of parents and staff while inspiring fulfillment for all the lives we touch.

History of First Parish Preschool

The First Parish Preschool was established as a kindergarten in 1949 by the Women's Alliance of the First Parish Church. The school was established as a cooperative one with parents working in the classroom daily.

With the advent of public kindergarten in Norwell in 1973, it became a prekindergarten school known as First Parish Nursery School. In 1982, the nursery school added the playgroup, preschool, and discovery programs. In September of 1990, we moved into our present classrooms. We also added our indoor recess room for inclement days when the children cannot use our playground. In recent years, we have replaced the discovery program with an additional prekindergarten program based on need.

In 2004, the school changed its name from First Parish Nursery School to First Parish Preschool to reflect the changing trend in the field of early childhood education.

Educational Philosophy of First Parish Preschool

First Parish Preschool provides an early childhood program that is welcoming and supportive of children, parents and caregivers. Our preschool creates an active, hands-on learning atmosphere in which children help to drive the curriculum to form a sense of excitement about learning and discovery. Curriculum is based on a child's individual interest, style of learning, and stage of development in alliance with the Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines, Creative Curriculum, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Standards.

First Parish Preschool is concerned with the total child in supporting their development of physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional needs while working together with parents and caregivers.

The staff of First Parish Preschool believes in their own continuing education in the field of early childhood in order to offer the most developmentally appropriate program for children and to advocate on behalf of children and their families.

Purpose of First Parish Preschool

First Parish Preschool offers your child the chance to mature in a positive and developmentally appropriate environment. With the help and guidance of skilled and experienced teachers, children will learn to direct their energies into constructive activities and stimulate intellectual curiosity. Children will gain confidence in meeting and dealing with new experiences inside and outside the home.

Programs at First Parish Preschool

(Subject to change)

PLAYGROUP CLASS: Toddler program two or three days a week.

Two days a week-	Monday/Wednesday Class	9:00-11:30 AM
	Tuesday/Thursday Class	9:00-11:30 AM

Optional third day	Friday Class	9:00-11:30 AM
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Child must be 2 years by September 1 to register for the Playgroup Class.

PRESCHOOL CLASS: Preschool program two or three days a week.

Two days a week-	Monday/Wednesday AM Class	9:00-11:30 AM
	Tuesday/Thursday AM Class	9:00-11:30 AM
	Tuesday/Thursday PM Class	12:30-3:00 PM

Optional third day	Friday AM Class	9:00-11:30 AM
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Child must be 3 years by September 1 to register for the Preschool Class.

PREKINDERGARTEN AM CLASS: Prekindergarten program three or four mornings a week.

Three days a week-	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday	9:00-11:30 AM
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Four days a week-	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday	9:00-11:30 AM
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Child must be 4 years by September 1 to register for the Prekindergarten AM Class.

PREKINDERGARTEN CLASS WITH EXTENDED DAY: Prekindergarten program three days a week. A nice option for those who are ready for a longer day of PreK.

Three days a week-	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday	9:00 AM-2:00 PM
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Child must be 4 years by September 1 to register for the Prekindergarten Class with Extended Day.

LUNCH BUNCH: Lunch Bunch is held from 11:30 to 12:15 daily. Children who are 3 years by Sept. 1st and registered in the Preschool or Prekindergarten AM Programs are eligible to participate in lunch bunch. Children in the AM Classes will be picked up at 12:15 PM. Children in the PM classes can come in at 11:30 AM and then proceed to their afternoon program. See Payment Schedule for fee.

***BY RESERVATION ONLY

EARLY DROP OFF: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:30 to 9:00 AM- Open to all children at First Parish Preschool. See Payment Schedule for fee.

*** BY RESERVATION ONLY

Any questions????

Please contact Tricia Fabrizio at (781) 659-1333 or email: info@firstparishpreschool.org.

Registration

Registration takes place online in January for the upcoming school year in September. We register in-house students and siblings first, and then we accept registrations from families of alumni. After we have accepted registrations from the above two groups, we accept registrations from families that have had a scheduled tour of the school or attended our Open House. Finally, we are open to the public at large on a first come, first served basis for registration. After classes are full, we keep a wait list and will fill openings as they become available. No child shall be admitted unless his or her parent or guardian has met with the administration and had a tour of the school. Children do not have to be toilet trained to be eligible for any of our programs.

Registration Fee

There will be a \$100.00 registration fee at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable and nontransferable.

Tuition

Tuition is based on a yearly fee. We have three methods of payment: single payment due in August, two semi-annual payments with one due in August and one due in January, or ten monthly payments starting in August and ending in May. The semi-annual and monthly payments include installment fees. Payments do not reflect time in a classroom, but basically yearly tuition divided into one, two or ten payments.

There will be a \$7.00 late fee for all payments made after the 15th of each month. If a payment is 30 days past due, a \$14.00 late fee will be added. If a payment is 60 days past due, a \$21.00 late fee will be added. If a payment is 90 days past due, a \$28.00 late fee will be added. First Parish Preschool has a \$30.00 fee for checks returned to us for insufficient funds.

Please see payment schedule for your child's program. Payment may be mailed to our bookkeeper, placed in our tuition basket in the preschool office, or made online.

Tuition Deposit

A \$200.00 tuition deposit, due in April, is required for each program that your child will be attending in the fall. This deposit is nonrefundable and nontransferable. It is applied as credit on tuition to a specific program.

Please be mindful that payment of the tuition deposit guarantees your child's placement in a specific program, including a quality curriculum that follows the Massachusetts Dept. of Early Education and Care Preschool Guidelines. First Parish Preschool does not guarantee specific classroom teachers and/or physical classroom spaces.

Administrative Organization

First Parish Preschool is run by an Executive Board of Directors, who meet regularly to discuss preschool business. To be appointed, a parent can express his or her interest to the school director. Meetings are open to any parents or guardians of children attending First Parish Preschool. Generally, meetings are held three times a year in fall, winter, and spring. Parents are welcome to bring concerns or suggestions about the school to these meetings.

The preschool also has a director who oversees the operations of the school, the staff and all programs. The director attends the executive committee meetings as a nonvoting member.

Non-Discrimination Policy

First Parish Preschool does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, culture, heritage, political beliefs, parent's marital status, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Toilet training is not a requirement for enrollment.

Please inform us if you need or know of any families that need written information or translations in languages understood by enrolled children's family members.

First Parish Preschool is an equal opportunity employer.

Cultural Diversity

At First Parish Preschool we strive to build a sense of community by welcoming each child's cultural heritage into our school. It is important to us that every child feels accepted. To accommodate families, we will also strive to interpret our policies and procedures in a language they can understand.

We provide books and images and invite members of our community to our school to reflect the diverse cultures of our community.

Traditions

Birthdays are celebrated in the classrooms. Due to numerous children with food allergies and the promotion of healthy snacks, we ask that you refrain from sending in **any** type of food for your child's birthday. He/she will be honored in countless ways throughout the day.

Special Celebrations: During the school year we have special classroom celebrations involving socialization and food. Food brought in from our families for these celebrations must be either washed whole fruits, or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers that include a list of ingredients on the package. Please check with your child's teacher for more specific information.

Visiting

You are welcome to visit the school anytime. This is your school with your children. All of our classrooms have two-way mirrors so you can observe our classes without interrupting the programs.

We also value any ideas or suggestions you may have to contribute toward our programs. Forms are available on top of the cubbies as you walk in our main door to your right. Completed forms may be placed in the treasure box provided or mailed to us.

Phones and PDA's

Cell phones have become an integral part of our lives. Out of respect for our program, we ask that parents/guardians volunteering in their child's classroom do not use these devices or conduct their business during their time in their child's classroom.

Transportation

First Parish Preschool does not provide transportation to and from school for children. Individual classes do occasionally take field trips. Parents will be notified and requested to sign permission slips for these trips.

Arrival and Departure

To facilitate family-staff communication, it is the policy of First Parish Preschool that all children are brought to and picked up from their assigned classroom teachers. This enables the parent and staff member to share information in regard to the child's health, day, and activities. Staff will be recording each child's arrival and departure time from school in the daily attendance records.

If a child or parent has special needs regarding arrival and departure time, please check with the school director to work out a solution.

Please be aware that we will dismiss your child only to a person for whom you have given written consent.

Please be aware that First Parish Preschool is not responsible for transporting children to and from school.

Preschool/Parking Lot Safety

We will lock our main door at 9:15 once the children have settled in class. We will unlock it at 11:15 to prepare for dismissals. We will again lock the door once the children are settled into lunch bunch and unlock the door at 12:15 and 1:45 for the bulk of arrivals and dismissals. The teachers will take their keys with them when they go out on the playground area. (All other doors are locked at all times.)

There is a doorbell and camera to the right of the main door to ring when the door is locked. A staff member will come and let in a known person to the school. As always, our practice is to ask for identification if we do not know the person.

We have chosen to put safety first by locking the main door; however you are still welcome to come into **YOUR** school at **ANY** time to observe the wonderful happenings in the classrooms.

Parents need to teach their children parking lot safety. Parents must be in control of their children at all times. Parents should lead by example. The main priority of parents should be the safety of the children in our very busy parking lot.

When your child is outside of the fence, please do not let them run freely on the grassy hill or in the parking lot area. Children should not climb the stone wall as it is not sturdy or safe.

When walking to/from their cars in the upper lot, parents and children should use the sidewalks and grass areas to walk around the parked cars. With so many cars coming and going at drop-off and pick-up times, it is extremely dangerous to have children walking across the parking lot.

Parents should never leave an unattended car running or children unattended in a car.

Drivers must reduce their speeds drastically in the parking lot. Too many parents rush in to drop-off/pick-up their children and can be extremely reckless.

In the lower lot, drivers must follow the basic rules of the road and stay to the right, then drive as far as possible around the circle to park. Vehicles should be parked in the marked spaces only.

In the upper lot, no one should park around the tree in the center of the lot. Cars parked there make it very difficult and dangerous for others to maneuver safely in the lot. Also, the children in these cars are either entering or exiting their cars right into the middle of the parking lot.

Backpacks/Home-School Folders

Please send a bag/backpack marked with your child's name to school each day. Some classes may use a home-school folder to send home school notices along with artwork in the bags/backpacks. You may also use this folder to send in tuition checks, updated health forms, etc. Please check your child's bag each day to avoid missing an important notice or a special project. Please note birthday party invitations may be given to your child's teacher to distribute **ONLY** if the whole class is invited.

Clothing

Children should wear clothing appropriate for the weather and suited for active play, both indoors and out.

Because children will be working with clay, water, paints, etc., clothes that will not be damaged by such materials are recommended.

Clothing should also be relatively easy for the children to put on and take off themselves. Rubber-soled shoes are strongly recommended at all times. For your child's safety in climbing and running, we do not allow sandals, crocs, flip-flops or any open-toe or heel shoes at school.

We do go outside in the winter and sled on our hill. Please provide snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens in the winter. Please mark all jackets, sweaters, coats, hats, mittens and boots with your child's name.

Many of your children take themselves to the bathroom. Please send them in clothes that are easy to manage. Many accidents can be prevented if a child can unbutton or unbuckle pants and belts without a struggle.

Hand Washing Policy

For the health and safety of all children at First Parish Preschool, each child, classroom volunteer, and teacher is required to wash his or her hands before starting the day, after using the bathroom, after using tissues (blowing nose), before snack, and before lunch.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch meets daily from 11:30 AM to 12:15 PM. Advance reservations are required. Children must be 3 years of age by September 1st to participate in Lunch Bunch.

If your child has a permanent reservation in lunch bunch and you need to cancel, please call the school office in the morning before 8:15 AM to cancel so you will not be charged for the day.

Lunch Bunch and Early Drop Off services will be billed on the first of each month for the time that your child used the previous month. Payment is due by the 15th of each month except for the May bill which is due before the end of the year celebrations/graduations.

Snack/Lunch Bunch

Parents should provide a small snack and water each time their child comes to school. If your child is also staying for Lunch Bunch, some helpful ideas include tuna fish sandwich, bagel with cream cheese, milk or juice box, cut up celery, pudding in a sealed container, carrot sticks, slices of cheese, etc. Please do not send candy or soda for snack and/or lunch.

As you pack your child's snack and/or lunch, please be aware foods such as meat, eggs, tuna fish, milk, cheese, yogurt, and peeled or cut fruits need to stay cool in the lunch box. This can be accomplished by using an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack or frozen juice box.

At snack and lunch, we encourage but do not force children to eat. Out of respect for the number of children attending First Parish Preschool with allergies to nuts, peanuts, and peanut oil, we are asking parents to refrain from sending these products to school with their children. Also, please check labels on products as some foods are processed on the same equipment with nuts. Thus, they could contain traces of nut products. This includes foods from fast food restaurants; for example, Dunkin' Donuts.

Our staff is able to double-check the labels on pre-packaged food (such as cookies, crackers, pretzels) but we are unable to know the source of foods that have been repackaged into containers or baggies. If you are going to repackage food or send in home baked goods, please double-check the label as to nut ingredients and attach a note (i.e., Post-it) to the repackaged food. If we do not see a note indicating the food has been checked, we will send the food home with your child.

Label your child's snack and/or lunch with his or her name. Please be aware the staff of First Parish Preschool will not allow the sharing of food between children at snack and/or Lunch Bunch.

Allergies/Medical Conditions

If your child is on a special diet, has allergies to certain foods, or has a medical condition, please notify the school office. You will be asked to fill out an Allergy/Special Medical Condition Form for our records. This information will be compiled into a confidential list for the teachers so that they are aware of the issues and can keep everyone safe accordingly. This list will be in effect for one school year. Please notify us of any changes or updates to your child's health as well.

Sick Child Policy

For the health, safety, and protection of all the children and teachers at First Parish Preschool, we do not allow sick or contagious children to attend classes. If your child will be out sick, please notify the school, especially if the child has been contagious. If your child has been exposed to a contagious disease, we will notify you via email.

Do not send your child to school if he/she has been contagious or sick during the previous 24 to 48 hours. This is to ensure your child has fully recovered from his/her illness. A few common conditions that would justify keeping your child home are colds, strep, chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis, bacterial meningitis, diarrhea, lice, ringworm, pinworm, undiagnosed rash, profuse nasal discharge, flu, Covid, RSV, and fever over 99 degrees. Regarding head lice, First Parish Preschool has a no-nits policy for children returning to school.

Please remember to check with your doctor if a child is being treated with antibiotics as to how long the child must be on the medication before being non-contagious to others. Most antibiotics must be taken for 24 to 48 hours before the child's illness is no longer communicable. Remember that even though visual symptoms may disappear, a child may still be contagious to other children.

If a child becomes ill while at school, we will immediately notify the parent/guardian to pick up their child. Your child will be made comfortable and supervised by a familiar staff member until the arrival of the parent/guardian.

First Parish Preschool follows the advice of our preschool healthcare consultant as well as the CDC for health guidelines. It is very important that sick children do not return to school until they have been fever-free 24-48 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medication and symptoms are improving overall. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community healthy.

Administration of Medicine

We will give children medication that is prescribed by a licensed physician. If your child needs to receive medication during school hours, we must have:

- The bottle the medicine comes in
- A written request for the administration of the medicine signed by the parent/guardian and physician. A physician must sign the authorization, filling in instructions, unless instructions are specified on the prescription bottle.

Medication will be administered for one day at a time. Medication that is administered to a child will be recorded including child's name, date that medicine is given, and who administered it. This information will be kept on file in the office.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

First Parish Preschool staff members do not apply sunscreen to children while in our care. It is recommended on sunny days that parents/guardians apply sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to a child's exposed skin before school.

First Parish Preschool staff members do not apply insect repellent to children while in our care. When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect-borne disease, we recommend you apply repellent before your child attends school and dress your child in long sleeves and long pants. At this point, officials are recommending insect repellent that contains DEET.

First Parish Preschool utilizes the company "oh DEER" for monthly all-natural tick sprays in our playground area.

Contingency Plans for Emergency Situations

In the Case of a Missing Child

If a teacher becomes aware a child is missing, her co-teacher will immediately alert the Director. The Director will take all available preschool staff and church staff to search the building, playground and parking lot. If the child is not found in a short period of time, the Norwell Police Department will be called for assistance. The Director will call the child's parents immediately following the call to NPD. The Director and preschool staff will fully cooperate with Norwell Police. The Director will report the incident to EEC. If the Director is unavailable, our Administrative Assistant or a veteran Lead Teacher will oversee the program and emergency procedures.

In the Case of Evacuation of the Building

In the case of evacuation, the children are led out of the building by their teachers. The students are brought to their designated meeting place on the playground where the teacher will bring the daily attendance and evacuation backpack and then count the number of children outdoors. The Director will check hallways, bathrooms, and unused classrooms for stragglers and then meet with teachers. If we must leave school grounds, we will evacuate to the James Library, Cushing Center Hall in Norwell Center or Gaffield Park. Parents will be notified upon reaching the James Library, Cushing Center Hall or Gaffield Park.

In the Case of Accident or Emergency

Minor Injury: For a minor injury requiring minor medical treatment (ice pack or band aid), the staff will administer first aid. Each staff member is trained in CPR annually, and first aid every three years. Parents shall be informed in writing of any first aid administered to their child within 24 hours of the incident.

If a child develops a fever or upset stomach at school, we will bring the child to the director's office. Here we will contact a parent/guardian to come and take the child home.

Extreme Injury: If a child has an accident or emergency situation, we will make every effort to contact the parents or guardian. Norwell EMT's will be contacted immediately and your child will be taken to South Shore Hospital. If we cannot contact you at home, we will telephone parent's place of business. If we still cannot contact you, we will call the emergency number(s) you have listed on the Emergency Card.

Policy for Reporting Abuse and Neglect

As a professional staff in contact with children and their families, we are mandated by law with the responsibility to report to the Department of Social Services any children who may be abused or neglected.

Abuse includes: The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker which causes or creates a substantial risk of harm or threat of harm to a child's well-being. The commission of sex offense against a child as defined by the criminal laws of the Commonwealth.

Neglect includes: Failure by caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to take actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, other essential care, or physical dependence of a child upon an addictive drug at birth.

Smoking, Drinking and Firearms Pose Risks to Children

First Parish Preschool is an alcohol and smoke-free facility. Smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages is not permitted indoors or on the playground. Firearms are not allowed indoors or on the playground of First Parish Preschool except by law enforcement personnel who are required to carry firearms.

Hot beverages; i.e. coffee, tea, etc., are prohibited at the preschool due to the risk of burns.

Release of Your Child

The white emergency card requires you to list names and telephone numbers of people who are authorized to pick up your child from school. Children will be dismissed to parents/guardians or to these listed people only. Please update the information on this emergency card throughout the school year when necessary. **No child will be dismissed to anyone not on the list, unless we have your permission. Then please be sure to tell the person picking up your child to have their identification ready.**

If arrangements have been made for a carpool, please list this carpool and give a copy to the child's teacher. If arrangements have been made for your child to visit a friend after school, we must have permission to dismiss your child to another parent/guardian if he/she is not on the authorized list.

If you plan to have your child dismissed earlier than the usual time, please let us know. We will plan activities accordingly so your child will not miss a special project.

Please bring any special instructions concerning persons who are NOT to have custody of your child to the attention of the director in writing.

Parents are responsible for bringing children to their teachers. No child is to be dropped off in the parking lot and asked to walk himself/herself into school.

Please be on time dropping your child off and picking your child up. We thank you for your cooperation.

Developmental Screening

First Parish Preschool uses the *Brigance Developmental Screening Instrument*. All children new to First Parish Preschool will receive a developmental screening within three months of entry to a school program. Screening will include a child's health status along with their sensory, language, cognitive, gross-motor, fine motor, and social-emotional development. Results of these screenings will be in the child's school file and shared only with the child's parents or guardians.

Assessment Plan

First Parish Preschool uses the *Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System*. This system helps our teachers track and pinpoint your child's progress through each developmental level of social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development throughout the school year. Results will be used to monitor your child's developmental learning so we can guide our curriculum planning and decision-making in alliance with the Massachusetts Early Program Standards, Creative Curriculum, and NAEYC Accreditation Standards to help identify children who might benefit from special services, activities, or curriculum. We use these results to create two written reports sent home to families.

Our assessments occur informally throughout the school day to include teacher observation and a collection of samples of your child's learning through the school year. We seek parent feedback as to how your child is learning outside the school environment in the form of questionnaires sent home in the enrollment package and twice during the school year at conferences.

Children's information is kept confidential and only released to their parents/guardians or other authorized parties by written consent from a child's parent/guardian.

Communication

Our school's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. Please feel free to call 781-659-1333 with any questions. You may also use this number to leave a message for staff after school hours as well; for example, reporting your child's absence and/or canceling a lunch bunch reservation for the day. Communication with our parents is very important to us at First Parish Preschool. Please make sure the information that you provide us in the family portal on our website is up to date (2 main email addresses, home address, phone numbers, etc.) The email addresses that you provide in our system will be used to receive extended day bills, enrollment forms, and other important info. We also take the 2 emails provided in our family portal and enter them into Constant Contact so that you may receive monthly newsletters from the teachers and general information from the director. Please let us know if you are not receiving information from First Parish Preschool. If you change your email address, please notify us immediately so you don't miss any important information. We respect your privacy and will not share your email address unless authorized to do so. Teachers also use the Remind app to communicate with parents. You may choose to download this app if interested in receiving photos, updates, and reminders from your child's teachers.

Conferences

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Parents should also feel free to make an appointment for a conference at any time the need arises.

Written progress reports will be sent home twice during the school year. Our written reports are based on the goals and objectives used in our assessment system (*Teaching Strategies GOLD*) and individual goals set by parents/guardians and teachers.

Behavior Management Plan

At First Parish Preschool we believe that a teacher's attitude and behavior determines to a large extent the atmosphere and environment, which in turn develops attitudes and behavior in children.

If a child is not in control of himself, we will talk to the child in a firm, but loving voice. We let the child know that we care for him/her, but are not pleased with his/her actions. We will be consistent, friendly, fair, patient, and understanding. It is our belief that children thrive on love and fairness.

If appropriate and feasible, children will participate in establishment of rules, policies, and procedures applicable to their development.

Guidance/Discipline Policy

Staff shall never use any form of physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child. Appropriate use of restraint, for safety reasons only, is permissible.

- Discipline shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child.
- Discipline shall be directed to the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and individuals within.
- Corporal punishment shall not be used, including spanking.
- No child shall be left unsupervised for any length of time.
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- No child shall be forced to eat or denied food as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be punished for soiling or wetting pants or not using the toilet.

Termination of Student

A child may be terminated if his/her repeated behavior threatens the safety of other children and/or staff members at First Parish Preschool. Our goal is to work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success, therefore limiting or eliminating the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures. Parents, educators, the Director and other professionals, if necessary, will meet to discuss challenging behaviors and identify steps to resolve the behaviors. They will then reconvene to discuss/evaluate the effectiveness. Exclusionary measures are not considered until all other possible interventions have been exhausted, and there is an agreement that exclusion is in the best interest of the child. If that is the determination, the Director and teachers will work with the parents to help make the transition smooth by assisting the family in accessing services and an alternative placement for the child. First Parish Preschool complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

A child may also be terminated if we cannot assure the health and safety of the child.

A student will be terminated from First Parish Preschool for failure to keep payments current. After missing the first payment, a notice will be sent home reminding the parents of the obligation. If two payments are missed, a letter will be mailed home asking for payment by a specific date. If payment is three months behind, a child may be terminated from school.

School Pictures

A photographer comes to the school in the fall to take class and individual pictures. You are under no obligation to purchase the pictures.

Picture Policy

Parents/guardians are not permitted to take pictures or video tape children at First Parish Preschool unless the school director has given consent prior to that day. Parents should never post another child's picture on social media without consent from that child's parent.

Snow Days/Inclement Weather

Please check your email and/or the message left on the school's answering machine (781-659-1333).

First Parish Preschool generally follows the Norwell Public Schools: if they are closed, we are closed. If Norwell Schools should open and then close during the day, we will be closed as soon as the public schools close. If Norwell Schools have a delayed opening, we will open at 12:00 PM for our PreK Extended Day Class only (students should eat lunch before coming to school). Due to the fact we have mostly half day schedules, and we closely monitor storms, we **may** be closed when Norwell Public Schools are open. The safety of our children and staff always comes first.

School Survey

At the end of each school year, we will provide a parent/guardian survey via email and/or hard copy asking for your feedback about our programs, procedures, physical environment, and assessment plan. Information from this survey is used to set goals for continuous improvement of our program. A summary of this survey will be available in the school office or sent to you by request.

Parent Reference Library

First Parish Preschool has a parent reference library. This library is located in the school office and is open to any parent/guardian who has a child enrolled in First Parish Preschool. You are welcome to stop in anytime and browse or check out a book to take home. The books cover many areas of parenting including toilet training, arrival of a new baby, divorce, death, child abuse, and school readiness. We also have videos on school readiness and child safety.

Parents Rights

The Department of Early Education and Care has asked First Parish Preschool to inform parents/guardians of their rights. They are as follows:

Parent Visits: First Parish Preschool shall permit and encourage parents to visit the center and child's room while their child is present.

Parent Input: The licensee shall have a procedure for allowing parental input in the development of center policy and programs. The licensee shall provide an explanation to the parents when a parent makes suggestions as to the program or policy of a center and the suggestions are not adopted by the licensee. If the parent requests a written response, the licensee shall respond in writing to the parent.

Reports to Parents: First Parish Preschool shall periodically but at least every six months prepare a written progress report of the participation of each child in the center's records. The licensee shall provide a copy of each report to the parents or meet with them at least every six months to discuss their child's activities and participation in the center.

For infants under fifteen months of age, the licensee shall complete a written progress report of the child's developments every three months, and provide it to the parents.

The licensee shall bring special problems or significant developments, particularly as they regard infants, to the parent's attention as soon as they arise.

Parent Conferences: The licensee shall make the staff available for individual conferences with parents at parental request.

Confidentiality and Distribution of Records: Information contained in a child's records, including their screening and assessment results, shall be privileged and confidential.

First Parish Preschool does not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian(s). The staff members of First Parish Preschool are the designated program planners for the children enrolled at First Parish Preschool.

First Parish Preschool will use the results from our assessment and screening programs to document the developmental progress of enrolled children and to make referrals to appropriate professionals when needed.

First Parish Preschool shall notify the parent/guardian(s) if a child's record is subpoenaed. The child's parent/guardian(s) shall, upon request, have access to their child's records at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two (2) business days after the initial request. Each time information is released or distributed from a child's record, the following information shall be recorded: the name, signature, and position of the person releasing or distributing the information; the

date; the portions of the record which were distributed or released; the purpose and the signature of the person to whom the information is released.

Amending the Child's Record: A child's parent/guardian(s) shall have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to the child's record. A child's parent/guardian(s) shall have the right to request deletions or amendment of any information contained in the child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described herein:

If such parent/guardian believes that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the child's record, he shall have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make his/her objections known. The licensee shall within one week after the conference render to the parent/guardian a decision in writing stating the reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent/guardian, steps shall be taken immediately to put the decision into effect.

Research and Experimentation: No licensee shall conduct research experimentation or allow unusual treatment involving children without written, informed consent of the child's parent or guardian.

Transfer of Records: When a child is no longer in care, upon written request of the parent, First Parish Preschool will transfer the child's record to the parent or any other person the parent identifies.

Charge of Copies: First Parish Preschool shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information.

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Policy and Procedure Acknowledgement

First Parish Preschool
24 River Street
Norwell, MA 02061

My child _____ is enrolled at First Parish Preschool in Norwell, MA. I have received, read, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures detailed in this Parent Handbook for the school. I understand the obligation to confidentiality of our children that exists for anyone volunteering in our classrooms.

Parent/Guardian (1) _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian (2) _____ Date _____

Please remove this page from the handbook and return it signed to the school office with your child's forms.