

St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool
205 Kings Way
St. Simons Island, GA 31522
912-638-1263 /www.sspres.org

St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool

Handbook

2019-2020

Dear Parents,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool for the 2019-2020 school year. I am looking forward to an exciting year with you and your child. We have a terrific group of children as well as a team of wonderful teachers.

This booklet is designed to give you more information about our program and answer any questions that you might have concerning our policies and procedures. You will also find information regarding our preschool on the church website www.sspres.org. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at any time. You can reach me at preschool, 638-1263 or via email judycauley@att.net.

You have taken a very important step in helping your child learn and grow. You will see many changes in your child during the next year and always remember that preschool is a journey; not a race. We are looking forward to helping your child make a successful and positive transition from home to school.

Thank you for entrusting your child to our care and teaching.

Sincerely,

Judy Cauley
Preschool Director

Preschool Objective

It is the objective of our program to provide high quality education in a Christian atmosphere. We consider the development of the whole child to be our primary goal. Children will explore and discover through hands-on experiences, develop positive self-concepts, learn to follow directions, build self-confidence, accept responsibility and become more independent. Our preschoolers will begin building a solid foundation to ensure success for future years.

Two-year-olds will spend most of their time in play situations learning to interact with their peers. The process of separation from the parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child. Sharing, cooperating, getting along with others and self-help skills are primary goals for the two-year-old child.

The primary goal for the three-year-old is to help each child develop his or her full potential as an individual and as a group member. This is accomplished by providing an environment in which he or she can be stimulated and challenged with activities that develop gross and fine motor coordination, visual perception and the ability to reason and communicate.

The four-year-old program is designed to provide the basic educational skills required of children entering kindergarten in any area school. This does not necessarily mean concentrating on just academic skills, but focusing on all areas of readiness. Activities and enrichment experiences are designed to be age-appropriate and to develop each child's potential in all areas - social, emotional and cognitive.

St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool has been issued a license exemption from Bright From the Start - Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Health

Our staff will make every possible effort to protect the health and safety of your child. Please do not send your child to preschool if he or she shows signs of illness. Your cooperation is expected to help prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

Your child must be kept home if he or she has a fever of 100 degrees or over, is vomiting or has diarrhea for any reason. Your child must be symptom free for at least 24 hours before he or she is allowed to return to school. Other symptoms that may require you to keep your child home include nausea, constant runny nose, sore throat, skin rash, earache, or intense coughing. If your child develops a contagious disease please notify the director so that other parents may be notified of possible exposure. This must be strictly adhered to for the benefit your child as well as the other children.

Certificate of Immunization

Each child must have a Certificate of Immunization (Georgia form #3231) on file with the director. This may be obtained from the health department or your child's physician. Children will not be admitted to school without this certificate.

Clothing

Children must be fully dressed when they arrive at school. Please dress your child so that he or she is comfortable for play. Although we try to keep our clothes as neat as possible, we do use messy materials such as paints, markers, glue and glitter. Make sure to keep this in mind when selecting an outfit for your child to wear to pre-school.

Clothes that your child can handle during bathroom visits are greatly encouraged. Your child will be able to further develop self-help skills if he or she can manage their own clothing with little or no assistance from the teacher.

Make sure your child wears shoes that fit securely on his or her feet. Tennis shoes are preferred since your child will be using the playground each day. Shoes that come off too easily can be dangerous while on the playground equipment. And yes... when your child returns from preschool he or she will more than likely have sand in their shoes! 😊 It's all part of the fun!

Every child needs to always have a complete change of clothes (including socks) available to them at school. If your child has changed during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace the extra clothes the following day. All clothing items must be labeled with your child's full name.

Preschool Closings/Severe Weather

If the Glynn County Public School System is not in session for ANY reason, our preschool will also be closed. In the event of severe weather please stay tuned to local television and radio stations regarding public school closings. There will be no tuition credit for these days.

The Glynn County Emergency management Center has inspected our preschool to determine specific areas that offer the best protection from severe weather. Teachers have been instructed to take the children to these designated areas if necessary. Our staff will be informed of potential weather hazards via local television and NOAA weather reports.

Tuition

To register your child for our preschool you must pay a deposit of one month's tuition plus a registration fee. This deposit will secure your spot in our preschool and the tuition paid upon enrollment will be applied to May or your child's last month in attendance. Tuition can be paid in full for the year or spread out on a monthly basis over a period of ten months. The first payment is due in August on or before our Open House. Subsequent payments are due on the first of each month regardless of your child's attendance. A \$10 late fee will be added to any tuition received after the tenth of the month. There is also a yearly supply fee of \$125 which is due in August. Tuition can be paid by cash, check or directly through your parent portal. Checks should be made payable to St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool.

If you secure your spot in our program and do not attend St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool for any reason your entire deposit will be forfeited. If you plan to remove your child from the preschool a two week notice should be given to the director. If less than two weeks notice is given the director reserves the right to require additional payment for the upcoming month.

Biting Policy

Children biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in a preschool group situation. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved.

For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers try it out as a way to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. They discover that biting is a perfect way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the biter can pick it up. However, they experience the disapproval of the teachers nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings.

For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power. No matter what the cause, biting in a group situation causes strong feelings with all involved. However, it does help to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur. The St. Simons Presbyterian preschool staff has developed the following plan of action to be used if and when biting occurs in any of our classrooms.

Before biting occurs:

1. St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool will make parents aware of the preschool biting policy by including the written policy in this Preschool Handbook.

For the biter:

1. The biter is immediately removed from the situation. The caring attention is focused on the victim.
2. The biter is not allowed to return to play for a period of time and is talked to on a level that the child can understand.
3. The child will be redirected to other play.
4. The teacher will notify the parents of the bite.

For the victim:

1. Separate the victim from the biter.
2. Comfort the child.
3. Administer first aid.
4. The teacher will notify the parents of the victim.

If biting is persistent and continues:

1. The teacher and parent will meet with the director for advise, support and strategy planning.
2. The teacher will record every occurrence, including attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviors, staff present, and circumstances.
3. The teacher and director will work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
4. The teacher and director will hold a conference with the parents of the biting child to develop a written plan of action. Schedule follow-up meetings or telephone conversations as needed.
5. The director will prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be removed from preschool.
6. If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, preschool and other children, termination of the offending child from St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool may occur. Written warning will be given to the parents before this action will be taken.

Terminating Enrollment

If the preschool director, after consultation with the preschool board, determines that it is not in the best interest of any given child or the preschool to continue such child's enrollment, the preschool may terminate such child's enrollment at any time and for any reason, including but not limited to, reasons related to non-payment of tuition, discipline, special needs of a child, or failure to follow preschool rules. The parent or legal guardian of any child enrolled at the preschool also has the right to terminate the child's enrollment at the preschool at any time and for any reason, by furnishing advance written notice to the director. In the event of such termination, tuition obligations will be determined in accordance with the tuition provision of this handbook.

Toys

All personal toys must be kept at home. It can be devastating to a child when a personal toy is broken or lost. Classes will have special days when children can bring toys from home for sharing.

Lost and Found

Please put your name on all items of personal property. We will make every effort to locate and return lost items. This task is much easier if your child's name is on the items. A "Lost and Found" box is located in the preschool building. We cannot be responsible for personal items that your child may bring to school.

Discipline

It is our policy to provide an atmosphere in which quality education can be provided for all children. It is the responsibility of the home to discipline the child. The preschool will seek to compliment and reinforce what the home provides. The teachers will make every effort to handle normal discipline problems while in the classroom or by routine contacts with the parents. Your child's teacher, the director and parents will work together to solve problems that need further attention. Teachers will typically redirect the child or if necessary, use a few minutes of "time-out".

Preschool Bags

Every child will be given a St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool canvas tote bag. Make sure your child brings this bag to school every day. Please keep the clip on the bag throughout the year. Written communications should be clipped on the outside of the bag for the teacher.

We ask that you do not use novelty bags or backpacks since they are difficult for children to open and close. Additional preschool canvas bags can be purchased from the preschool director.

Field Trips

The teacher will notify parents of all field trips. No child will be able to participate in a field trip without a permission slip signed by a parent. Parent volunteers are sometimes needed for transportation and are always welcome.

Parties

A sign-up sheet will be provided at the Open House for you to volunteer to help with special events for your child's class. Special events include Fall Fun Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and special school programs.

You are encouraged to choose an event and sign-up in the classroom to help. If you cannot attend the special event the teacher will let you know what items are needed. You can send the items in with your child in the morning. Some events may require you to be here and help with set-up and/or clean-up.

Any parent wishing to provide a special treat for their child's class on his or her birthday is welcome to do so. Please make sure to coordinate this with your child's teacher. Teachers usually pick a day in May to celebrate all summer birthdays.

Summer Program

A summer program may be offered for our preschoolers depending upon parent interest. Information regarding the summer program will be distributed in the spring.

Snack

Your child will need to bring a small nutritious mid-morning snack to school each day. You will not need to bring a drink. Water will be provided during our snack time. Please do not put snacks in your lunch box. The snack should be placed directly inside your preschool bag. We do not want children rummaging through their lunch box looking for their snack.

Although children are required to bring their own snacks each day, there will be certain times when we will provide a special snack. Please consult your monthly preschool calendar to see specific days when snack will be provided. Make sure to let your child's teacher know about any food allergy concerns or special dietary restrictions. In these cases children should continue to bring a snack from home.

Lunch

Every child will need to bring a nutritious lunch with a drink to school. Make sure you put your child's name on all lunch boxes, bag and food containers. We cannot heat or cool any food items. Please use a thermos or ice pack to keep lunch foods at appropriate temperatures. Make sure to include necessary disposable utensils such as spoons, forks and napkins.

Please keep in mind that foods such as hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts, grapes and hard candy are considered choking hazards for young children. For the safety of your child you will need to cut hot dogs and grapes into small pieces before packing them into your child's lunch. Hard candy, gum peanuts and carbonated soft drinks cannot be brought to school.

Diapers

Your child should be sent to preschool in a fresh clean diaper each day. Although we have specific diaper changing times in our daily schedule, diapers that need immediate attention will be changed accordingly. Please make sure to provide us with diapers and an extra set of clothes to be kept in the classroom.

We will make every effort to send your child home in a clean diaper. If you have any concerns regarding diaper changing please talk to the director or your child's teacher.

Potty Training

When you tell us that your child is potty trained this is what we expect: *Your child will be in cloth underwear (not pull-ups) and have the ability to use the bathroom without assistance from the teacher.*

Otherwise, please inform us when your child is beginning to experiment with potty training. Sometimes a child who exhibits an interest in potty training at home may not be as ready in preschool due to the many other distractions. During the beginning states of potty training we would like you to keep your child in diapers while at preschool. Once your child is able to communicate their needs to the teacher and begins to undress themselves a pull-up may be worn. Clothes that your child can handle without assistance are essential during the potty training period.

We will be happy to help encourage your child in the potty training process. Ongoing communication between parents and teachers is essential to help achieve this developmental milestone!

Arrival and Dismissal

Preschool hours are from 9:00am-1:00pm. Teachers will be in the drop-off/pick-up area beginning at 8:50am. Children will be escorted into the building and directed to their classrooms. You will need to escort your child into the building if you arrive later than 9:15a.m. Never let your child enter the preschool building without an adult.

During the first few weeks of school it is very common for many children to become upset during the drop-off time. Although this can be an uncomfortable situation for both parents and children, we strongly encourage parents to allow our teachers to assist your child from the car. By doing so we can assist your child through the separation process and help your preschooler become more independent. More often than not, children who are upset usually calm down and interact with the other children after a few minutes. We will contact you if your child does not stop crying for an unusual amount of time. We want every child to develop a positive attitude about coming to school.

Children will be ready for pick-up in the same area starting at 12:50p.m. Please make every effort to be on time. Children who are not picked up on time may feel very uneasy. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be given to parents who pick their child up after 1:05p.m. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please make sure to notify us in writing.

Curriculum

St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool curriculum is a discovery-based learning experience. The curriculum focuses on learning basic concepts and skills through hands-on experiences and activities. The teachers of each age group design the curriculum. Each year we review what was taught the previous year and add to those skills. Our preschool subscribes to many professional resources designed for teachers of young children. These enable us to incorporate new ideas and keep our curriculum up-to-date. Please keep in mind that some basic skills are taught every year to ensure a solid foundation for kindergarten.

Although certain activities and skills may be repeated each year, student involvement changes and grows. Young children like repetition and feel comfortable knowing how to do an activity. Our teachers work closely together to coordinate learning activities with age-appropriate goals in mind.

We strongly believe in the “hands-on” and “learn by doing” approach to preschool education. Children need time to experiment and to discover ideas and concepts for themselves. While some preschools focus only on academics our program provides a strong academic foundation and gives each child the tools needed to encourage the growth of the whole child. In addition to classroom experiences our preschoolers are provided with a wide variety of enrichment classes such as music, Spanish, chapel physical education and small group enrichment (reading readiness). Our preschool strives to foster a love of learning in children so that school will always be a positive experience for them.

Visitation

All visitors are required to check-in at the front office upon entering the building. Although parents are always welcome in our preschool, please keep in mind that it is our goal for children to establish preschool routines and feel comfortable with the separation from parents. Parents who linger with upset children in the classroom are only prolonging the separation process. Staying with your child can make the transition from home to school more difficult. Other children in the class may also become distracted when another parent is present.

If you have any concerns regarding your child in the classroom please do not hesitate to contact the director or your child’s teacher. The director will be available to let you observe your child in the classroom through the mirrored glass windows at any time. There are many times throughout the year that parents will be asked to attend parties, programs and/or other special events.

Special Services

Children receiving special services from professionals who are not employed by or otherwise associated with St. Simons Presbyterian Preschool must sign a “Special Services Agreement”. Please make sure to let the director know if your child will be receiving any special services from Glynn County or other private practice.

Suggestions

Compliments, complaints, concerns or suggestions should be made known to the director. We need to know how you feel so that we can consider necessary changes or continue practices that are favorable. Your input is a valuable tool in planning our preschool program.

If you have a special talent that you would like to share with us please let the teacher or the director know. Thank you for sharing your child with us!