

St. Stephen Presbyterian
Day School



Parent Handbook

St. Stephen Presbyterian Day School
Parent Handbook
Introduction and Overview
Purpose, Philosophy, Structure, Summary

Purpose

The Day School program of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church is a quality care program available to members and non-members. It is designed to create a safe, loving, secure, nurturing atmosphere of play and learning experiences to help each child grow physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. Structured and unstructured activities are planned to encourage creativity with emphasis placed on developing a strong sense of self-esteem and emotional well being in each child.

Philosophy of Education

Education is more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It has to do with the whole person. It is the harmonious development of physical, mental, social, and spiritual capabilities. True education prepares children for a life as productive human beings, concentrating on not only academics but also on the practical, imaginative and creative thinking powers available to each individual.

Structure

The Day School is operated under the supervision of the Director. The Director reports to the Day School Board which is responsible to St. Stephen Presbyterian Church. (The Session of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church is responsible for the operation of child care programs at St. Stephen Presbyterian Church.)

Summary

The Day School Staff and parents share a joint, special interest and responsibility in the care and nurturing of children. By working together, the staff and parents can ensure a positive, growth-oriented experience for the child.

Parent/School Relationship
Responsibilities of the Parents

The following parental responsibilities are important for maintaining a constructive relationship with the program. Parents Shall:

1. Keep staff informed of any event in the child's life which may help the teacher to better understand the child and relate to him or her appropriately.
2. Share an active interest in the child's work and development.
3. Arrange for the child's regular, prompt attendance.
4. Ensure that the responsible teacher is aware of the arrival and departure of the child.
5. Notify the staff if the child contracts or is exposed to a communicable disease.

6. Ensure the health and welfare of the child by providing proper nutrition, adequate rest, healthful hygiene, and prompt attention to illness.
7. Provide a nutritious breakfast before the child arrives at the program.
8. Provide a nutritious lunch for the child. (No carbonated drinks.)

In addition, the parents are expected to make timely tuition payments and update the child's enrollment and health information as necessary. This includes advising the Director of any change in the parent's marital status. Parents will sign a statement indicating that he or she has read, understands, and agrees to the responsibilities and program policies as outlined in this document.

Responsibilities of the Staff

The following staff responsibilities are important for maintaining constructive relationships with the parents and children. The Staff will:

1. Keep parents informed of the child's development.
2. Discuss with the parents events in the child's life to foster a better understanding of the child.
3. Relate to the child as a person of worth. Through attitudes and actions the staff will show genuine concern and respect for each child.
4. Keep parents informed through use of individual notices, bulletin boards and the program's newsletter.
5. Inform parents of outbreaks of disease within the class.
6. Follow the guidelines for discipline set forth in the Day School Personnel Policies and Operations Manual.

Operations Admission Policy

Admission into St. Stephen Presbyterian Day School is available to members and non-members of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church on a first come first serve basis with priority given to siblings of those currently enrolled and to church members.

Once classes are filled, those interested in the Day School may place their child's name on the *Wait List*. Siblings and church member's children will be placed at the top of the *Wait List*. If there is an opening in any class with no *Wait List* the spot will be available to the first interested party. If this child has a sibling, the sibling will be placed at the top of the *Wait List* of his/her age grouping.

If an opening is declined by a sibling or non-church member, the child's name will be removed from the *Wait List* unless the parents request that the name remain, wherein the name will be moved to the bottom of the *Wait List*.

If an opening is declined by a church member, but it is requested that the child's name remain on the *Wait List*, the name will move below any other church member's child on the *Wait List* for that age group.

The *Wait List* will consist of names in this order: (1) Siblings; (2) Church Members; (3) Non-Church Members **If siblings do not take a space at age one, they are moved to the bottom of the preferential list for that age group and church members who are on the *Wait List* will have priority.

Registration

Each child must be registered for each session. A one-week pre-registration time is reserved for current students, siblings, and church members. After that time, any openings will be filled from the *Wait List*.

Withdrawal and Re-Enrollment

If there is a need to withdraw a child from the program, parents are requested to notify the director in writing 30 days in advance or one month's tuition will be due. To re-enter the program, the child must be re-enrolled.

Tuition

Tuition is determined by the Day School Workgroup. Rates are evaluated annually but may change from time to time as needed. In the event of a change, parents will be given advance notice.

First month's tuition is due on or before June 1st. This tuition payment guarantees a place for your child and is non-refundable after June 15th. Tuition is due on the first of each month and payment is made in the Day School Office. For ease of payment, total tuition for nine months is determined and then divided into nine equal payments. Therefore, the cost is the same regardless of the number of program days in each month.

A \$10.00 late fee will be charged if payment is received after the 5th of the month, with an additional charge of \$2.00 for each subsequent week tuition is late. If a tuition check is returned, the director contacts the parents personally and asks them to pay the amount of the check, plus the bank's service charge, in cash.

No deduction in tuition is made when a child is absent, on vacation, or sent home sick. A child's scheduled day that falls on a holiday, Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) Inservice Day, or a break period may not be traded for another day. School closings for inclement weather or emergency closings will not be rescheduled. A calendar of events, specifying scheduled holidays, inservice days and breaks is provided in each child's enrollment package.

Fees

A non-refundable registration fee is due and payable at the time of registration.

A supply fee is due and payable in September and with January's tuition payment.

A field trip fee is due and payable in September.

Hours of Operation

The Day School operates on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

A calendar noting opening and closing dates, as well as all breaks and holidays, is published at the beginning of each school year.

The program follows the Fort Worth Independent School District's (FWISD) decisions regarding the opening and closing of school during inclement weather or emergency closings. If FWISD postpones their opening to or after 10:00 a.m., the program will be closed all day.

Entering, Leaving and Visiting

Signing Children In

For the safety and security of the children in the program, a parent or guardian must sign each child in on the designated sheet on the child's classroom door and accompany the child to the classroom door.

Parents are encouraged to bring siblings who are not enrolled in the program into the building with them. However, to avoid unnecessary confusion as the children are arriving and leaving, non-enrolled children and adults other than guardians are discouraged from entering the classroom.

Picking Children Up

The person picking up the child must sign the child out on the designated sheet on the classroom door. Only legal guardians or persons designated on the registration form will be allowed to pick up the child.

If someone other than the designated person must pick up a child, the parent or guardian must obtain approval from the director before the child will be released. Children will not, under any circumstances, be released to a minor.

In a separation or divorce case, the status and any change in custodial rights must be documented by court order or agreement of the parents.

Picking Children Up Late

Parents are encouraged to bring and pick up children by the designated times. This helps build self-confidence and ensures the smooth operation of the program.

If a child is picked up late, the parent is charged \$10.00 for the first 10 minutes, assessed at 2:40, plus \$1 per minute thereafter will be assessed any time your child

has not been picked up on time. Time will be kept according to cell phone time. Please pay the teacher(s) directly with cash or check at pick-up time

Visiting the Program

Visitors are always welcome to observe the program. All visitors entering the Day School Area must check in with the director.

Health Standards Maintaining Health Records

Upon enrollment each child is required to have on file immunization and examination statements from a doctor. This record must be updated annually or as immunizations are received. Health forms are made available in the enrollment packet.

Illness

To preserve a healthful atmosphere, the parents should notify the program if the child contracts, or is exposed to, a contagious disease while in attendance. Children should not be sent to the program with a fever or other signs of illness and should remain at home for 24 hours after having a temperature of 99.8F or more. When a child becomes ill at the program, the parents are notified and are expected to pick up the child immediately.

Injury

If a child is injured, a staff member will attempt to contact the parents or specified persons listed on the registration form while another staff member attends to the child. If the parents cannot be reached and the injury is serious or life threatening, the child will be taken to the emergency room of a nearby hospital. Continuous attempts will be made to reach the parents.

Medication

The Director or Assistant Director may administer medication only if parents sign the proper forms, which are located in the Day School office. The medication must be handed directly to the Director or Assistant Director and be clearly labeled with the child's name and directions for administering it. The form is then given to the child's teacher who will notify the Director or Assistant Director when the time has come for the medication to be administered.

The program does not provide facilities for locking up medications overnight; therefore, it is recommended that medications be brought daily as needed.

Clothing and Personal Items

Dress

Parents are encouraged to dress their children in comfortable, washable play clothes to eliminate the worry of "getting dirty". Appropriate dress is important as

children use paints, glue, markers, water and other materials in creative activities as well as play outside.

Extra Clothes/Diapers

Each child should bring a change of clothes in a labeled sack or bag in case of accident or soiling of clothes. The clothing should fit properly, be seasonal in nature, and washed occasionally. If needed a supply of diapers should be kept in this bag. Do not store anything in this bag or in the child's locker which could be harmful to the child (i.e. medicine, glass containers, etc.) All clothes and other personal items should be labeled with the child's name. Neither the Day School nor the staff is responsible for lost or stolen items.

Nap-time Linens

Children may bring their favorite "sleepy-time" item to make them more comfortable during the rest period of the day. All linens should be taken home weekly for washing.

No Valuable Items

Children should not bring items considered to be of great monetary or sentimental value.

Weapons

Guns, swords and/or any toy which resembles a weapon are not permitted on the premises. St. Stephen is a house of peace where children are encouraged to problem solve through positive role modeling and cooperative methods of play.

Special Occasions

Field Trips

Children are occasionally taken on field trips during the program hours. Parents are notified in advance of all field trips and of any costs associated with them. Only children whose parents have signed and turned in a permission slip may attend a field trip. Children are chaperoned by teachers and parent volunteers and are transported by personal vehicles.

Parties

Celebrating a child's birthday or special occasion with a class party is welcomed with the consent of the teacher. All baked goods and edible items are required to be store-bought. Red or purple juice and party favors are strongly discouraged.

Discipline

The program's philosophy of discipline is designed to give each child ample opportunity to self discipline and problem solve. We believe that hands are for loving and caring; therefore, no physical action (e.g. slapping, hitting, pushing) is used.

Children are never humiliated. Most discipline problems are corrected by removing the child from the normal classroom activity for a few minutes and explaining to the child privately why his or her behavior is unacceptable. Ample time is given listening to the child to determine correct guidance.

Dismissal

A child's enrollment may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Tuition Payment is delinquent or not paid.
2. The Day School policies are not followed.
3. The student repeatedly displays unacceptable behavior that affects the morale of the program.
4. A change in the student's health, mental or physical condition requires services beyond what the program can provide.

Dismissal Procedure

Chronic problems will be documented. When the problem becomes serious, the director notifies the parents in writing and in conference. The parents will sign the written notification and return it to the program so there is record of the parent being notified.

A follow up conference will be set and progress evaluated. If the parents are dissatisfied with the director's recommendation or request for dismissal, they may request evaluation by the Day School Workgroup and the Education Committee.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Objectives of the Parent Support Group

To interest and involve the parents in the Parents' Day Out/Day School program.

To educate the parents concerning the program's curriculum and child-rearing techniques.

To emphasize the importance of the parental role.

To develop understanding between the home and the program.

To provide an opportunity for parents with common concerns to meet with each other and share experiences.

To develop friendships among parents.

To assist with long term and objectives toward the quality growth of the program.

Project Ideas of the Parent Support Group

Room Parents

Encourage participation in the Parent Night Activities

Field Trips

Work parties to repair and build equipment

Cataloging the program's library

Parent Study Groups

Welcoming new families/picnics to get better acquainted

Public policy, legislation affecting families and children

Assisting with a self-study and on going assessment of the needs within the program and community Dismissal, cont.