

Parent Handbook

The Learning Center Preschool
at First Presbyterian Church





Program Operations

The Learning Center at First Presbyterian Church

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The Learning Center Preschool (TLC) at First Presbyterian Church (FPC) is an extension of the Spiritual Growth ministry of the church. Fully realizing that the early years of life are the most important for laying the foundations of faith and for social, emotional, and cognitive development, TLC:

- Provides each child with acceptance, respect, and love in a Christian environment by caring adults.
- Provides a place where children can learn about their uniqueness as children of God, develop new relationships and learn about their expanding worlds, and
- Provides an environment in which each child is free to explore, experiment, and learn to make decisions.

Within this framework, the children develop a positive self-image and sense of self-worth as we provide them with many opportunities for successful accomplishments. We encourage their curiosity and independence. We believe the love of God binds us together. In that love we welcome and respect all faiths and provide a welcoming and loving community in which the children learn to work and play with others, to respect property and the rights of others and to learn of God's love for us all.

TLC seeks to offer a high-quality program – one that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children, parents, staff, and administrators who are involved in the program. We believe that each day of a child's life is important in the growth and development of the child.

Hours of Operation

We are open 9:00AM-2:00PM Monday-Friday. We offer Extended Care services beginning at 7:45AM and ending at 4:00PM daily for additional fees. Our playground is off limits to visitors during these hours. We love for our friends to stay and play but we ask that you wait till after 4:00 or come back to play over the weekend.

Our program closely follows the Wichita Falls Independent School Districts (WFISD) calendar, and we are closed when WFISD is closed for inclement weather days. If WFISD delays for bad weather, TLC will be closed for the day.

Please see the calendar for exact dates of closures and holidays.

HOLIDAYS – The Learning Center observes the below holidays and will be closed:

- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving Week
- Christmas Break (follows WFISD calendar)
- Martin Luther King Jr Day
- Presidents' Day
- Easter (Good Friday and the Monday following Easter Sunday)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

DAILY SCHEDULE - Our school day begins each day at 9:00AM and ends each day at 2PM. A daily class schedule, snack menu, as well as chapel, and music and movement schedules will be posted in your child's classroom.

Your child's teacher will provide a monthly calendar of class events to come home in backpacks and via Brightwheel. All communication about upcoming events will take place with your child's teacher on Brightwheel.

Our Philosophy

We believe that all children grow and develop at their own pace and while it is important to ensure children are ready for kindergarten and for life experiences, we also feel they should not be hurried through childhood. Our goal is to provide a safe learning environment where kids can simply be kids.

We feel play is an essential aspect of young children's lives, it is essential to their well-being and development. Our preschool program provides time for free play as children need these experiences. New concepts, new skills and new understanding come to children through play. In play children learn to formulate and organize

ideas and to become more flexible in problem solving. Children's attention begins to lengthen when they play. Their imagination can take them anywhere they want to go. During play children learn to communicate their thoughts, feelings and needs of others. We feel by arranging our childcare areas to offer challenging, interesting play and learning choices at a range of developmental levels, children will learn through their play.

We balance play with many structured activities such as table time, circle time, open ended art activities, music, meals, clean up etc. We choose curriculum activities based on the needs of the children enrolled and where we feel they need to be for kindergarten. We feel it is important to help each child succeed at his or her own level and adjust projects to meet and challenge their current level of development. Teachable moments provide learning opportunities on any given day. Activities such as setting the table can be used as teaching opportunities. Children can learn counting, patterning, and one to one correspondence setting the table. Looking up a bug they may have seen on the playground teaches them not only the information about the bug (science), but that book, magazines, and computers are resources. We strongly feel that developing their love for learning and exploration is every bit as important as their care and safety!

We believe social skills and self-help skills are essential for each child to develop and we reinforce this through modeling responsibility, acceptance, caring, sharing and respect for all children and adults. We believe by truly listening and engaging in conversations with children provides numerous opportunities for the development of emotional, language, and social skills as well as enhancement of self-esteem. We are sensitive to each child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs. We strive to meet their individual needs as well as the group's needs as a whole. We believe given these experiences and opportunities, children will develop a positive self-esteem and love of learning that will follow them throughout their lives.

Our program does have a faith-based learning approach. We include bible stories and scripture in our curriculum planning, as well as hold Chapel every week for all students. During Chapel we spend time worshipping together with music, hear children's sermons from our ministry staff and work together to memorize scripture.

Mission

- To sustain a distinctively Christ-centered environment, modeling and teaching a love for God and others - through the practice of prayer, exploration of the Bible, and acts of compassion and kindness - in the classroom, in teacher-student relationships, in program content, and in ministries of outreach to the community.
- To develop social awareness, appropriate social behavior, and wholesome social relationships.
- To provide opportunities for your child that will encourage positive self-esteem and foster love and enthusiasm for learning.
- To create a relaxed, informal atmosphere with a prepared environment in which each child will be encouraged to explore, experiment, and develop in a way that is unique to him or her.

Staff

Director: Farrah Stahler

Assistant Director: Cynthia Andree

Our teaching staff is a phenomenal group of women with great passion and experience for early childhood education. Each teacher brings many different gifts to our campus and works together as a team to provide exceptional care. Teachers are required to obtain 25 hours of professional development/training each year in the area of early childhood education/childcare.

Parent Communication

We use Brightwheel for communications and updates. Please make sure you have downloaded the app and are connected to your child's profile. Communications via the app are private between parents and staff members and any photos posted to the app are only viewable by parents in the classroom.

Parents should not expect an immediate response from teachers on Brightwheel messages or texts/phone calls during school hours. If there is an urgent issue or message, please call our office to make sure the appropriate staff members receive the message.

Using Brightwheel, email and texting to develop effective communication with parents and with extended family is easier than ever. This, of course, is not intended to replace verbal communication but to enhance it and make it easier when you need to send me a quick note. Please do not hesitate to contact us anytime.

BRIGHTWHEEL - We use Brightwheel for many purposes at TLC. The purpose may be different in each classroom. Some features you might find helpful:

Bill pay and Auto Pay- Please sign up for this feature to make billing much easier!

Messaging- This is our main form of communication! You may communicate with your child's teacher or the office staff via Brightwheel. You will also receive school wide and classroom specific messages via Brightwheel. "Quite Hours" for Brightwheel will be encouraged for Staff and Admin. If you send a message outside of school hours, it may be the next day before you hear back from us. If you are communicating with us outside of this time frame, please know that person is taking time away from their family to assist you.

Check in/Check out- This feature is very important for:

- *Security purposes.

- *Meeting our state minimum standards for checking students in/out each day.

- *Accurate invoicing for early and extended care.

Record Keeping- This is a helpful feature for TLC staff to keep track of student information, portfolios, shot records, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA- We will use TLC's Facebook, Instagram, and website to post pictures of what the children are doing in our program. Permission for your child's photo to be posted is your choice and will need to be filled out on the Photo Release Form. We understand each family has personal preferences regarding social media platforms and respect your decision about having your child's pictures posted. Please check out our page to keep up with special events and pictures from school.

Parent Code of Conduct

Cursing/Swearing Parents and visitors must understand young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children and some adults. The Learning Center Preschool prohibits offensive words on our premises, this including but not limited to, swearing or cursing. Please also be mindful of music that may be heard from your vehicle in our parking lot.

Threats and Confrontations – From time to time, parents may have questions about their child's care and education. The Learning Center Preschool promotes open communication and discussion. We expect parents to handle disagreements in a calm and respectful manner.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated. The Learning Center Preschool has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from any parent, guardian or visitor. In order to maintain safety, all threats will be taken seriously. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Discipline and Guidance –The Learning Center Preschool must follow particular rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property. Regardless of a parent's personal belief on corporal punishment, failure to follow our discipline and guidance rules will lead to immediate termination of care. Please refer to our policy on discipline and guidance for further explanation of our expectations.

Use of Tobacco Products – Per the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, the use of tobacco products is strictly prohibited on our premises. This includes, but not limited to, cigarettes, vapor devices and chewing tobacco.

Safety Practices – The Learning Center Preschool has policies and procedures in place to maintain a safe environment for all children, staff and parents. Safety practices must be followed by all individuals on our premises. Violation of our safety policies will lead to immediate dismissal from our program. We ask that

parents be mindful of safety practices at all times. This includes, but not limited to, allowing children to enter or exit the building unsupervised, allowing children to run in the hallways, opening the secured front door for individuals, and being mindful of personal belongings brought into the center during drop off and pick up time.

Appropriate Dress – Parents must be mindful of appropriate dress attire when on our premises. Young children and families have different values of what is appropriate or offensive. We want all families and visitors to feel comfortable when on our premises. Adults wearing offensive or inappropriate clothing, or lack in clothing will be asked to leave the property until appropriately dressed.

Violation of Confidentiality Policy- The Learning Center Preschool takes the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with our school very serious. Parents need to be aware of the confidentiality of all children, families and employees, not just their own. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered a violation of the Confidentiality Policy and will be dismissed from the program.

Respect- Parents will show respect and courtesy to all children in our program. Parents will show respect to teachers, staff and any other adults in authority in front of all children. Any negative comments or disagreements will be discussed in private at a scheduled time. Parents will speak respectfully and with kindness and courtesy to other parents/adults regardless of their disagreements or feelings towards one another.

Arrival and Departure Routine

Parents will park and come inside for drop off & pick up. Our main TLC doors will be open to welcome you as well as our south entrance (facing First Christian Church) if your child's classroom is on that end of the building. Drop off begins at 8:55.

****** If your child is going to be arriving late or will be absent for the day, please call or message us by 9:00AM so we can accommodate and plan for the day accordingly

EARLY/EXTENDED CARE

- All ages are picked up and dropped off at the main entrance for early and extended care.
- If your child is not picked up at 2:10 pm, they will join the extended care class.

- We ask that if you know you will be utilizing extended care (after school), you notify us in advance. This is very helpful in making smooth and HAPPY transitions. Many kids find it very upsetting to see their friends going home when they are continuing care.

PICKUPS & CARPOOLS- If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child or the child will be involved in a carpool, please fill out the approved pick-up section in your child's Brightwheel profile and Admission Form. Make sure TLC staff is aware of schedules. Teachers will check students in and out daily with an approved pick-up person.

Parents are always welcome at TLC. Please check in with the office upon arrival in the building (other than drop off/pick up).

Orientation to our Program/Separation Anxiety

Starting in a new setting is an exciting experience for a young child, however it can also be a difficult one initially. Even children who are very excited about "starting school" may suddenly realize that you are not going to be there. The apprehension that accompanies that realization is a normal reaction. We would like to offer several suggestions to help your child with the adjustment process.

- Relax! Children will sense your apprehension; therefore, it is important that you feel comfortable with the routine. If you have questions or concerns, please ask us.
- Come and visit with your child before the first day of attendance.
- Learn the names of your child's future playmates and the teachers who will be caring for them.
- Go to our Facebook page, look at the pictures with your child. It will help your child become more familiar with the classroom before attending.
- In their first days, use Facebook and Brightwheel pictures as a conversation starter with your child. What do you think you would like to do there? What did you play with today? Did you like the ____? etc.
- Actively listen to your child as they talk about their day. This will give insight to help the next day. If you know they like the blocks, that might be a great direction to get them thinking about the next morning.
- Establish a "goodbye routine" and even practice it at home when leaving your child with a grandparent or spouse who typically doesn't drop off. Try for example a special phrase like "see you later alligator", "one hug and two kisses". Try not to get trapped in the "one more hug, kiss etc." Kids are amazing at this game! Unfortunately, it usually just makes a tough goodbye more difficult.

- Figure out what works best for your child. For most children a quick departure is best. It doesn't prolong what they are dreading (you are leaving). Usually by the time parents have pulled out of the parking lot, a crying child has stopped and is involved in playing.
- If you are wondering how they are doing, please send us a Brightwheel message. We don't want you spending the day worrying about them and totally understand how difficult this transition is on parents as well as children.

Health & Medication

Your child's health is important to all of us. Please inform us of any special health precautions, medications or other concerns you may have about your child. In accordance with state law, Immunization records must be on file in our office before your child's first day of school. Please update records after each immunization. TLC will accept unimmunized children on a case by case basis and only with the official affidavit.

Authorization for medical treatment must be completed and signed by a parent and be kept on file for each child enrolled in our program. Our emergency medical facility is typically United Regional Hospital unless another facility is dictated by your insurance carrier, you, or the severity of the emergency. In case of emergency, we will make every effort to contact the parent first. Children requiring emergency treatment may be transported by EMS for minor injuries requiring immediate treatment.

TLC IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL

Staff are trained in First Aid & CPR.

ILLNESS: Parental cooperation is necessary to promote a healthy environment for all the children attending our program. Please do not send your child to school if they show signs of illness in the morning. Your child may attend if they have regular cold symptoms, mild coughing or runny nose if they are able to participate in ALL childcare activities including outside play.

Parents need to have an alternative plan for the illness of their child(ren) arranged in advance. When we call to inform you that your child is sick and needs to be picked up, we expect you or someone to pick up your child within 60 minutes.

Children should not return to the program until a full 24 hours after a fever has ceased (without the use of a fever reducer) and diarrhea or vomiting has stopped. In addition, children must be on medication for any communicable disease for 24 hours before returning to the center. I understand this is a hardship for working parents, but I must think of all the other parents and the other children's health.

- Children with fever of 100.4 or higher, vomiting, diarrhea or rashes must not attend school. Children will be sent home if symptoms occur during school.
- Please report any communicable diseases to the school so that we may inform other families (your child's name will be kept confidential). If a healthcare professional has diagnosed your child with a communicable disease, we ask that you bring a note from the professional stating the child is no longer contagious.

MEDICATION: Our staff is not authorized to administer medication at any time. Parents are welcome to come administer medication during the school day at any time.

SAFETY:

- No child will be released to any person not listed on the child's enrollment form or BrightWheel profile without prior approval from the child's parents.
- When someone other than normal pick-up people comes to pick up a child, prior permission from parent is required. The child may identify familiar adults or ID will be required for unfamiliar adults.
- Playground and classroom equipment is cleaned and inspected regularly.
- Children and staff use proper hand washing procedures before and after each meal, toileting, diapering, etc.
- Child records are kept up to date and are located where all staff members can quickly access in case of emergency.
- A first aid kit, children's emergency information and cell phone are located in classrooms and offices and brought on any field trips.
- Monthly fire drills are held at various times of the day using different exits. Fire extinguishers and wired/battery fire alarms are installed and inspected regularly.
- State Fire Marshal inspects premises before each license renewal.
- State licensing inspector visits the premises each year. This is an unannounced visit. Additional unannounced visits by the health department inspector takes place during the year.
- Staff are mandated reporters of suspicion of child abuse or neglect.
- To contact our state licensing officials:
 - www.txchildcaresearch.org
 - 1-800-2552-5400
 - 325-691-8232

EMERGENCY PLANS- see posting in your child's classroom for emergency plan flip book and maps.

Social & Self-Help Goals

We feel social and self-help skills are as important as academics. Each program has different expectations for children, so we wanted to outline some of the goals and skills children in our program will be working on. We DO NOT expect your child to come in our program knowing how to meet these expectations. It is a growing and learning process. The goals we have for the children in our care are all in place for a reason. They may be for health and safety reasons or developing self-help skills they will need for kindergarten and beyond, or social skills they need to navigate through life.

General Manners and Expectations:

- Children will learn to say please and thank you regularly.
- Children will learn to say excuse me when appropriate.
- Children will learn to share and take turns as developmentally appropriate. (Preschoolers will not be able to do this at all times – this is a goal to work towards.)
- We do not allow children to exclude anyone who wants to play with them. (they can have alone time, but we try to eliminate the “I only want to play with _____”)
- Children are expected to help clean up the classroom at clean up times. We also encourage children to get in the habit of putting things away when they are finished playing.
- Children are expected to use a gentle touch, we discourage rough play and pretend guns.
- Children are expected to be respectful of their teachers and other children.
- Children are expected to take care of their own things. They put their things away in their cubbies. They put papers in their folders. Clean up their own messes.

Table Manners:

- Children wash their hands before and after each meal.
- Children are expected to remain seated during mealtimes. They are expected to say, “May I please be excused?” when they are finished eating. (This helps children remember they are not to get up and down during a meal.)
- With children serving themselves, spills are to be expected, they are told “It’s ok, try to be more careful next time.” They are responsible for cleaning up their own spills – help is given as needed, but this is one way to teach them to become responsible.
- Children clean up their own plates, cups and utensils after eating.
- Children pray before each mealtime.

Potty Learning

At TLC, we know what an important milestone potty training is during the preschool years. We make sure to provide as much support as possible, once they are ready to go diaper less. We will be glad to assist in potty training with the understanding that it will only work if we work together. When your child is showing signs of readiness, you must work with your child at home and we'll work with them here. Children should have some consistent success at home before we start with them at school/childcare. This typically means several days with only one accident and interest in staying dry. If they have 3 or more accidents on the same day our sanitation policy requires us to put a diaper back on the child.

Our Four's classes do not have restrooms in each room, so accidents do tend to happen on occasion. We handle accidents with discretion and encourage ALL parents to keep a spare set of clothes in each child's backpack. State guidelines require that no child be able to go to the restroom unaccompanied, so students are asked to be able to "hold it" for very brief periods (never more than 3-5 minutes at most) while a transition is made.

Some milestones we consider when determining if a child is ready for potty training:

- * Is he/she waking up with a dry diaper from nap?
- * Are they verbal? They need to be able to tell us when they need to go potty.
- * Is he/she telling us when they have a poopy diaper?

At TLC it is a requirement that your child is potty trained upon entering the Threes. Our policy is: In order to enroll in the 3- and 4-year-old classes, children must be potty trained by the first day of class. Our Three's and Four's classrooms/programs are not equipped to handle potty training. All students must be potty trained by the first day of school.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is maintained to provide and protect the student's right to privacy and confidentiality in the school environment and to protect the student's record from unauthorized use.

Student records are open only to the child's teacher, the director and/or office staff, authorized employee of the state licensing agency, an authorized employee of the national accrediting organization or the child's parent or legal guardian.

Preschool Program

Our preschool schedule is flexible to meet you and your child's needs. We have a variety of programs from 2, 3 or 5 days a week and can be combined with our extended care services. We teach weekly and monthly themes. These are designed to meet curriculum needs or/and building on the children's interests. Activities

are designed to have children learn and discover new things each day and more importantly develop a love of learning.

The Learning Center Preschool is a member of The Teaching Tribe, which offers comprehensive curriculum resources, support and training to go along with their planning for each week and month.

Our Three's and Four's classes use additional resources including a phonics-based science curriculum, The Quirkles, to offer a wide variety of learning opportunities for children in Pre-K.

Our Toddler and Two's classes have accessed the ABC Jesus Loves Me Curriculum supplies and resources to supplement their activities and planning in their classrooms.

Some curriculum goals we establish for our students are:

Social Skills- manners, kindness, playing cooperatively, taking turns, compassion, respect, handling emotions

Self-help Skills- washing hands, dressing self, handling bathroom needs, cleaning up toys, taking care of their possessions

Gross Motors Skills- climbing, running, hopping, jumping, balancing, catching and throwing balls

Fine Motor Skills- puzzles, Lego's, blocks, manipulative toys, lacing beads, drawing, coloring, writing, cutting, play dough

Math Skills- counting, patterns, simple addition and subtraction, one to one correspondence. We use a wide variety of manipulative activities and incorporate math during our daily activities and circle time

Literature-based Activities- circle time, stories, charts, finger plays, songs, beginning reading and writing skills and dictating their own stories

Letter and Number Explorations- activities including letter books, fun tactile activities, games, and a rich print environment

Handwriting Without Tears- handwriting program teaches proper letter formation from the start, yet in fun, easy ways designed for preschoolers to develop good fine motor skills

Science- hands on explorations about our environment, animals, and nature

Social Studies- learning about our community

Art Media Discovery- a variety of painting techniques, markers, glue, scissors, collage materials, beads, stencils, rubbing plates, play dough

FIELD TRIPS - Each child must have a permission slip on file. Parents who do not give permission for their child to go on field trips will be required to make other arrangements for their child's care on field trip days. Parent chaperones will be asked to accompany classes on field trips to provide appropriate supervision.

PROMOTION OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – TLC strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day.

When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through a dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

Toddler age children will participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten children will participate in a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when weather permits.

The Learning Center Preschool will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping to the extent of their abilities.

All children will participate each day in:

- One to two occasions of active play outdoors when weather permits.
- Two or more structures or teacher-led activities or games that promote movement over the course of the day.
- Continuous opportunities to develop and practice age-appropriate gross motor and movement skills.

Physical activity may take place in the classroom or on the playground, when weather permits.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Gym shoes or study shoe equivalent
- Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket without any hood or neck strings.

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running or that provide insufficient support for climbing.
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as those with drawstrings or loops.

When weather conditions prohibit outdoor play, physical activities will occur in the classroom or indoor playroom during the scheduled outside time. Classroom teachers have activities planned for rainy days.

Outside Guidelines (Weather permitting) - Defining weather permitting conditions in Texas is quite difficult, however we are committed to making sure children enjoy the great outdoors, safely, as often as possible. We are following the below listed limits in terms of heat and cold:

- Heat index less than 90 – no more 30 minutes outdoors in the sun, no limit to play in shaded areas.
- 90-95 – 15 minutes in the sun and additional play as tolerated in the shade
- 95-100 – 5 minutes in the sun and additional play as tolerated in the shade.
- Over 100 – shade play only as tolerated.
- Wind Chill over 55 – no limit to outdoor play
- 50-55 – 15 minutes or as tolerated by students.
- 45-50 – 5 minutes or as tolerated by students.
- Under 45 – only as tolerated and if appropriate clothing is provided.

SCREEN TIME – Because we care about the health, well-being and development of the children in our care, we follow best practice recommendations on screen time:

- Children under age 2 should have no screen time.
- Children age 2 and over should watch less than 1 hour per week at childcare (educational requirements must be met for screen time to be offered).

Educational guidelines are as follows:

- No television or movies will be left on as background noise or be left on during mealtimes.
- Screen time is never offered as a reward.
- All screen time must relate to educational goals.

NUTRITION - Snack is served by The Learning Center each day and once during extended care hours. Snacks follow meal patterns established by the US Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program. Children will never go more than 3 hours without food being offered. Enough food will be served to allow for second servings. Drinking water is always available for all students in our care.

Parents provide lunch for their child daily. The Learning Center Preschool is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting your child's daily food needs.

Infant Feeding and Nursing Mothers

As a licensed childcare facility, we are required to have Infant Feeding Instructions for children ages 18 months and younger that must be updated every 30 days or sooner if there are changes to the infant's feeding schedule.

Refrigerators and microwaves are available for cooling/heating your child's food and breastmilk (if provided). Daily reports are sent via Brightwheel to provide details about their day.

The Learning Center encourages and promotes breastfeeding by providing designated areas for nursing. Please make arrangements with us ahead of time if you would like to breastfeed at school. All parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care.

What To Bring

Casual clothing is strongly recommended. Your child should be dressed for play; children do get dirty when they are actively involved in play. We feel letting them learn through explorations is much more important than keeping their clothes spotless. Please send your child in clothing that is easy to manage. Your child wants to learn to care for him/herself, and to be independent. Please do not send your child with a belt, suspenders or overalls unless they can fasten and unfasten them by themselves.

Please provide a backpack for your child to bring back and forth to school each day. This should include 1-2 complete changes of clothes (more if potty training). Dirty clothes will be sent home each day, please be sure to replace any missing items. It may be a good idea to label socks, because kids don't always get put in the right place and they are hard to tell apart, especially during summer months.

All children should have the following items daily (labeled with name):

- Diapers and/or pull ups/training pants (when a child is ready for potty training) along with several changes of clothes for toddlers and preschoolers. We recommend that you bring a full package of diapers, so you won't have to bring diapers back and forth each day. We will send you a notice when we need more.
- Security item, stuffed animal or doll if your child needs it (nap time only)
- A complete change of season appropriate clothing.
- Lunch- Please send a nutritious lunch for your child daily. Do not send food that requires heating or prep time. Do not send candy or more than one dessert. **All snacks and lunch items must be Nut Free.** Label child's lunch items.

- Water Bottle (labeled with name!)- ONLY send water to school with your child. No juice, milk, or drinks of any other kind in the water bottle.
- Nap Mats- Some classes have nap or rest time in the afternoon. Please send and label a mat or blanket for your child to rest on if applicable in your child's class. All classes nap with the exception of the Fours.
- Backpack

Remember your child's comfort for outdoor play:

Winter Season: Please dress your child properly for the weather at all times. We typically go outside when the weather is above 42 degrees unless it is bad weather due to freezing rain, snow or wind. **Please label ALL** winter clothing.

Spring/Fall Season: Please bring shorts, pants, t-shirts, sweatshirts and jacket. Often a chilly day turns very warm or a warm day turns cold.

TLC T-SHIRTS - School shirts are available for purchase at the beginning of the school year. These are our Chapel shirts and children are encouraged to wear them on their class's chapel day.

CELEBRATIONS- If you wish to send a special snack for your child's birthday that is certainly welcome. Please keep in mind our Nut Free policy when choosing this snack. Make sure to make prior arrangements with your child's teacher for planning purposes. We encourage everyone to choose our Birthday in a Box option for birthday celebrations in order to provide consistency and continuity for celebrations. Our Board plans the parties, decorates and provides all materials needed. Parents are welcome to attend celebrations.

PRESCHOOLERS: No Toys Please!!!! Please do not allow your child to bring any toys to school. Toys brought to school cause added tension as toys could be easily lost or broken and special toys are difficult to share. All young children practice taking turns and sharing; however, it is much harder for your child to share his or her favorite toy. Therefore, we ask that no toys be brought, unless you have been notified that it is a special day such as teddy bear day.

Child Guidance Policy

Our child guidance policy is designed to help children become independent and caring by learning self-control, decision-making skills and responsibility for their own actions. We believe that children should be treated with the same respect that we, as adults, wish to be treated. Our goals are to help children develop positive self-esteem, respect for themselves and the rights of others and socially acceptable ways of expressing their needs and feelings. This is accomplished through positive guidance and loving discipline when necessary.

Our staff uses these guidelines and techniques to help children develop self-discipline and reduce problems before they start:

- A learning environment that promotes consistent routines and well-defined expectations.
- Use of praise through kind words and actions (hugs, smiles) to reinforce desirable behaviors.
- Redirection to another activity when a child displays undesirable behaviors.
- If a child causes physical or emotional harm to others, the child will be removed from the situation for a brief time to calm down and will “take 5” in a calm down area.
- Time is provided to talk with the teacher about how the child is feeling and alternative, appropriate behaviors at a time when the child has calmed down.

We believe the primary responsibility for raising young children rests with the parents; however, the staff strives to assist parents in the training and guidance of their children. We will provide parents with feedback about their children (both positive and negative, if necessary). If you desire help in dealing with a specific behavior or issue, please discuss it with us. Parent support is expected for any guidance techniques used by staff to resolve unwanted behaviors. Staff are not allowed to discipline a child using prohibited methods (according to licensing regulations) even at the request of a parent.

CONDUCT

At The Learning Center Preschool, we want each child to enjoy planned activities while participating in our program. Because we realize that the inappropriate behavior of a few children can spoil an experience for the entire group, the following conduct policies apply to each child and will be used to his or her eligibility to continue as a participant in The Learning Center Preschool Program.

Based on the severity of the infraction and the number of times the infraction occurs, a child may (A) lose the privilege of participating in a specific activity, (B) be suspended from the program or, (C) be terminated from the program. The duration of suspension will be decided on by the director. During times of suspension, no refund of tuition or credits will be given.

Unacceptable conduct includes:

- Intentionally or repeatedly going to unauthorized areas of the facility or leaving the premises without permission.
- Using foul or inappropriate language and/or being discourteous.
- Defacing or stealing from The Learning Center Preschool and/or First Presbyterian Church property or the property of others.
- Engaging in fighting.
- Intentionally injuring staff or children (biting, hitting, kicking, etc.)

Your child's participation in childcare activities depends upon his or her behavior. Should your child's behavior become disruptive or dangerous to other children, staff, or to oneself the parent or legal guardian will be notified, and the child will be expected to be picked up immediately. Disruptive or dangerous behavior may result in suspension or expulsion if the Director feels that the safety of the child, other children, or staff is at risk.

DISCIPLINE

General discipline techniques at The Learning Center Preschool include positive reinforcement of good behavior, redirection, and explanation of behavior that is unacceptable. Brief time-out periods where the number of minutes matches the child's age may be used, or in serious incidences that child may be referred to the Director. At no time will physical discipline be used.

Parents will be informed through Brightwheel, by phone, and/or through parent conferences if their child repeatedly displays poor behavior.

Depending on the severity and location of the infraction, the parent will be expected to:

- Pick the child up immediately.
- Meet with the Director and/or Assistant Director and the child's teacher for a conference concerning the infraction.

It is important that parents and staff work together and are consistent when working with challenging behaviors.

It is our desire that each child enjoys his or her experience at our preschool. It is for this reason that we implement the preceding policies.

Any trouble your child may have at home is likely to affect his or her behavior at The Learning Center Preschool. Please keep us informed of any such problems so we can be sensitive to your child's needs and provide the best environment for his or her growth and development.

Our goal is to help children develop socially and emotionally, assisting them to be comfortable, happy and involved in play and other activities. Our staff will help children deal with anger and frustration by comforting them, encouraging them to identify and verbalize the problem and use various strategies to solve.

Occasionally a child exhibits behaviors which are of concern to others (biting, hitting, etc.) These behaviors typically are born of frustration and sometimes a lack of communication skills. When staff members observe a changing pattern in a child's behavior, parents and the director are contacted and together they try to find reasons and solutions for undesirable behaviors.

GRIEVANCE POLICY – It is our goal to strive for quality and excellence when it comes to caring for your child. Therefore, any positive comments or suggestions are greatly appreciated and can be made to the Director of The Learning Center Preschool.

We always welcome your input and feedback toward the care of your child. The Director appreciates questions, or discussions of any kind that can affect a positive outcome for your child. However, if you feel that there is a problem concerning the facility or a staff member, please follow the steps as listed:

1. Speak with your child's teacher or the staff member directly involved.
2. Allow follow up from the teacher or staff member to you.
3. If you are still not satisfied with the results of your concerns, please make an appointment to personally speak with the Director.

All comments made to staff members are relayed to the Director, so that the Director is aware of any problems or issues. If a complaint is made, the Director will listen carefully to the issue that the parents have and will attempt to work with the parent(s) to rectify the problem. At this time, it may be appropriate to discuss any other issues that the Director may feel is important concerning the child in the context of the complaint.

We feel that communication is essential to the success of your child's care. We must make sure that we can share opening any concerns or questions that may arise. We believe in an open-door policy and encourage parents to feel free to call or check on your child's day if you have any concerns. We understand that, to you, the most important person in the entire center is your child and we respect that fact and in turn treat your child with just as much respect. We try to put ourselves in the parent's place and, we recognize that you have a right to expect the best care possible for your child.

Tuition and Fees

Each student will be charged a yearly tuition that is broken down into monthly payments.

Monthly Fee Schedule:

2 day class - \$205.00 (only offered to Toddlers & 2s classes)

3 day class - \$235.00 for the 3s & 4s classes

\$250.00 for the Toddlers & 2s

5 day class - \$375.00 for the 3s & 4s classes

\$400.00 for the Toddlers & 2s

Current rates are listed in the contract signed by parents and the director.

**** Tuition is a yearly amount billed monthly from September – May. Tuition may be paid in one lump sum if you prefer.**

REGISTRATION/ENROLLMENT FEE: There is a \$175 enrollment fee which is due with Admission Form or New Contract for returning families. This fee helps cover the administrative cost associated with enrollment. The fee is due no later than the first day of school, but your child(ren)'s spot will not be reserved until the fee and paperwork has been received. Parents understand the enrollment fee is nonrefundable.

SUPPLY FEE: TLC will be assessing an annual Supply Fee of \$75.00. This will help cover increased costs of supplies and materials. Enrollments beginning after January 1 will pay \$250 at the time of enrollment for their registration fee and supply fee.

SNACK FEE: TLC will be assessing an annual Snack Fee of \$90.00. This will help cover the rising costs of food as well as all parties where TLC provides lunch.

RATE INCREASE: There will be a tuition rate increase every other year.

LATE PAYMENT FEE: Parents agree to make tuition payment on the first of each month. Please make checks payable to: The Learning Center. There will be a \$10 late fee applied to all accounts past due on the 10th of each month. If tuition payment is late for more than one month, your child will not be allowed to return to childcare until tuition is current or arrangements have been made with the director. Returned checks will be charged \$10 plus any bank charges incurred. Repeated returned checks will be subject to being put on a cash-only basis. Should tuition fall behind more than one month, you may not participate in the Extended Care program.

LATE PICKUP FEE: Parents agree to pay a \$1.00 per minute late fee beginning at 4:05 PM for late pick up of your child. This fee will be waived the 1st & 2nd instances; however, it will be enforced beginning the 3rd and each successive instance each calendar year. Please make payment at pick up that day or the next day's drop

off time.

EXTENDED CARE SERVICES

7:45am - 9:00am - \$5 per day

2:00pm - 3:00pm - \$5 per day

2:00pm - 4:00pm - \$10 per day

- Billing for Extended Care is done daily and due by the 10th of the following month.

WITHDRAWAL - If you wish to withdraw, 30 days written notice is required. If you wish to return after withdrawing, your child's space is not guaranteed, and you must pay a new enrollment fee.

EXCHANGE FOR SERVICES/GOODS - TLC does not trade services or goods for tuition fees or other costs.