

**PRINCE OF PEACE NURSERY SCHOOL
HANDBOOK
2008-2009**

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OUR MISSION AND VISION

At Prince of Peace Nursery School our program is designed to offer the young child an opportunity to interact with other children in a warm, caring and accepting environment that is conducive to the development of wholesome social relationships. Our goal is to help children learn to care about themselves and others. We provide appropriate experiences in emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development at each child's age level. We encourage this development in a nurturing, relaxed and nonsexist environment with caring adults. Our curriculum is based on the Connecticut Framework Pre-school Curricular Goals and Benchmarks, and is in compliance with the National association for the education of Young Children as a nationally recognized, high quality early childhood program.

EMOTIONAL

- * Self concepts are enhanced
- * Encourage independence
- * Free choice decisions are offered
- * Individuality is respected

SOCIAL

- * Encourage social development through cooperative play
- * Help the child gain self-discipline in an environment where he/she knows the limits and expectations
- * Create an atmosphere which promotes respect for others

PHYSICAL

- * Meet each child's physical needs while encouraging independence in self care
- * Provide ample opportunities for the use of large motor skills, small motor development, and coordination through physically active play, either indoors or outdoors

INTELLECTUAL

- * Provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities within a routine where cooperative play is encouraged
- * Develop in each child an appreciation for nature
- * Develop in each child an active curiosity about the world in which he/she lives and an enthusiasm for learning which stimulates exploratory behavior and creativity

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Registration takes place in January. Church members and currently enrolled families have first preference. The registration fee is a non-refundable \$85.00. An advanced tuition payment is due in June, to secure a placement for September. Class assignment, tuition payment schedules, physician's health forms and other pertinent information will be distributed to you in August.

TUITION

Tuition payments are due by the 15th of each month from Sept.-May. A late fee of \$10 per late payment will be charged if payment is received after the 15th unless prior arrangements have been made through the office. A \$30 bank fee will be charged for insufficient funds checks received, and replacement tuition needs to be made in cash.

SCHOOL HOURS

9:00-3:30

Our classes are full of fun and information and we don't want your child/children to miss a moment of them. For your child's sake, please be punctual. Your child is considered late if they arrive after 9:10 or 12:40. The doors to the school will be locked at 9:15 and 12:45. You will need to ring the doorbell to enter the school. Parents requesting an early dismissal should notify the school so that your child will be ready.

In order to avoid confusion at dismissal hour, we kindly request that you remain in the front lobby until the director has determined that the children are ready to go home.

STUDENT - PARENT GET ACQUAINTED DAY

The first day of school is our get acquainted day for parents and students. This day is specifically designed to introduce you and your child to our school and staff. **Parents must remain with their child/children in the school at this time.** You will receive an invitation informing you of the time your child should be at the school for get acquainted day. On Get Acquainted Day, parents will be provided with lists of those students who will be attending school at the same time. These lists give names, addresses, and telephone numbers, and will make it easier for you to arrange car pools for the purpose of transporting children to and from school. Simple refreshments will be available. Our aim is to make entrance into school as reassuring as possible, for both parent and child. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call the school office.

PLEASE ACCOMPANY YOUR CHILD(REN)

For safety reasons, we request that parents or guardians always bring children to the classroom for the start of daily activities. Likewise, you are requested to meet children at the classroom after the close of the school session. Staff members are present in the classroom at least five minutes before and following each session. Please bring your children and pick them up with these time limitations in mind! We reserve the right to charge an additional fee if a parent is consistently late in picking up children.

EXTREME CAUTION PLEASE

Children are taught by us not to run in the building or onto the parking lot. Please seek to enforce this practice with your own children. Above all, practice extreme caution when operating a motor vehicle in areas adjacent to building.

PARENT - TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

Daily contact is normally established between parents and teachers. Teachers seek parents' specific ideas for dealing with their child. When deemed necessary, teachers will initiate special conferences with parents. Parents are also invited to request conferences with their child's teacher and/or administrator. For obvious reasons, we request that appointments for conferences be made in advance. We respectfully request that teachers not be contacted at home. Phone conferences can be arranged through the Nursery School office for the convenience of everyone. Formal conferences between parents and teachers will be held in the fall and the spring.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are welcome to be a part of their child's school experience. We provide many opportunities for parents to meet one another and our staff. Parent coffee hours are scheduled throughout the year, during your child's class session. Our Open House is held in the fall, Holiday Parties for the children and guests in December, and the Prince of Peace Art Show, in the spring, where everyone is invited to attend.

Parents are welcome to arrange for visits in the classroom while school is in session. Please, however, make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher to make this a special time. We also welcome parents to share special talents, stories, hobbies, interests or professions with their child's class or the entire school.

IDENTIFICATION OF GUARDIANS

If someone other than a parent is going to take your child home from school, we must have advanced written permission from you. Forms for this purpose are available in the front foyer. Prince of Peace Nursery School reserves the right, at all times, to demand that a person, unknown to a member of our staff, produce proper ID before we will release a child into that person's custody.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS - WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Please inform our office if your address and/or telephone number changes. An emergency telephone number is kept on file for each child enrolled; if this number changes we should be informed immediately for the safety of your child.

Sometimes families must move during the school year, and children must be withdrawn from our program. **We require written notification to the Administrator, posted at least two weeks in advance of the withdrawal date, to make you eligible for a refund of applicable fees that have been paid in advance.**

CAR POOLS

Parents participating in car pools must have a separate form for each driver who is to transport their child. These forms are available in quantity on opening day and when needed in the nursery school foyer. Car pool participants are reminded of the Connecticut State Law which states, **“children must ride in a proper child restraint until they are over 6 years of age AND 60 pounds! (Both the age and weight requirements must be met) After children outgrow their car seat, they must ride in a booster seat using a lap and shoulder belt.”** The car pool in which you participate must comply with the law. We are concerned about enforcing safety at all times!

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

Children should be dressed comfortably at all times and in clothing that they can manage by themselves! Sweaters, coats, hats, gloves/mittens, rainwear and boots **should be clearly marked with your child’s name** before they are worn to school. For safety reasons please do not allow your children to wear “flip flops” or “cros” to school.

OUTDOOR PLAYGROUND POLICY

Whenever weather conditions permit, we have an outdoor play period. Therefore, in cold weather, please dress your child warmly and be sure that his/her legs are covered. **Rubber soled shoes** are a must on the playground. Due to liability reasons, we have found that our playground must be CLOSED before and after school hours. Thanks for your cooperation.

FIELD TRIPS

Several field trips are scheduled to local points of educational interest during the school year. The school asks parents to assist in providing transportation for these trips. However, please be aware that all drivers should have proper insurance coverage. Drivers are responsible for supervising their child and other children from the class; therefore we respectfully request that siblings not attend these functions. Drivers are also requested to **NOT** provide food, to protect those individuals with allergies.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Parties and special events are held at points during the year to give emphasis and special meaning to certain holidays. Parents will be asked during the year to indicate a willingness to provide simple refreshments and/or supplies. The teachers will post a sign up for volunteers prior to these events. In providing refreshments, please keep in mind our desire to provide children with healthful and nutritious foods. You will be notified of these dates through our Newsletters and Classroom Calendars.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are very special days, and are often celebrated with treats that are provided by the parents of the birthday child. “Unbirthdays” are fun, too, for the child whose birthday happens to fall during the summer time or during a school vacation period. A special date for any party should be scheduled with the child’s teacher well in advance. Teachers will inform you of any treats that should be avoided due to allergies. In addition, NAEYC accreditation criteria require that food that comes from home for sharing among the children be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. We respectfully request **NO** goodie bags.

SHOW AND TELL

This activity is handled differently by each teacher. It will be scheduled well in advance, at the teacher's discretion, and ample notification will be given to parents. Please help your child choose items that do not show or represent violence, and be sure to clearly label all objects. One object should be brought at a time. Be sure your child can handle the object he/she has chosen. Also refrain from allowing your child to bring any item, which if broken accidentally, will cause significant personal trauma.

SNACKS

A snack is provided daily, consisting of 100% fruit juice, assorted crackers, fruit and cheese, and vegetables and dip. Often times the classes will bake or prepare their own snack as part of the lesson plan for the day. It is important that your child's teacher be informed of any allergies which your son/daughter may have to certain foods and drinks. **Snack records are posted in each classroom for parents to view.**

ROOM PARENTS

During the school year there are opportunities for parents to assist with party and event planning, making phone calls, setting up a phone chain, or assisting the teachers with classroom projects. At the beginning of the year we will be asking for volunteers for room parents. Speak with the teachers if this is something you would like to do during the year in your child's class.

HEALTH AND PERSONAL HABITS

All children must be potty trained on regular sized toilets and able to assist themselves in the bathroom.

The State of Connecticut requires the school to have a current health certificate, properly completed and signed by a licensed physician, in our files for every student enrolled in the school. If you have not scheduled an appointment with your child's physician, please do so immediately! Extra copies of the Health Record Forms are available from the office. **Health Certificates are good for a period of one year from the date of examination.**

Please do not send your child to school with a fever, sore throat, or other suspicious symptom. If your child develops a contagious disease, please inform our office immediately, so that other children in his/her class and throughout the school can be watched for symptoms. We also request that you call the office if your child will not be attending school, for any reason

RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS

<u>If your child has had:</u>	<u>He/She may return to school:</u>
Chicken Pox	...when blisters crust and are dry
Fever	...fever free for 24 hours
Pink Eye	...24 hours on medication
Strep Throat	...24 hours on medication
Flu or Cold	...3 days after last symptoms
Diarrhea, Vomiting	...24 hours after last episode

A SHARED CONCERN

Child abuse in whatever form is a subject that no one likes to consider, but nonetheless cannot be ignored. The administration and teaching staff of our school share with parents a deep concern for every child's health, well-being, and peace of mind. To this end, we support state legislation which will reinforce currently practiced screening procedures in the hiring of staff. As early childhood professionals we are mandated by law to report **any suspicion** that a child is being abused, neglected or at risk. We ask that parents and staff do not hesitate to bring concerns about child abuse, physical or sexual, to the attention of the Administrator.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is contrary to the interest of the school and those we serve to give out information regarding children and their parents. Such information should be held in strict confidence, and should not be discussed with anyone outside of the school. Inside the school, such information should be discussed only when it will benefit the care we offer the children and the parents. Refer any inquiries on children, their performance, and/or parents to the Administrator and/or Nursery School Committee.

Always keep in mind that gossip can be very damaging to the staff, parents, and children, as well as the school. Another consideration is that gossip breaks the law, the "Law of Confidentiality".

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop inner controls so that he/she may move toward appropriate social behavior. Methods for resolving conflicts are:

- The use of positive guidance
- Redirection
- Setting clear limits
- Continuous supervision by staff during any disciplinary action
- Specifically prohibiting abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment
- Prohibiting physical restraint, unless such restraint is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or other people

The steps above are used by our teachers within the classroom whenever negative behavior is observed. When disputes arise among children or between a child and teacher, the teacher will encourage a talking out process among those involved. The goal of this talking out process will be to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using children's ideas whenever possible. If the negative behavior persists, the child is removed from the situation. Should the behavior continue, the parents are then contacted for a conference to help reinforce our agreed upon course of action. Under no condition will any staff member administer physical, emotional or humiliating punishment. Prince of Peace Nursery School reserves the right to remove an individual from the school should all above measures be ineffective

EMERGENCY PLANS

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

In the event of severely inclement weather, school closings are announced over local radio stations and WLAD (800AM 98Q FM) and on local TV stations . As a general rule, whenever the Brookfield Schools are closed for the day, Prince of Peace Nursery School will automatically be closed for the day as well. If the Brookfield Schools are delayed, we will be open at 10:00 am. Should we determine a need to close earlier than the usual time of dismissal due to sudden weather emergency, parents will be called by telephone and so informed. In such an event, however, school personnel always remain until the last child has been picked up. In keeping with our policy, we will not make up days lost due to inclement weather, or refund tuition.

MEDICAL

In case of a medical emergency, a qualified staff member will attend to first aid as needed. Another staff member would notify the family of the child. For extreme emergencies, 911 will be called. An ambulance will take the child and a staff member to the Danbury Hospital. The child's file will be brought with them. Another staff member will notify the family or alternate pick-up person to meet the child at the emergency room. Additional staff will be called in if necessary to maintain required ratios.

In the event a child becomes ill while at school, parents will be notified and the child will be moved to the Director's office, with a cot available. A staff person will remain with the child at all times.

FIRE

In the event of a fire, evacuation from the building will be through the closest fire exit. Staff will be responsible for supervising the children under their care and leading them to the fire exit. The class will walk to the lower parking lot, safely away from the building, and line up for attendance. The staff will immediately take attendance. The Director, Assistant Director, or person in charge will be responsible for taking the portable first aid kit, cell phone and emergency files with them. Should it not be possible to return to the building, staff will walk the children through the parking lots to the First Assembly of God/Christian Life Academy building. Parents will be notified via cell phones to pick up their children.

EVACUATION

In the event that the school must evacuate, the children will walk to the First Assembly of God/Christian Life Academy building. If that facility is not safe, busses will take the children to Huckleberry Hill School or Brookfield High School. Advanced contact has been made with the town's Civil Preparedness unit, adding the school to their list for emergencies. Notes will be posted to alert parents of the location of the children. Local radio stations will also provide that information. Parents will also be notified by cell phone to pick up their children. Ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff members will remain with the children until all children are picked up.

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WELCOME

The Administration, Staff and Committee of Prince of Peace Nursery School welcome you and your child.

Our school is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, and operates under the direction of an appointed Nursery School Committee. We are proud of our past record of accomplishments in operating a quality and Nationally Accredited pre-school program for children residing in the area wide community. Our experienced staff stands ready to assist you and your child during the coming year.

Prince of Peace Nursery School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

While our curriculum does not include formal religious instruction, a sense of Christian caring that values each individual is central to our philosophy and pervades our school environment. Prince of Peace Lutheran Church views the nursery school as a key part of its outreach to the community.

This handbook has been prepared to provide some guidelines and information which should be helpful to you during the school year. Please keep it in a convenient and handy location. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by telephone at 203-775-0140, or e-mail at popnurseryschool@sbcglobal.net. You are also welcome to stop at our school office and make inquiries in person.

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