



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PLAYSCHOOL

## HANDBOOK

2024-25

Stephanie Swims, Director

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731-424-6515 (school hours)  
731-215-0750 (after hours)

Contents

- OUR STAFF WELCOMES YOU .....3
- OUR HISTORY .....4
  - MISSION STATEMENT .....5
  - PURPOSE .....5
- REGISTRATION .....6
- ORGANIZATION .....7
  - Playschool Board:.....7
- CLASSES and FEES .....8
  - Late Pick Up Fees: .....10
- WITHDRAWAL POLICY:.....11
- ATTENDANCE POLICY:.....11
- PLAYSCHOOL CLASSROOMS.....12
  - DAILY SCHEDULE .....13
  - SCHOOL SUPPLIES .....14
  - ROUTINES.....16
    - Arrival:.....16
    - Pick Up: .....16
    - Dismissal: .....16
- HEALTH.....17
  - Health Immunization Policy: .....18
  - GOLD SNEAKER POLICIES .....19
- PLAYSCHOOL CALENDAR 2022-23 .....21
- Snacks: .....22
- Party Planning: .....23
  - Party Committees: .....23
    - 2 Year Old Class:.....23
    - Pre-K Class:.....23
  - Party Suggestions:.....23
    - HALLOWEEN:.....23
    - THANKSGIVING: .....23
    - CHRISTMAS: .....23
    - VALENTINE'S DAY:.....24

EASTER: .....	24
CINCO DE MAYO: .....	24
END OF YEAR: .....	24
SACK LUNCH DAYS .....	25
Lunch: .....	25
For lunch your child will need: .....	26
For rest time your child will need: .....	27
BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES .....	28
Policy regarding behavioral and/or discipline issues: .....	28
Policy regarding trial period for enrollees: .....	29
Policy regarding children with special needs and handicapping conditions (disabilities): .....	29
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES .....	30

## OUR STAFF WELCOMES YOU

There are five full time Playschool teachers:

Three and Four Year Old Class: Mrs. Mary Beth Gibson, Mrs. Melissa Sanders and Mrs. April West.

Two-Year-Old Class: Mrs. Hannah Hallman and Mrs. Stephanie Swims

Playschool Hours: 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon Monday – Friday

12:00 Noon – 2:30 PM Sack Lunch (optional) Monday – Friday

Children may not be signed in and left in a teacher's care until 8:55 AM. Please respect the teachers' set up time until 8:55 AM daily

The director is available outside of school hours. Meetings should be scheduled at the convenience of the parent and director.

You may contact Stephanie Swims directly by phone or text at 731-215-0750 or by email:

[fpplayschool@yahoo.com](mailto:fpplayschool@yahoo.com)

## OUR HISTORY

First Presbyterian Playschool had its beginning in 1971 as an offshoot of the established kindergarten program that had been in existence since the 1950's. The first teacher was Shirley Adams. G. G. Bray was hired as Director/Teacher in 1972. Originally the Playschool operated from September to May from 9:00-11:30 AM with one teacher and one "Mother-Helper."

The Kindergarten closed its program in the early 1980's due to compulsory public kindergarten. Eventually, the program expanded to include 2-year-old classes and a large 3 and 4 year-old program. The hours expanded to 9:00-12:00 PM or 2:30 PM (Sack Lunch program). A Summer Fun program was also added; this program is held during the week immediately following the conclusion of the regular Playschool year with a "day camp" atmosphere.

In May 2002, "Miss G. G." retired after thirty years at Playschool and Penny McRee was named Director. "Miss" Penny served as director until her retirement ten years later in 2012. "Miss" Penny served Playschool for an amazing 37 years, teaching 2 generations of Jacksonians. After "Miss" Penny retired, "Miss" Jennifer Geraghty was director until moving out of state in 2021. "Miss" Stephanie Swims, "Miss" Penny's daughter is our current director.

At present, there are six teachers and one Secretary/Bookkeeper, Mabelle Daniel-Hall. Programs are offered either Monday-Wednesday-Friday, Tuesday-Thursday or 5 days a week for up to 94 two, three, and four-year-olds. The Playschool has been **licensed** by the Department of Human Services and received a **Three Star Rating** under the assessment program for daycare and preschools.

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**Important Note to Parents:** Please read this handbook thoroughly and keep it handy should you need to refer to it throughout the year. It is a mandated law that parents receive/review the Parent Handbook and sign a statement that they have received, read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures as stated.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Playschool's mission is to provide the preschool child with the companionship of children his/her own age in a Christian environment scaled to his/her needs under trained adult supervision. It is our goal that each Playschool student becomes confident in his/her own abilities and has acquired the cognitive, social and emotional skills to be successful in Kindergarten. Playschool is an approved program of First Presbyterian Church.

## PURPOSE

First Presbyterian Playschool partners with families to introduce their children to school so that they grow to love school and desire to become lifelong learners. We create a caring, cooperative school environment that promotes cultural values and supports positive relationships and respectful interaction. Every day our students have these opportunities to engage at their readiness and developmental level:

**Love** – every hug helps make new brain connections

**Faith** – appreciation and gratitude for all God has created and given

**Music and Movement** – fun connecting the brain and body

**Phonics/Reading** – reading is critical to boosting brain power

**Primary Education Program (PEP)** – guiding self-directed learning

**Language Development** (Peabody Language Development Kit) – expressive and receptive language skill building

**Spanish** – introduction to nearly 200 Spanish vocabulary words

**Numbers/Math** – learning to make sense of the world through problem solving

**Socialization skills** – developing social, language and life skills through imagination and play

**Creativity** – using many different opportunities; paints, blocks, clay, dramatic play, cutting and pasting, drawing

**Fine Motor Development** – introducing “Handwriting Without Tears” curriculum

**Quiet Concentration** – puzzles, pegboards, sensory boxes, building materials, etc.

**Gross Motor Development** – playground or gym time every day to build and coordinate big muscles

Our play based approach provides a child-centered curriculum directed by teachers in an environment steeped in love which allows children to feel safe to engage and challenge themselves to develop their knowledge at their own pace.

First Presbyterian Playschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender or national origin in its acceptance of students or in its hiring practices.

## REGISTRATION

Registration: Registration for Playschool occurs in March each year. Classes are filled based on enrollment priority. School year vacancies are filled from a numbered waiting list. No new students will be enrolled after January 6, when we transition to registration for the upcoming school year.

Enrollment Priority:

First priority is given to children and grandchildren of active First Presbyterian Church members.

Second priority is given to currently enrolled families.

Third priority is given to children of alumni families

Fourth priority is given to new families

A child must be 2 years old by August 15<sup>th</sup> to register for the 2 year old class. The child must be at least 3 years old by August 15<sup>th</sup> to register for the Pre-K class. Children who turn 5 prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> may not re-register without approval of the director. If you are interested in having your student return for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Pre-K class; a parent teacher conference should be scheduled prior to re-registration. *All Pre-K students must be totally potty trained to attend Pre-K. (No pull-ups may be used – per DHS)*

A completed enrollment form, account information form, a non-refundable \$100 registration fee and one month's tuition are required at the time of registration. Until this information and payment are completed a child is NOT registered.

A pre-admission visit is required prior to initial enrollment. We highly recommend you schedule a visit prior to March registration. All school visits must be scheduled, so please contact the director for an appointment.

## ORGANIZATION

The First Presbyterian Playschool meets in the Education Building of the First Presbyterian Church as an approved activity of the church. As such, we do not pay rent on the space used, which includes our classrooms, bathrooms, playground and gym. We receive limited financial support from the church, so our only other source of money is registration fees and tuition. We will pay our share of the utility costs to the church and upkeep of the Education Building and playground.

We are licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services (the licensing agency for daycares and preschools) and received a 3-star rating (the best!) again this year!

In 2000 and 2001, Tennessee launched a broad program to improve childcare. This program's goals are to give more information to parents and to improve the quality of childcare in the state. This new program actually includes two programs, the Child Care Evaluation and Report Card Program and the Star-Quality Child Care Program.

The **Child Care Evaluation and Report Card Program** is required for all licensed and approved childcare providers in Tennessee. During the process of renewing a license, the State evaluates a provider on seven areas of quality. The **Star-Quality Child Care Program** recognizes childcare providers who meet a higher standard of quality. Once qualified for this program, providers can receive one, two, or three stars to place on their license. Each star shows that a provider meets increasingly higher standards. In other words, the more stars a program has, the better the quality of care it offers to children.

Both programs require a **program assessment**. This part of the licensing process is new in Tennessee, and is required for both Child Care Centers and for Family and Group Homes. An assessment (an on-site observation by a highly trained Assessor) evaluates many things. For example, it evaluates the interactions between the children and staff (to be sure that it is appropriate for the age of the children). It also examines the layout and use of space and rooms and looks at health and safety practices. It even makes sure that the program includes appropriate math, language, music, and art activities.

**Playschool Board:** The Playschool Board's purpose is to support the director and the relationship of Playschool and First Presbyterian Church. In addition to approving the budget and audit results the committee approves policies and consults on conflict resolution when required.

The Playschool Board is composed of the following:

- Mrs. Stephanie Swims, Director
- Mrs. Ceil Cowles, Director of Congregational Life (Chair)
- Mrs. Penny McRee, Former Playschool Director
- Mrs. Nelda Evans, Church Member
- Mrs. Emily Taylor, Church Member and Parent Representative
- Erica McNair, Parent Representative
- Mrs. Tracy Dillon, Former Parent
- Mrs. Becky Crockarell, Former Playschool Teacher
-

Once a year, the parents will be asked to complete an evaluation of our program. With this frank input, we will be able to incorporate program ideas and services to better meet our families' needs.

## CLASSES and FEES

In order to keep tuition as low as possible, we operate on a very tight budget and it takes all families paying on time for us to pay bills, order supplies and purchase new inventory for your children to use. *Tuition is a yearly fee. As a convenience for families the yearly tuition may be paid in 9 equal monthly installments. Please note carefully the monthly payment schedule and penalties for late payment of tuition paid monthly.*

**2 Year Olds (Must be 2 years of age by August 15, 2024)**

**Pre-K Class (Must be 3 or 4 years of age by August 15, 2024)**

	Half Day (9-12) Monthly Tuition	Half Day (9-12) Yearly Tuition	Sack Lunch Per Diem Rate	Full Day (9-2:30) Monthly Tuition	Full Day (9-2:30) Yearly Tuition
<b>MWF</b>	\$175	\$1750	\$10	\$260	\$2600
<b>TTH</b>	\$123	\$1230	\$10	\$181	\$1810
<b>5 Days</b>	\$298	\$2980	\$10	\$441	\$4410

\*\*Non Church member families with 2 or more children may deduct \$5.00/month or \$45/year

Church Member Rates are as follows:

	Half Day (9-12) Monthly Tuition	Half Day (9-12) Yearly Tuition	Sack Lunch Per Diem Rate	Full Day (9-2:30) Monthly Tuition	Full Day (9-2:30) Yearly Tuition
<b>MWF</b>	\$145	\$1450	\$10	\$230	\$2300
<b>TTH</b>	\$103	\$1030	\$10	\$161	\$1610
<b>5 Days</b>	\$248	\$2480	\$10	\$391	\$3910

Non-refundable registration fee: \$100 per child.

- Once you enroll your child in the program, you are reserving your space for the program.
- Payment for the services for which you register will be expected
- Returned checks will result in a \$15 charge.

- Members of First Presbyterian Church will receive a reduced rate.
- Grandchildren of members of First Presbyterian Church will be allowed to register on the same day that children of members do, but will not receive a reduced rate.
- Non church member families with more than one child enrolled in the program will receive a reduced rate on the second child.
- The registration fee is non-refundable and is required to ensure a place for your child.
- May tuition is prepaid at the time of registration. Should you need to withdraw your child please see p.8 for our withdrawal policy. Tuition will not be refunded if Playschool must be held via Distance Learning.
- Fees may be paid to the director at Playschool at arrival times, paid online through the Brightwheel app, or may be mailed to:

Ms. Mabelle Daniel-Hall, Treasurer  
 First Presbyterian Playschool  
 1573 North Highland Avenue  
 Jackson, TN 38301

If you choose to place your payment in the drop box located near the school door, please let Mrs. Stephanie know to pick it up there.

Make checks payable to **First Presbyterian Playschool**.

**\*\*Your child's name should be placed on the memo line of your payment check and the check placed in a Playschool Payment envelope. If you use a plain envelope, please label it as:**

CHILD'S NAME
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S NAME
SESSION (MWF T-TH or 5 Days)

Money will not be taken unless labeled with breakdown of the amount paid, i.e. tuition, Sack Lunch, or other fees and in an envelope. Failure to follow these procedures may result in credit not being properly recorded and late fees assessed to your account. The Playschool Treasurer is Mabelle Daniel-Hall. If your payment was not properly labeled and submitted you are responsible for all resulting fees and penalties.

Tuition for each month and Sack Lunch charges for the previous month are due on the first of the month. There is a 15 day grace period. There will be a \$5.00 late fee levied on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month if your payment has not been received, with \$1.00 per day added for each day thereafter that your account remains unpaid. If your account is not paid in full by the last day of the month; the current month's tuition plus the previous month's Sack Lunch fees, plus any accumulated late charges; your child will not be able to return to Playschool until the bill is paid, unless other arrangements have been made with the Director. Please include the late fee with your payment if your payment is not made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month at 2:30 PM. If you choose to pay annually or several months at a time, you must pay in advance – not later. If you have paid tuition in advance, the above late fee charges apply to your monthly Sack Lunch bill.

*If you are not at playschool during the first 15 days of any month you will need to mail your payment to Mabelle in order to avoid incurring a late fee. Late fees will be waived only if school is unexpectedly cancelled (i.e., snow day).*

The only exception for late fees will be for the month of August. August tuition will be due by Friday of the first week of school.

Call Mabelle, (731-422-1591) or Stephanie (731-215-0750) if you have any questions.

Playschool is happy to accept payments from third parties, such as grandparents. However, each child's PARENTS HAVE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY to see that Playschool statements are paid on time. Late charges will be applied if payments are made late, no matter who is paying the bill.

If your child is not enrolled as a full-time student, sack lunch (optional extended care until 2:30) is a separate fee and must be paid at the end of the month. **Sack lunch bills for the previous month, not paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month, will be noted and your child may not stay for sack lunch again until bill is paid.**

**Late Pick Up Fees:** Dismissal time is at 12:00 Noon or 2:30 PM. Playschool staff strives to be prompt in getting students to the carpool line and be efficient in the dismissal process. If you arrive after 12 Noon or 2:30 PM a late fee of \$1.00 per minute is assessed. Please be mindful that a preschool child may find it disconcerting to be the last one left. Our teachers also have children to be picked up from school and other commitments which makes staying later difficult for them. Please be respectful of their time! In order to be consistent our clocks and watches are set using our cell phones and classroom satellite clocks.

We will not release any child to anyone whom we consider to be a risk to that child's safety. Any questions, contact Stephanie Swims, Director.

#### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY:**

Although Playschool operates under the auspices of First Presbyterian Church, we rely solely on tuitions and donations for funding. Because of this, we count on a steady enrollment to budget and plan for the school year.

We also understand that circumstances and family needs change and there will be occasions when a child must withdraw from our program.

Your withdrawal policy will depend upon your registration date and with the understanding that notice should be given to the school as soon as possible. Registration fees are non-refundable.

#### **Students registering during the spring enrollment window (March to May):**

- Students withdrawing before May 31 will be refunded their full pre-paid tuition
- Student withdrawing between June 1 and September 1 will not be refunded. Because school is not in session and teachers are on vacation, it is much harder to fill these seats during the summer break.

#### **Students registering during the summer enrollment window (June-September):**

- Students withdrawing within 7 business days of registration will be partially refunded (1/2 tuition)
- Students withdrawing after 7 business days of registration will not be refunded

#### **Students registering during the school year enrollment window for the current year (September-January):**

- Students withdrawing within 7 business days of registration will be partially refunded (1/2 tuition)
- Students withdrawing after 7 business days of registration will not be refunded

#### **After school begins in September, there will be no refunds.**

For all students that begin school in August, we ask for a 30 day notice of withdrawal in order to notify students on our waiting list.

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Playschool does not have a required attendance policy. Families may choose to not attend as they see fit, however, children can come only on their assigned days and must be registered as current students. Children not currently enrolled cannot attend Playschool or Summer Fun.

Playschool does not allow "drop in" attendance, nor do we make up days that are missed whether by parent choice or school closure. There are no refunds given for days that a student does not attend.

Parents may choose to change the days a child attends; however; only 1 change may be made per school year unless discussed with the director. There is no guarantee that there will be space

available to change your child's assigned days. If a child changes to attend more days, the difference in tuition for May must be paid immediately. If a child changes to attend fewer days, a credit will be added to their April tuition invoice.

## PLAYSCHOOL CLASSROOMS

A good preschool provides the preschool child with the companionship of children his/her own age in an environment scaled to their needs under trained adult supervision. In addition to the child-directed play and activities such as the home life corner, blocks, and kitchen area, there is provision for activities requiring special adult direction such as storytelling, PEP program, reading, use of rhythm instruments, and singing games. It is our desire that each preschooler becomes confident in his own abilities and has acquired the cognitive, social and emotional skills to be successful in Kindergarten. Some of the things that enrich a child's experience in preschool are:

1. Companionship with others his/her own age who have similar interests and abilities.
2. Learning to share.
3. Opportunities for creative expression in paints, blocks, clay, cutting, pasting, etc.
4. Quiet concentration with books, puzzles, pegboards, etc.
5. Dramatic play- doll corner, kitchen, dress-up clothing, acting out simple stories, etc.
6. Language development (Peabody Language Development Kit)
7. Music in many forms: listening, singing, dancing, and rhythmic.
8. Stories and poems with all their possibilities.
9. Outside play- use of large equipment and development of the "big muscles."
10. Number fun (pre-readiness activities with math).
11. Begin to understand letters have sounds and can make words.

In order to meet our goal to work as a support to parents we will send home PEP reports in October and February and a Progress Report for all Pre-K students will be sent home in late winter/early spring. Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled as requested. Progress reports are intended to help parents know where home based enrichment may be most effective.

Students in the 2 year old class will receive an assessment packet to be completed at home. Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled as requested.

**Attendance: Promptness at drop off and pick up is expected. If a child will be late or absent please notify the director through the Brightwheel app or call the school at (731) 424-6515 by 9:30 AM**

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Three and Four Year Olds:

9:00 - 10:00	Free play, Art Activities, "PEP" Program
10:00 - 10:30	Clean up, Music, Spanish
10:30 – 11:00	Small Groups: Math, Pre-reading, Language Development & Snack
11:00 – 12:00	Outdoor Play
12:00	Dismissal or Sack Lunch Time

**NOTE: 3 and 4-YEAR OLDS MUST BE FULLY POTTY-TRAINED!**

Two Year Olds:

9:00 - 10:00	Free play, Art Activities
10:00 - 10:30	Clean-up, Restroom, Diaper changes
10:30 – 10:45	Circle Time (Stories, Music, Sharing)
10:45 – 11:00	Snack
11:00 – 12:00	Outdoors
12:00	Dismissal or Sack Lunch Time

Diapering and Toilet Learning Toilet learning is a developmental process in which a child learns to use the toilet appropriately. Children are ready to learn when they are healthy, well and nourished, and not pressured to achieve at a level above their capability. If your child shows an interest in toilet learning you are encouraged to start a toileting routine at that time.

Parents partner with teachers, communicating frequently, so that the home-to-school approach is coordinated and consistent. By sharing terms and strategies, adults unite to support the child. Parents will provide diapers or disposable training pants and will be notified by the teachers when the supply needs to be replenished.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

This year Playschool has chosen to adopt a supply fee. This will allow the teachers to purchase items needed for our activities in a timely manner and will reduce the amount of storage space needed for supplies.

This fee will be invoiced with August tuition and is due by the Friday of the first week of Playschool.

MWF and TTh students will pay a \$75 supply fee while 5 Day students will pay \$100.

Please address any concerns to the Playschool director.

### **School Supplies:**

On the first day of school each student will need to bring a few supplies to school for use in our classrooms. These items should not be labeled as they will be shared among the students.

Full Time Students or those staying for Sack Lunch will need:

1. Backpack large enough to hold a fitted crib sheet and blanket. You may also send a pillow and/or lovey if your child needs these for rest time. Remember the sheet and blanket must be washed between uses, so you may wish to purchase more than 1 set.
2. Lunch box and “Bento” style container (see attached sheet for lunch box recommendations)

We ask parents to help provide supplies through our “Giving Tree”. We will post items in a Brightwheel message that we need and that will be used by all students. When you do the shopping for your family, you could purchase the item you chose to share with us at school. Items will be requested by teachers as needed throughout the year.

These are a few suggestions to help us start the year:

- Dry erase markers
- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Clorox wipes
- Cleaning supplies
  - Lysol spray
  - Disinfectant cleaning spray for cleaning hard surfaces such as tables and counters
  - Swiffer Wet Jet refills
  - Swiffer pads
- Paper napkins
- Paper towels

- Tissues
- Ziplock bags
- 5oz paper cups
- M&Ms or Smarties (large bags)
- Duct tape
- Masking tape
- Cellophane tape
- Band-Aids
- Labels that can be printed
- Color coding blank circle labels (like those used for garage sale tagging)
- Glue Dots
- Craft sticks
- Command strips and/or hooks

## ROUTINES

**Arrival:** We will be open the school doors and greet you and your child from 8:55 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. Please sign your child in through the Brightwheel app by scanning the QR code and marking if your child is staying for lunch. Once you have signed your child in you will place their belongings on their hook and wash their hands. Give your child a hug and a kiss and tell them you love them and you will see them soon. Should your child become upset at your departure we will take them and give them lots of love and get them engaged in all the wonderful activities of the day. We will never let them be upset for too long, without getting back in touch with you. You are welcome to call and check in on your child at any time.

**Pick Up:** You are welcome to pick up your child at any time during the day. If you are picking up at a time other than our regular dismissal times please message us through the Brightwheel app so we can have your child prepared to leave. Please come to the school door and ring the doorbell. We will bring your child to you just outside the school door and you will use the Brightwheel app to sign them out. Please do not enter the building or playground unless instructed to do so. If you are picking your child up earlier than 12:00 noon dismissal we ask that you come no later than 11:50 a.m. to sign out. If you are picking your child up after rest time we ask that you come no later than 2:20 p.m. to sign out. Your cooperation with these guidelines will help keep any confusion about a child's presence to a minimum.

**Dismissal:** We will dismiss at both 12:00 and 2:30 from the Playschool building. We are no longer using the portico for carpool. You will need to come to the building to pick up your child and check them out. Remember that all students should be dismissed to their parents by these times. We will begin dismissal procedures at 11:45 and 2:10.

*Cell phones* are a part of life for all of us. We ask that you end your cell phone conversation before coming to pick up your child. Your child will be full of news about their day and anxious to share with you, we encourage you to have some phone free time on the ride home from Playschool. It's a great time to connect with your child.

## HEALTH

**At the time of this publication (March 2024) we are no longer taking special COVID-19 precautions other than those listed below. We do ask that you be vigilant for signs of illness and err on the side of safety when sending your child to school.**

The care and safety of your children is of utmost importance to our staff. Our staff is trained in infant/child and adult CPR and first aid safety.

Playschool is licensed as a Well Child program by the Tennessee Department of Human Services. Children must be able to engage in the daily rhythm of the Playschool program to attend. Parent partnership is necessary to comply with the Well Child Policies. The goal is to keep children in school.

When a child shows any sign of illness or possible infection, it is the responsibility of each family to keep the child home. Should a child expose the group to a communicable disease, please notify the teacher immediately. This information helps other families to be aware of and manage their health. Communicable disease exposure is a risk of attendance in a school setting.

We ask that the parents assess their child's health and wellness based on the child's behavior at home as a first indicator of ill health before arriving at Playschool. The Playschool **cannot** care for sick children. If a child is clearly uncomfortable and not able to participate in activities, a parent will be called to pick up the child. If a child displays any of the symptoms listed below at school you will be called to pick up your child. Your child should then remain at home until symptom free for at least 24 hours.

Teachers are not allowed to give medication to children. If your child is on medication and must have it during school hours, you must come to school to administer it.

Hand washing is the #1 prevention practice in place at Playschool to support health. By teaching children good hygiene practices, adults minimize the spread of illness.

- Parents and/or teachers will facilitate children’s hand washing upon arrival at Playschool.
- Teachers will ensure every child washes their hands before and after eating and after toileting or diaper changes.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please be sensitive to the health of our children and families in the Playschool community by keeping your child at home.

- Fever over 100 degrees in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours
- Yellow/green nasal discharge, as this indicates infection
- A contagious skin condition such as impetigo (Should be treated 48 hours and should not be draining)
- Pinkeye (until treated with antibiotics for 24 hours)
- Chickenpox (until all sores are crusted over)
- Productive cough
- Allergies with a secondary infection
- Common Cold

Please be especially cognizant of any changes in your child’s health. We recognize that it is often difficult to determine the cause of a runny nose (allergies, cold, flu, etc.) but we must be extra diligent in order to protect the staff and students. We do not want to have to close Playschool due to high levels of sickness, especially among our teachers. We cannot operate if many of our teachers are out at the same time.

**Health Immunization Policy:** ALL Playschool students must be current and in compliance with the Madison County and State of Tennessee Health Department immunization requirements. All students must provide a “school form” record of immunization signed by their pediatrician, even if they have not been vaccinated. If a religious exemption is the reason for non-immunization, it must meet the State of Tennessee standards for religious exemption and the notarized exemption form must be turned into Playschool. Non-immunization for medically valid reasons must be confirmed with a signed statement from your child’s pediatrician of record. Please contact the Madison County Health Department (423-3020) should you have specific questions regarding these policies.

Students who do not meet these standards may not participate in Playschool.

## GOLD SNEAKER POLICIES

### Policy 1:

Children attending less than a full day program shall be offered a proportional amount of the physical activity time as required by TDHS licensure rules

Physical activity for children ages three years and older must be a balance of **structured and unstructured play**, both **indoors and outdoors** (weather permitting) utilizing age appropriate activities

### Policy 2

Providers shall provide education (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources, etc.) to families twice each year that addresses the importance of **limiting screen time** according to current American Academy of Pediatrics policy and the development of a Family Media Plan

### Policy 3

Children shall not be allowed to remain **sedentary** or to sit passively for more than 60 minutes continuously, except for scheduled rest or naptime

Child care director shall take **Go NAP SACC Self Assessments** (Infant and Child Safety Physical Activity & Screen Time) to compare their physical activity practices to best practice standards

### Policy 4

Child care providers must ensure physical activity is a **positive experience** for children and that it is never used negatively or to control behavior

### Policy 5

Providers shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **breastfeeding**. All educators shall be trained to: advocate for breastfeeding, safely prepare expressed breastmilk for feeding, feed infants according to their individual needs, and store expressed breast milk properly

Providers shall publically **display their support for breastfeeding infants and mothers by posting signage** or other publically facing information (i.e., participate in *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* through the TN Department of Health or Team Nutrition resources for new and expectant moms about breastfeeding)

### Policy 6

Child care educators shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **adequate time for snack and meal consumption** and age-appropriate portion size

Child care educators shall **provide education to families** twice each year (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources, etc.) that addresses nutritional learning experiences, with a focus on adequate time for snacks and meals and age-appropriate portion size

All eating opportunities shall consist of a respect for the child and promotion of a **positive attitude toward food**

Child care educators shall apply evidence-based **early food preference learning strategies** such as introducing healthy foods, repeatedly pairing new healthy food choices with foods children already like and modeling consumption and enjoyment of healthy foods

#### **Policy 7**

The child care provider **campus shall be free of all tobacco and tobacco-related products**, including smoking, smokeless and electronic products. The campus is inclusive of all vehicles used to transport enrolled children, all outdoor spaces, and all indoor locations, whether or not children are present. Child care employees and volunteers may not use tobacco or tobacco-related products while off-campus at provider-related activities (i.e. fieldtrips, walks, and all other outdoor activities)

Employees who use tobacco products while off campus are required to **change clothes and wash hands** thoroughly prior to interacting with children

**“No Smoking” signs** shall be posted conspicuously at each child care provider entrance, as required by state law

## PLAYSCHOOL CALENDAR 2024-25

August 15, Thursday 6:00 p.m.	Parents' Meeting
August 19, Monday	Playschool Begins
September 2, Monday	Labor Day Holiday
October 14-18, Monday-Friday	Fall Break
October 30 & 31, Wednesday & Thursday	Halloween Parties
November 11, Monday	Veteran's Day
November 21 & 22, Thursday & Friday	Thanksgiving Parties
November 25-29 Monday – Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 18, Wednesday	Christmas Program (with both classes)
December 19 – January 6	Christmas Break
January 7, Tuesday	Classes Resume
January 20, Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday
February 13 & 14, Thursday & Friday	Valentine Parties
February 17 & 18, Monday & Tuesday	President's Day/Winter Break
March 10-14, Monday - Friday	Spring Break
March 17, Monday	Playschool Registration Begins
April 16 & 17, Wednesday & Thursday	Easter Parties & Egg Hunts
April 18 & 21, Friday & Monday	Easter Break
April 28, Monday	Summer Fun Registration Begins
May 5 & 6, Monday & Tuesday	Cinco de Mayo Celebration
May 15, Thursday	Spring Program (with both classes)
May 19-23, Monday- Friday	Summer Fun

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When adverse weather conditions occur causing changes in public and private school schedules, Playschool will **post the information on Brightwheel and on our Facebook page**. You will receive this information as soon as a change in schedule is made. If you do not receive a notice then school will be held as usual Because we have teachers with students attending public school, we will usually follow their lead in closing.

## Snacks:

There will be a monthly Snack Calendar posted on SignUpGenius and linked in the Brightwheel app. Any time you would like to share snack, feel free - just sign up for a day. Your children love to bring snack because they are recognized and thanked by their classmates.

If your child's birthday month is approaching Miss Stephanie will send the sign up link early so that you don't miss the day you want to send a special birthday snack. The SignUpGenius link will be sent to birthday students about a week before being shared with all students as well. If your child has a summer birthday and you would like them to celebrate at school, we suggest you celebrate their ½ birthday, if desired.

We appreciate any and everything you do to help us provide a variety of snack experiences for your children. *Be sure to check with us about current food allergies of the students. State of Tennessee regulations regarding snack outline that snack must include two food groups, be food appropriate for pre-school age children and cut up in small pieces.*

**Please do not bring any treat with icing; including cupcakes and cookies.** This includes cupcakes and cookies from Wal-Mart, Kroger and Two Sisters' Bakery. (Two Sisters' will leave the icing off cookies if you make that request when you place your order)

## Party Planning:

We ask the families to help with two parties during the year. Parents of 5 day students will be asked to help with 4 parties. A Party Chairperson will coordinate the planning and implementation and make sure all parent volunteers understand their party day responsibilities. Party sign ups will be posted on SignUpGenius and linked in the Brightwheel app. You are free to plan almost anything you would like. Be creative!

**Party Committees:** This year our Parent Party Committees will plan our parties as they have done in the past. Contact information for other parents will be provided to the chairperson who will make arrangements for planning (in person, zoom, etc.). Once you have planned the party please bring all the supplies to school, labeling them as needed and letting the teachers know any pertinent details.

**2 Year Old Class:** Parties consist of a special snack, party paper products and a party favor. No extra activities need to be planned and parents should not attend unless they are prepared to take their child home at the end of the party. Two year olds do not understand Mom, Dad or grandparent coming and then leaving without them.

**Pre-K Class:** The Party Committee is responsible for snacks, party paper products any decorations and take home bags. If you are feeling creative, you can include a craft for the take home bags. PreK Parents are expected to come on the day of the party from 9:45-11:00 to help with party prep, snack and a craft. Please plan accordingly so there are enough adults available on party days!

## Party Suggestions:

**HALLOWEEN:** A festive snack and a treat bag that you don't mind your child bringing home. Remember, we have 35 children so anything messy for one is not a good idea for our class. Halloween is learning about pretend, dressing up and treats.

**THANKSGIVING:** . The idea of a FEAST is what we are trying to learn, please send foods for our feast such as raisins, goldfish, pumpkin bread, popcorn, candy corn, etc. At this time of year we are learning about history and gratitude.

**CHRISTMAS:** The Christmas party is part of our Christmas Program and will be held in the dining hall. We ask the Parents that sign up to be responsible for the table decorations, punch, set up and clean up. **Everyone** is asked to bring a festive treat. The committee is responsible for the paper products- plates, cups, etc.

**VALENTINE'S DAY:** Each child will have decorated a mail bag during school and each child should bring 35 signed Valentines to share. No names on the envelopes please. A valentine snack and activities or games need to be planned.

**EASTER:** Pray for a sunny day! Plan an Easter egg hunt. Each child will bring a basket and a sack of filled eggs to share for the hunt. Provide an Easter snack on festive paper products. No additional treat bag is needed, as the eggs from the hunt are the treat.

**CINCO DE MAYO:** The first week of May. Plan an ethnic snack that helps the students appreciate our neighbors south of the border. Festive decorations and an easy art project or games and activities may be planned. This is really about getting to know a different culture.

**END OF YEAR:** See Christmas party information

Remember, these are merely suggestions and we would like for you to feel free to plan and use your creativity. Keep it simple. Feel free to ask a teacher about your ideas if you are not sure if they are party appropriate or if you need some ideas or guidance. We will be glad to talk to you.

The Pre-K children love having their Mothers and Daddies at school and it is always a fun time to be there on a special occasion.

## SACK LUNCH DAYS

The organization will be as follows:

1. Sack Lunch is available Monday - Friday. This is an optional program - use it as you wish.
2. Sack Lunch fee is \$10 per child per day if you are paying ½ day tuition. Students paying full day tuition have the sack lunch fee factored into tuition cost. Both full and part time students must indicate on the sign in sheet that your child is staying for Sack Lunch. Part time students will be billed for Sack Lunch at the end of the month.
3. You must provide lunch and **milk** in a spill-proof cup. If your child **cannot** drink milk, 100% juice may be substituted, this is a requirement of the Dept. of Human Services concerning all children who eat lunch at school.
4. No squeezable foods (yogurt, sauces, etc.)
5. Each child must bring a **backpack** with a **crib sheet and small blanket**. We provide the nap mat for each child. They may also bring a small stuffed animal and pacifier, if needed. All **must fit easily in the backpack** so the child's hands are free to carry papers and his/her lunchbox. **Sheets MUST be WASHED DAILY to comply with licensing regulations.**
6. Names must be on everything used for the Sack Lunch program including containers/lids, drinks, ice packs, lunchboxes, sheets, blankets, pillows, etc. If you did not label something there is a good chance it will get misplaced.
7. The 2 year olds need to have an appropriately sized backpack, small enough for them to handle.
8. There will be two or more teachers from the Playschool staff responsible for this program.
9. Naptime will not be enforced - only a rest hour, but children must rest on their mat. No playing or reading. Quiet music will be played. There will be a story time before rest.
10. Dismissal will be between 2:15 and 2:30 PM. The children should be picked up promptly. *Remember, a late fee will be charged if you are tardy.*

**Lunch:** Good Manners will be encouraged and expected during lunch. Plastic utensils and napkins need to be included in the lunch box (per DHS). Because of the dangers of choking, eating quietly and sitting on bottoms in chairs with feet under the table will be required. Conversation with table mates will be allowed but not loud laughing or playing with food. As

your child's "mom away from home" we will do all we can to make eating as safe as possible and yet remain an enjoyable time of the day.

Please practice good manners at home; eating at the table with the family, sitting properly in chairs (boosters when necessary), using utensils with food, following the guidelines set forth by DHS as to proper ways to serve foods to small children and quiet conversation sets the stage for safe eating habits for a lifetime.

All children staying for sack lunch (12-2:30) will need a few items to help them have a restful afternoon.

All your child's belongings (except the lunchbox) should fit easily into a backpack. The two-year-old class will have tote bags provided. If your child's belongings do not fit into the tote bag, they will need a backpack as well.

#### For lunch your child will need:

- A lunch box that hold all items including the cup (Cup must either fit into the lunchbox or in the sleeve on the side). We will not check backpacks for your child's drink!
- A "bento" style container with 3-5 compartments
- A spill proof cup (5oz to 8oz recommended)

We suggest buying the container and cup before the lunchbox to ensure that everything will fit.

We open lunches and have the food ready for your child to eat when they enter the classroom. Therefore, it is more sanitary for the children and easier for the teachers if all food is in containers. Please do not send ziplock bags of food.

Your child should also have a spill proof cup of 100% juice or milk. Please do not send colored juices that can stain our tables and/or your child's clothes!

We are also sending guidelines for a well-balanced lunch. Please send foods that your child likes to eat. We will encourage them to eat their lunch, but we do not require them to do so.



For rest time your child will need:

- A fitted crib sheet (these fit our mats and don't slide up while sleeping)
- A small blanket
- A small pillow (if desired)
- A small stuffed animal (if desired)
- A pacifier or other lovey (if needed)

All items for sleeping should be washed after each use. We suggest purchasing 2 sets to rotate. All of these items should fit easily into your child's backpack. We will help them pack up after rest time, but we encourage them to do as much as possible independently.

Rest time is usually from 12:45-2:00. We strive to be packed up and ready to dismiss by 2:10 each day.

If you have any questions, please ask any teacher and we will be happy to help you!

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

A primary goal of our Playschool is to guide our children to be caring, responsible, and cooperative participants in our program. Our staff exclusively employs positive behavior management techniques (PBMT), e.g., redirecting a child's behavior and/or removal from particular activities to achieve this goal. Our end-goal regarding the behavior policy for Playschool is to: 1) teach our children self-control, 2) help them recognize and select appropriate behavioral choices, 3) help children identify their feelings and 4) to develop an understanding and respect for the needs of others in a community.

**Policy regarding behavioral and/or discipline issues:** In the rare event that a child does not respond to the positive-behavior management techniques employed by our teachers, the director of the Playschool shall, at her/his sole discretion, determine an appropriate course of action to take in an effort to amend the child's behavioral issue. Three determining factors will be used to assess behavioral issues that require intervention from the director: 1) the child is not responsive to PBMT, is not participating in or benefiting from the program, 2) there are no reasonable accommodations that Playschool can make to provide adequate or safe care for the child, and 3) the child chronically engages in inappropriate behaviors that interfere with and contradict the aforementioned end-goals for the stated behavioral policy.

**NOTE: The director may at any time, at her/his sole discretion, suspend or dismiss from Playschool any child who engages in any behavior that seriously endangers the child, other children or the staff.**

Should the director's intervention be required, the following steps will be followed:

- After monitoring and documenting a child's inappropriate behavior, the director will notify the parents about the child. Appropriate modification techniques will be discussed. NOTE: Excessive unruly behavior may warrant asking the parent to pick the child up from the Playschool before the daily dismissal. Examples warranting an early pick up include but are not limited to biting, hitting, deliberate disobedience, or other behavior that inordinately distracts from the normal operation of the Playschool.
- If the child's inappropriate behavior persists after the initial meeting between the parents and director, a formal conference will be held to discuss the ongoing behavioral issue and determine what steps will be taken to adjust the child's behavior. The director may, at her/his discretion, invite the child's teacher and/or non-parent member of the Playschool Board to attend.

- If the child's inappropriate behavior persists after the formal conference between the parents and the director, the director shall call a special meeting of the Playschool Board, which body shall determine whether the child should be removed permanently from the Playschool, or other appropriate action.

Policy regarding trial period for enrollees: First Presbyterian Playschool has a two-month trial period for any enrolled child. The Playschool, at the discretion of the Director, reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child during the trial period if one or more of the following conditions exists: 1. the child is not participating in or benefiting from the program; 2. there are no reasonable accommodations that the Playschool can make to provide adequate or safe care for the child, or 3. the child is not responsive to PBMT

Policy regarding children with special needs and handicapping conditions (disabilities): First Presbyterian Playschool will not discriminate against a child with a handicapping condition (disability) solely on the basis of the handicap (disability). Playschool serves children with special needs and handicapping conditions (disabilities) whenever possible. Any eligible applicant with special needs or handicapping conditions (disabilities) will be enrolled in the program if, after careful evaluation of the child's care needs and Playschool's abilities to meet those needs, it is felt that Playschool can make reasonable accommodations to provide safe care to this child as well as to the other enrolled children should this child be enrolled.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

As a part of our licensing, we are required to develop and continually evaluate our emergency preparedness and plans. While we don't like to think that any emergency will arise, Playschool has plans and procedures in place to assure the safety of our students.

We are required to develop a written multi-hazard plan to protect children in the event of emergencies, including, but not limited to, fires, tornados, earthquakes, chemical spills, and floods. Such plans must address the following components: evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place and lock down, staff and volunteer emergency preparedness training and practice drills, communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.

Furthermore, child care agencies shall also inform parents and guardians of children attending the child care agency of the plan.

Our emergency plan is available for your review through the Brightwheel app in the documents section. If you have trouble locating this information, the director will be happy to assist you.



#### **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS FOR PARENTS:**

If an emergency occurs during Playschool hours:

- Do not drive to the school unless it is safe to do so and/or you have been directed by the Playschool Director to pick up your child.
- It may be difficult to get through to Playschool via telephone because of damage to phone lines or cell phone tower outage. Staff will contact parents as soon as possible.
- Tune to the news media for emergency instructions.
- If the situation allows you may receive an email, text, Brightwheel or Face Book message with information and/or directions

In times of emergency, information about the status of Playschool is communicated through a variety of media. Playschool requests that parents do not call the school, church office or teacher cell phones in times of emergency as it is important to keep phone lines free for emergency communications. Circumstances may prevent parents from picking up their children or may require that children be picked up at a location other than the Playschool building.

The safety of children and staff is our first priority. Our second priority is the reunification of parents with their children. Parents should check the following sources for information and status reports

- Local media
- Brightwheel, the Playschool Facebook Page, website and email

In times of emergency, general information will be shared with the community through major radio and television stations.

*The Playschool teachers will strive to preserve and protect life, reduce emotional trauma, minimize personal injury and cooperate with the local emergency preparedness agencies.*