



Preschool

**2021-2022**  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**SILVER SPRING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESCHOOL**

**444 Silver Spring Road  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050  
(717) 766-9400  
[preschool@silverspring.org](mailto:preschool@silverspring.org)**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to SSPC Preschool! Silver Spring Presbyterian Church is very committed to providing a preschool which meets the needs of our church members and community. The preschool provides a happy, healthy, secure environment for young children under the guidance of committed Christian leaders.

This Parent Handbook contains information about our program. We hope that it will answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL**

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool will meet the needs of the church members and the community by providing young children with experiences at their developmental levels in a Christian atmosphere.

Children's early learning experiences are vitally important to their development. Their lively interests, interactions, exploration and readiness to learn are inexhaustible and influence a lifetime of learning ability and later success.

The preschool recognizes the home as the most important school. Parent involvement in the preschool is important, as it will assist us in supporting and strengthening the growth of our children. The preschool will provide a supplemental environment, equipped for young children at their developmental level, to stimulate creativity, and to turn everyday interactions into learning adventures that young children enjoy, in a nurturing environment that will be an exciting part of children's lives.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop an awareness of God through Christian learning activities which will include simple Bible stories and prayers.
2. To develop an awareness of the wonder of God's world by exploring the children's environment and surroundings.
3. To develop individuality and encourage creativity by fostering feelings of positive self-esteem, comfort and uniqueness in a healthy, loving, caring environment.
4. To develop sensitivity to others through socialization.
5. To develop enjoyable, creative and positive learning experiences which facilitate and encourage a readiness to learn.
6. To enhance gross and fine motor development.
7. It is the goal of Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool to provide guidance toward the development of positive self-esteem, social and play skills, readiness to learn and motor development in a nurturing Christian environment. We want the children to be happy, healthy and successful!

## PROGRAMS AND HOURS

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THUR.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
2-Year-Olds (Ducklings)	X		X			9:00-11:30 a.m.
2-Year-Olds (Bunnies)		X		X		9:00-11:30 a.m.
3-Year-Olds (2-Day)		X		X		9:00-11:30 a.m.
3-Year-Olds (3-Day)	X		X		X	9:00-11:30 a.m.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (3-Day)	X		X		X	9:00-11:30 a.m.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (4-Day)	X	X	X	X		9:00-11:30 a.m.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (3-Day Extended)	X		X		X	9:00-1:30 p.m.

Teachers will be busy preparing their rooms prior to the start of class. Please stay with your children until the classroom doors are opened **AT 9:00 AM** and they have been admitted by a teacher. A staff member will record their arrival time and direct them to the hand washing/hand sanitizer station. At starting time, please do not linger any longer than it takes to say "good-bye" and share a hug. Your child's teachers will help if there is a separation problem.

Children will be dismissed from their classrooms. Please arrive **AT 11:30 AM** and gather your child, their personal items and exit the building promptly.

If an emergency arises, please call the preschool office at 766-9400. If there is no answer, call the church office at 766-0204.

**WE WILL NOT DISMISS A CHILD WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THE PARENTS UNLESS GIVEN PRIOR WRITTEN NOTIFICATION. The Emergency Information and Release Forms offer a place to list individuals permitted to pick up your child; this form must be filled out and brought to preschool by the first day of classes. Please include carpool information on this as well and inform your child's teacher.**

PLEASE BE SURE TO GIVE US ALL CURRENT HOME AND CELL PHONE NUMBERS IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. ALSO, BE SURE TO LEAVE CELL PHONES TURNED ON DURING SCHOOL HOURS SO YOU ARE REACHABLE!

### PARKING

Please drive **SLOWLY** in the parking area. Please use the side entrances behind the Sanctuary and the playground. Use the parking spaces provided and do not block walkway entrances for safety measures. Handicapped spaces ARE used during preschool hours, so please **DO NOT** park there at any time unless you have documentation to do so.

### TUITION AND PAYMENTS

Tuition payments are based on the YEARLY cost per child broken down into nine equal monthly payments. Classes for older children are more costly due to extra preparation requirements and more classroom time. Tuition costs are as follows:

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>MON.</u>	<u>TUES.</u>	<u>WED.</u>	<u>THUR.</u>	<u>FRI.</u>	<u>TUITION</u>
2-Year-Olds (Ducklings)	X		X			\$125/mo.
2-Year-Olds (Bunnies)		X		X		\$125/mo.
3-Year-Olds (2-Day)		X		X		\$125/mo.
3-Year-Olds (3-Day)	X		X		X	\$140/mo.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (3-Day)	X		X		X	\$140/mo.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (4-Day)	X	X	X	X		\$160/mo.
4 & 5-Year-Olds (3-Day Extended)	X		X		X	\$180/mo.

Payments are due on the first of each month, payable one month in advance. Special payment arrangements are occasionally made. SSPC Preschool does not charge late fees for overdue tuition payments. Families are notified and given a reasonable amount of time to bring their account up-to-date. If this fails to happen, the child will not be allowed to return to SSPC Preschool until the account is settled. **Please make checks out to SSPC Preschool.** Tuition payments can be placed in the mailbox outside the preschool office.

### **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Scholarship money is available for preschool families in need of financial assistance. Referrals are brought to the Preschool Director through teachers, church members or the preschool families directly. A scholarship application must be completed and then reviewed by the Preschool Director. Full and partial scholarships are given, depending on the situation.

### **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS**

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool offers additional programs throughout the year outside of the regular preschool calendar. The programs are optional and carry an additional cost. They are developed by our preschool staff to expand on the opportunities and experiences of our preschool students. These programs are subject to change based on participation and staffing. Parents are encouraged to inquire about what additional programs are being offered. Examples of the programs offered include but are not limited to:

### **LUNCH BUNCH**

Lunch Bunch, an optional program, is offered on various days of the week beginning in October, and running through the middle of May. Lunch Bunch allows children from different classes to stay an extra 2 hours at preschool, eat lunch and participate in play with children and teachers from other classrooms. The program is offered to children in the 3, 4, and 5-year-old classes only. The students will bring their own, ready to eat meals. The cost of each Lunch Bunch is \$15.00 and is payable in advance. Lunch Bunch is from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### **CLUB TUESDAY**

Club Tuesday is our newest optional program. It is for our 3, 4 & 5 year-old students in the Zebras, Penguins, Pandas and Owls classes. We offer a regular preschool day from 9:00 – 11:30 am for a mixed group of children from those classes. Sign-up sheets are outside the preschool office and the cost of Club Tuesday is \$15.00 payable in advance.

### **FRIDAY FRIENDS**

Friday Friends, an optional program, is offered on two (sometimes three) Fridays per month from the beginning of November through the middle of May. Friday Friends is offered to children in the 2 year-old classes who only attend preschool two days per week. This program is designed to give these children an occasional extra day at preschool. The children will have the opportunity to play with children and teachers from other classrooms. The cost of each Friday Friends is \$15.00 and is payable in advance. Friday Friends is from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

**Lunch Bunch, Club Tuesday & Friday Friends fees must be paid in advance. If a parent cancels within 24 hours of the scheduled Lunch Bunch or Friday Friends for any reason other than illness, they are responsible for payment. If payment is not made, the child is not eligible to stay for these optional programs until the outstanding payment is made.**

## **WEATHER RELATED DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS**

### **SCHOOL DELAYS**

If SSPC Preschool needs to delay due to the inclement weather or for any other reason, we will operate on a one (1) hour delay. Preschool will be held from **10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.** Class schedules will be modified accordingly. If there is an extended day class or Lunch Bunch, these classes will end at 2:00 p.m. School delays will be announced on ABC 27 News and CBS 21 News. There will be a posting made on the church's website, [www.silverspring.org](http://www.silverspring.org) . An outgoing message will also be recorded on the preschool voicemail system and an email will be sent to all parents.

### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

If SSPC Preschool needs to close school due to inclement weather or for any other reason, an announcement will be made on ABC 27 News and CBS 21 News. There will be a posting made on the church's website, [www.silverspring.org](http://www.silverspring.org) . An outgoing message will also be recorded on the preschool voicemail system and an email will be sent to all parents.

### **MAKE-UP DAYS**

SSPC Preschool will consider making-up preschool after our M/W/F or T/Th classes miss school for three (3) snow days. This means that if we have a fourth snow day for either schedule, we will do our best to make up any missed day of preschool from that day forward. Snow make-up days are not built into the school year and will only be made up as needed.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

If you must withdraw your child from preschool, we request at least one month's notice, if possible. **Our preschool is supported by tuition payments and we will need time to fill your child's place.** Exceptions are made depending on circumstances.

### **ABSENTEE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

If your child is absent from preschool, please call or email the preschool office as a courtesy to preschool staff. If your child will be absent from preschool due to vacation or other extended absence, please notify your child's teacher in advance so that they may complete any projects with the student ahead of time.

### **ILLNESS/GENERAL HEALTH**

Please let the preschool know immediately if your child has contracted a communicable disease. The current Health and Safety Plan due to COVID 19 is in full effect for the 2021-2022 school year. That is in addition to our normal policies listed below.

We request that you keep your children home when they are ill. Preschool is not a place for sick children. If your child has a fever, vomiting, stomachache, diarrhea or congestion (due to cold or flu), please keep him/her at home. If your child becomes ill at preschool, we will call you to come and pick him/her up.

The health of the children enrolled in our preschool is highly important to us. Please be aware that it is by SSPC Preschool policy that we cannot provide care for children that have or show any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Constant runny nose that is yellow or green in color
3. Inflamed eyes, pink eye or other infection
4. Any untreated, contagious or persistent illness
5. Rash or other contagious skin condition
6. Diarrhea
7. Vomiting

It is our policy that a child who has shown sign of any of the above symptoms cannot return to preschool for 24 hours after the child has last shown symptoms. This is to help ensure that the spread of the illness is limited.

The staff at Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool will not administer medication to the students, including over the counter medications.

### **VACCINATION POLICY**

In order to protect the health and well-being of all the children and extended members of our preschool we ask that all newly enrolled children have up-to-date vaccines. We understand that under special circumstances children may be on an alternative/catch-up schedule. Therefore, we ask that information as to previously administered and upcoming (out one-year) immunizations be provided to the preschool. As long as the family is working closely with a doctor to ensure proper immunizations (according to the American Medical Association Pediatric guidelines) that child may attend SSPC preschool. If it is determined that the catch-up/alternative schedule is not being carried out, we reserve the right to withhold the child from school until the agreed upon immunizations have taken place.

As with all medical information provided to the preschool, this information will be held in confidence as only the preschool director has access to the information.

Section 23.84(b) of the Immunization Code only pertains to the public school system. We have the right to refuse admission as a private preschool.

### **HEALTH FORM**

It is required that a Physician's Form be completed each year for every student who attends SSPC Preschool. This form is distributed with your registration confirmation letter which will give you a reasonable amount of time to visit your child's pediatrician prior to the start of the following school year. Physicals are not required to attend SSPC Preschool; however, a Physician's Form showing completed vaccination information is required. Parents are required to inform the preschool director and update immediately any changes to the information contained in the health form.

### **ACCIDENTS/INJURIES/INCIDENTS**

You will be called immediately in the unlikely event your child has an accident at school. If you cannot be reached and it becomes necessary, we will call 911 and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital or urgent care facility. If your child has an accident while participating in a preschool activity away from school, we will call you and then call 911, if necessary. We will continue to try to reach you. In the event of a minor accident or injury involving a child at preschool, the teacher is required to fill out an accident/injury/incident report explaining the incident that occurred.

Any child who receives an injury will get a documented ACCIDENT REPORT. The report is signed by the teacher and preschool director and given to the parent or guardian. A parent or guardian must sign all INCIDENT and ACCIDENT REPORTS, and the person signing the report will receive a copy after all necessary parties have signed it. In the event a parent or guardian is unavailable to sign the report a notation will be made in the students file and the report will be mailed to the parents or guardian. Copies of the report are kept on file by the teacher and the preschool director.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS REQUEST**

SSPC Preschool is very willing to work with families when a child has special needs or requests. PLEASE make the preschool aware of any special emotional or physical needs your child may have, such as allergies to foods and bug bites. During the school year, please update your health form if there are any changes. The more information we have about your child, the better able we are to assist in appropriate care.

### SCHOOL TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

Throughout the school year, the children (except the 2-year-old classes) may take field trips and participate in activities away from the preschool. The trips will be taken by private car. Parents will be asked to drive and help supervise the children. Each child will need an approved safety seat to be transported as well as a signed permission slip. It is a very special treat for children to have parents accompany them on field trips. We hope you will join us!

### CLOTHING

Preschool is a time for play, craft activities and fun. Please dress your child in comfortable, manageable clothes and sneakers. Please send in disposable diapers for children who are not toilet trained and a change of clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name in case of accidents. As winter draws near, we will ask you to send in a warmer (and probably larger!) change of clothing---just in case. These will be returned at the end of the school year.

### PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held in early November and March or April. The November conference will concentrate on your child's early adjustment to the class. The teachers will tell you about your child's favorite activities and friends. They will be happy to discuss your questions and concerns. The March or April conference will be a more detailed assessment of your child's development in the preschool setting. A Kindergarten Readiness Checklist will be given to you if your child is preparing to go to Kindergarten in the fall.

Teachers will send home a weekly class newsletter. They will also place a quick note on the classroom chalkboard (for those of you who are able to pick up your children) outlining the day's activities. Please read these as well as our monthly "all-school" newsletter to keep abreast of the latest preschool happenings.

Aside from these methods of communication, you are welcome to set up a conference time with your child's teachers at ANY time. Don't wait for formal conferences if there is something on your mind!

### BUCKETS

Buckets are used at SSPC Preschool as a way of transporting art projects, newsletters and other important paperwork back and forth to preschool. The bucket is something that would be purchased by the preschool parent and is transported back and forth to preschool. It is the responsibility of the parent to see that the bucket is brought to school each day and to have the child's name clearly written on it.

### TOYS

Your child's teachers will notify you about times to bring toys for "Show & Tell." Comfort toys such as a blanket or stuffed animal are permitted at preschool. Please leave all other toys at home!

### BIRTHDAYS

We love to celebrate birthdays at preschool! Please notify your child's teachers if you would like to bring a treat for his classmates and sign up on the snack calendar. Your little one will receive a birthday crown and card and be the special little student of the day. If his/her birthday does not fall during the preschool year, you are welcome to celebrate a "half birthday" at another time. PLEASE NOTE: **We no longer allow cupcakes at SSPC Preschool.**

### SNACKS

There is a snack calendar posted outside each classroom door. If you would like to treat your child's class to a snack, please sign up on the calendar and take note of the preferred and discouraged snack items. Please confirm with the classroom teacher to ensure that there are no dietary restrictions/allergies that need to be complied with. Water and disposable cups will be provided by the preschool. **Until further notice, all snacks must arrive at preschool in store sealed containers.**

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

We want you to feel comfortable knowing your child is safe and secure while here at SSPC Preschool. In order for you to help us in this matter, please be aware of the following school rules:

- (1) **DO NOT** leave any child in your car while you go into the preschool to either drop off or pick up students. Please make arrangements with another parent or staff member to stand by your car if you must leave a child in the car.
- (2) Please escort all students to their classrooms! We have seen children running down the hallways unattended by their parents. This also pertains to after school when parents stay to play on the playground. If your child needs to use the bathroom, please escort him/her into the building.
- (3) In order to make the preschool as safe as possible, interior brown doors will be locked Monday through Friday from 9:15-11:15 a.m. and from 11:45-1:15 p.m. If parents need to enter the preschool during those hours, you must enter through the main preschool lobby and ring the "call" button for someone to open the door. It would be helpful if you could call ahead and let us know what time you will be arriving so that we can expect you.
- (4) Parents are required escort their children to and from the classroom each day. If someone other than the parent will be picking up a child from preschool, that individual will need to show their driver's license or other photo identification the first time. Anyone picking up a child from preschool (other than parent) will need to be listed on the Emergency Form.
- (5) The SSPC Preschool Emergency Planning Guide is on file in the preschool office for your review of other emergency procedures.
- (6) Fire drills are scheduled every sixty (60) days so that children and staff are aware of our evacuation plan in the event of a building fire. The church office arranges the sounding of the fire alarm for this drill.
- (7) On our application, parents are asked to sign a Permission to Photograph form which gives the preschool staff permission to photograph their child(ren) throughout the school year. Photos may be used in newsletters, art projects, Fall Faire displays and others, throughout the preschool and church and on the preschool website.
- (8) No child is permitted outside of the preschool classroom without a teacher or parent escort. All children are escorted to the bathroom, gym or playground by a teacher or parent. Children in the 3-year-old and 4 & 5-year old classes may go into the hall to place items in their buckets with teacher permission.
- (9) Teachers will not take children to the playground if there is snow, rain or temperatures below 45 degrees. The gym will be used for play in the event of inclement weather. Only one class is permitted on the playground or in the gym at one time with the exception of the 4 & 5-year-old classes. Playground/Gym rules for teachers are outlined on a separate sheet which is given to the teachers at the first staff meeting of the year. One teacher from each classroom is required to carry an emergency bag at all times when leaving the classroom with the children. This bag contains all emergency forms which include parent phone numbers, allergy information, etc. It also contains an emergency kit, tissues, Epi-pens (if necessary) and a cell phone to contact either 911 or the preschool director in the event of an emergency.
- (10) If you play on the playground with your child, please continue to use the school playground rules!



## **BEHAVIOR / DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The staff of SSPC Preschool strives to nurture feelings of self-worth, security and uniqueness in a loving, caring atmosphere. We believe that discipline plays an important role in maintaining this environment. We realize that no child is perfect and that some children do and say things that they should not. Our policy below ensures the safety of every child enrolled:

Preschool teachers will set consistent and age-appropriate guidelines that will help children maintain self-control, refrain from harming themselves or others and make appropriate choices. More specifically, classroom teachers will use the following ways to promote positive behavior:

1. Acknowledge children when they are "good" and offer sincere praise.
2. Re-direct inappropriate behavior.
3. Keep rules few, simple and consistent.
4. Make natural and logical consequences for disobeying rules clear and appropriate.
5. Maintain consistency in expectations.
6. Maintain age-appropriate expectations.
7. Maintain classroom routine.
8. Keep attention to inappropriate behavior to a minimum. Try to work one to one when possible.
9. Use a quiet, matter-of-fact tone as opposed to an angry or excited tone.
10. Use time-out. Time spent in time-out is not to exceed one minute for each year of age.
11. Occasionally, inappropriate behavior can be ignored. Behavior that can be potentially unsafe should never be ignored.

Any non-accidental incident that a child is involved in which results in a physical injury will be documented with an INCIDENT REPORT. The child who receives an injury will get a documented ACCIDENT REPORT. Please be advised that it is possible for a child involved in an incident to receive both an INCIDENT and an ACCIDENT REPORT.

An INCIDENT REPORT is intended to inform you, the parent or legal guardian, about inappropriate behavior that has occurred. We encourage you to review the report with your child and to discuss better ways to deal with the situation that transpired. Should you have any questions or concerns about the report, the staff at the Preschool will be happy to discuss them with you. As with any disagreement, the viewpoint of the persons involved vary greatly. Please remember that at no time is it acceptable for a parent or legal guardian to engage in an argument or threaten the staff who work with the children. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to: loud voices in front of the children, foul language or threatening physical harm. This type of behavior could result in your child's dismissal from the preschool.

Should a child cause damage to any Silver Spring Presbyterian Church owned property as a result of inappropriate activity or behavior, Silver Spring Presbyterian Church reserves the right to assess the parent or legal guardian for any and all amounts necessary to repair the property. Likewise, Silver Spring Presbyterian Church reserves the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of any child who is consistently unable to participate as part of the class as defined in the Behavior/Discipline Policy. Any child who has been terminated from the Preschool will not be eligible to re-enroll at any time in the future. Termination or suspension will be considered based on an excessive amount of INCIDENT REPORTS or if the severity of a specific incident is such that we feel the safety of the other children or staff may be in jeopardy. Such decisions are not entered into lightly. When a decision of this nature is made by the Preschool Director and subject to the approval of Session, the circumstances surrounding the event(s) have already been discussed with all preschool staff involved with the parent or guardian of the child in question. Any incident which occurs in a Silver Spring Presbyterian Church program must be kept confidential; therefore, the outcome cannot be discussed with the parents of other children involved in the preschool. There will be no refunds given for a child who has been suspended or terminated from the SSPC Preschool.