

PRESCHOOL PARENTS' HANDBOOK

2008 - 2009

*The Vernon Presbyterian Child Development Center
571 W23280 National Avenue ("ES"east of Hwy 164)
Big Bend, WI 53103
Phone 662-4648*



*The Presbyterian Church in Vernon
Serving Since 1840*

Vernon Child Development Center is a Christian-base child development center established as a mission of First United Presbyterian Church of Vernon. We are committed to positively impacting families in our community by providing a safe, nurturing environment where children have unique opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. We provide developmentally appropriate services in a loving, caring environment which emphasizes Christian values. We achieve quality in our programs through developing a competent, professional staff. We make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. Honesty and hard work are essential in all we do.

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The Child Development Center provides two separate programs, childcare and preschool. This booklet describes our preschool program. If you are interested in child care please ask for that booklet.. Children are not enrolled in childcare and preschool programs simultaneously.

OUR PRESCHOOL

Our Preschool program continues the principles and practices which have earned high praise since 1978. Our goals are to encourage the development of decision-making skills, social and verbal skills, and creative thinking in our students. Our activities include:

Free choice time: Children decide which of the many activities provided they want to participate in. Choices include such activities as housekeeping or imaginative play area, sand play, block area, art area, puzzles, water table, book corner, and a wide choice of manipulative toys. During this time children learn to make choices, develop muscle coordination, use their imaginations, and develop social skills.

Group time: Includes calendar time, singing and rhythm instruments experiences, sharing experiences, finger plays, and games.

Snack-Time: "The special person" of the day provides the snack for the class. Milk or juice is provided by the Center. We encourage nutritious, healthy snacks.

Outdoor Play: Play equipment is available in the back of our school. In the spring and fall we go outside, weather permitting.

Christian Values: Time is set aside each day for prayer before snacks and sometimes for a short story about the wonders of God's world. Occasionally both biblical and traditional stories are shared with the children.



Intellectual Stimulation: The concepts of colors, shapes, numbers, alphabet, nature, and other scientific principles are a regular part of our daily curriculum, taught by "hands on" experiences rather than work sheets.

ART EXPERIENCES

Your child's experiences with art are designed to help him/her experience a wide variety of materials, to use these materials in a creative way, and to develop manual dexterity in the use of these materials. We encourage each child to experiment with each medium as it is introduced.

Some of the activities your child will be involved in are painting at an easel, water colors, cutting and pasting activities, play dough, collages, finger painting, and drawing with chalk and crayons.

As a parent, you play a major role in developing your child's attitude toward his or her art. It is important that you appreciate what he or she has done. You can show your appreciation simply by taking time to look at the work or by having a "special" place to display it. You can turn your refrigerator into a showcase by using magnets or tape to hang your child's art "masterpieces" on it. Asking your children if they would like to mail one of their pictures to an appreciative relative is another way of boosting confidence in their art work and in themselves.

When looking at your child's art work, try not to ask, "What is it?" and avoid guessing. It can be very discouraging for a child to work hard painting a picture of a dog, only to have a well-meaning adult say, "What a nice cow you have painted!" It is best to keep your comments simple. A few examples would be "What bright colors you have used!" or "This picture will be hung on our refrigerator as soon we get home!"

As parents and teachers, we must always have the child's positive view of self as our priority. Art is an area which lends itself easily to building self-esteem.

SCIENCE AT THE CENTER

We try to keep your child's science experience at the Center as much a part of his or her environment as possible. There are activities for each to take part in if they choose, such as helping to care for plants, planting seeds and examining their growth, experimenting with magnets, measuring water, sand, or their own growth.



Each child also has the opportunity to help make things which require measuring and combining materials. They help in making cookie dough, following recipes, and other things which involve the children in science without forcing it upon them or setting up an artificial situation which lacks meaning.

Our field trips often have an emphasis on science, too. Trips in our woods and field and nearby parks afford children an opportunity to examine plants and animals in their natural environment. These activities set the stage for development of healthy, scientific minds. Our science field trips have also included the Bears' Den, Betty Brinn Museum, a dentist's office, a hospital, nature walks at Minooka Park, and a planetarium.

LANGUAGE EXPRESSION AT THE CENTER

Our children at the Center are encouraged to express themselves verbally. Our approach to learning words and their meanings is a natural one. By associating familiar things with words, they become a part of the child's environment. This is basic to beginning reading. There are many ways we give the children this exposure to language. Our being willing to just listen to them is, of course, one of the best. Our encouraging them to listen to others is also crucial (good listening skills lead to good speaking skills).



Daily, we read to them, make books easily available, answer questions about what a word means, and allow them to see words being printed by us. For example, if a child expresses his thoughts about his or her art work, we may print this verbatim on his project, (e.g. "This is a lion which will eat you up!" or "This is my grandma's house."). By seeing their spoken words put down on paper, the idea of written language becomes real to them.

We also encourage the children to learn to recognize their printed names and, for some of the older children, to actually print their names. We approach this casually as some of the children are ready and others are not; for those who are not, we concentrate on general exposure.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CENTER

The ruling body of the church, the Session, established the Preschool in September of 1978 and a separate Childcare program in September of 1980. The Session each year appoints a Child Development Center Committee responsible for the Center. The Committee consists of Elders, VCDC parents, and other interested persons. The budget and finances of the Center are publicly reviewed, along with all church funds, at our congregation's annual meeting.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Some of our children find the challenge of the new situation and the separation from parents difficult. Tears are sometimes their reaction. However, after a few days eager smiles replace the tears. The staff is experienced in handling this occurrence.



All children attending preschool should be toilet trained. Exceptions will be made for special needs children.

Your child may bring a favorite toy to the Center; however, he or she must understand that it will have to be placed on the "show & tell" table. It is not to be played with at the Center because of the possibility of loss or breakage. Guns or other violent toys are not permitted. Please label "show & tell" items.

Please bring your children into the Center. DO NOT drop them off outside. Please use only the main door by the office. For the safety of our children all other doors are kept locked. Please be prompt in picking up your child. Late pick-ups will be billed at \$4.00 per quarter hour.

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please inform the teachers. Children must be kept home for 24 hours after symptoms of a contagious disease subside.

Dress your child in play clothes so that there will be little concern on his/her part about "keeping nice". Also, we go outside, weather permitting, so please dress your child so that they can enjoy their outside playtime.

The Center is operated in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture policy and does not permit discrimination because of race, religion, color, age, handicap, sex, or national origin.

An Open House for parents will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2007 from 5-7 PM. An open house/orientation will also be held on the first day of class in September. A Christmas program in December and a spring program in May are special events for our preschool families.

Parent conferences will be held twice during the school year. These will keep you informed of your child's progress and let you know of any area in which help is needed. If you have concerns regarding your child at any time during the school year, please talk to the teachers right away rather than waiting until conference time.



For school closing information, please listen to local television broadcasts for announcements concerning the Mukwonago School District. If poor weather necessitates school closings, our preschool will close along with the Mukwonago schools. Days off for inclement weather are not made up.

A snack schedule will be included in the monthly newsletter so each child will have an equal number of turns bringing a snack. Please try to make them sugar-free. The Center will provide the juice or milk. For the safety of all our children, **no peanuts or peanut products are allowed in the Center.**

Since all the preschool children are arriving and leaving at the same time, please exercise care in the parking lot. Park only in places designated for parking and away from the mailbox, entrance, and school bus loading zone (the row closest to National Avenue). **Please do not leave your car engine running while bringing your child into the Center.**

PRESCHOOL CLASSES

Three- and four-year old preschool

Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9 to 11:30 am

Four-year old kindergarten

Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning from 9 to 11:30 am

2008-2009 PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

Open house: Wednesday, March 5, 5:00 to 7:00 pm

First Day of Class and

Orientation/Open House (for student and parents):

- Wednesday, September 3, 9:00-10:00 am for Monday/Wednesday/Friday am class
- Thursday, September 4, 9:00-10:00 am for Tuesday/Thursday am class

Closing Day: Wednesday, May 22, 2009

Vacations:

- Thanksgiving Break - November 27-28
- Christmas break - December 22-January 2, 2009. Classes resume Monday, January 7, 2009
- Spring Break – April 10-17. Classes resume Monday, April 20

TUITION 2008-2009

Registration Fees (Non-refundable)

- \$50.00 for one child
- \$55.00 for two or more children

Tuition Fees-2 days per week

- \$95.00 per month due on the first class day of each month (\$855.00 per year)

Tuition Fees – 3 days per week

- \$136.00 per month due on the first class day of each month (\$1224.00 per year)

Discounted Rate (Paid in full on or before August 1, 2008)

- \$820.00 for two-day class
- \$1175.00 for three-day class

Tuition includes all field trip and transportation fees for students. Chaperone fees are extra.

Preschool payments are due on the first class day of the month.

Payments may be left in the box at the church office. A receipt will be available at the office at the end of the day. Late payment fees of \$5.00 per week are assessed on all past due accounts.

Because your child's slot in class is reserved regardless of attendance, no credits are given for absences. Please be prompt in picking up your child. Late pick-ups will be billed at \$4.00 per quarter hour.

HOW TO ENROLL

- Phone or stop at the office for the following forms:
 - Preschool Registration
 - Child Care Enrollment
 - Health History and Emergency Care Plan
 - Immunization Record
 - Child Health Report
 - Emergency Card
- Return the registration form with your registration fee. All other forms are due on or before the first day of class. Please note that registration fees are not refundable.
- Make checks payable to Vernon Child Development Center.