

# Parent-Tot Handbook



St. Stephen's Preschool

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# **St. Stephen's Preschool**

**Established in 1969 as a ministry of  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**

**At St. Stephen's Preschool, our mission is to:**

- **Serve ambulatory children Parent Tot - 5 years of age without discrimination as to race, religion, gender, national origin or family configuration;**
- **Create a warm and happy environment in which the young child is encouraged to discover the joys of learning and is provided opportunities for physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth;**
- **Provide a climate of Christian understanding and acceptance for each child so that social values, relationships with others, and a positive self-image may be developed;**
- **Promote growth and understanding in families and to stimulate parental interest in their children's development.**

**St. Stephen's Preschool is licensed by the  
California Department of Social Services.  
Lic. # 191202102**

**This handbook has been prepared to answer most questions parents will have regarding our preschool. If needed, hard copies are available in the preschool office.**

# PARENT-TOT CLASS PARENT HANDBOOK

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## I. ADMINISTRATION

### **NEW STUDENTS**

There are several forms that parents need to complete or provide:

- Admissions Agreement
- Immunization Record
- Proof of Negative TB Test and proof of the following immunizations for all adults attending class: influenza, pertussis, and measles

These forms **must** be completed and returned to the school office no later than the first day of school. This is a requirement by the State of California and your child **cannot** attend school until the office has received the forms.

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Before your child may attend school, we must have proof of the following immunizations:

- Polio -- 3 doses
- DPT- 4 doses (3 if under 18 months)
- MMR- 1 dose; given on or after first birthday
- Hib- 1 dose; given on or after first birthday
- Hepatitis B- 3 dose series (2 if under 18 months)
- Varicella (required at 18 months)

The yellow immunization card, or other immunization record may be presented to the school office. After a copy is made for our records, the original will be returned to you.

If your child is not fully immunized and has a medical exemption form signed by a pediatrician, please speak with the administrative assistant in the Preschool office.

### **TUITION PAYMENT AGREEMENT**

The school relies entirely on tuition to meet operating costs.

#### **Due Date**

Tuition is due the first class day of each month. We do not send out bills.

#### **Late Fee**

A Late Fee of \$10.00 will be assessed on all tuition payments not received during the month.

#### **NSF Check Fee**

There will be a \$10.00 charge on any check returned by the bank.

#### **Tuition Credit**

NO tuition credit is given for school holidays or absences.

### **Withdrawal**

Should it become necessary to withdraw a child, parents must give at least two weeks' notice. If written notice of withdrawal is received by the last Friday of February, June's tuition deposit will be applied to the current month's tuition. After the last Friday of February, no refunds will be made.

### **Receipts**

Your cancelled check is your receipt. If you require further documentation for tax or work purposes, please request it from the administrative assistant. All payments in cash will be receipted.

<b>Federal Tax ID # 95-2592621</b>
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### **STUDENT RECORD UPDATES**

Whenever there are changes or additions to the information originally provided on your registration form, stop by the office to update your records.

### **HEALTH**

#### **Daily Health Assessment**

All children must check in with the teacher upon arriving. At this time the teacher will ensure that the child is free from obvious signs of illness.

#### **Illness**

Ill children will not be admitted to school. A non-clear runny nose or persistent cough are signs that children are ill and may not attend school. Children may return to school when they have had a normal temperature and no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours, they feel well and can participate fully in the program.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT**

#### **Preschool Board of Directors**

St. Stephen's Preschool is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of members in good standing of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and teacher representatives. The Preschool Board meets the first Tuesday of each month.

#### **Director Availability**

The director welcomes comments and concerns from parents. Through open communication we can ensure that the needs of all are met.

## II. PROGRAM

### CLASS DAY

Teachers plan activities for the entire 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. class time. Your child will benefit most from our program when present for the complete class. The program is designed to provide a directed environment in which parents and children can interact. Activities will include a free choice time where the children can choose from activities such as easel painting, playdoh, science exploration, blocks, the playhouse or rug toys. Activities will change from week to week, but some, such as playdoh and easel painting, are standards that will stay out most weeks. Please plan on your child getting messy every week. No matter what is said on the paint container, paint is not washable and will stain clothing. It may be best to “sacrifice” one outfit and have your child wear it each week. We will have a circle time each week, which will include music and finger plays, and will last as long as the attention span of the children. In September, this is usually 5 minutes, but it becomes 10 to 15 minutes by May. Parents are asked to participate with their children during circle time, not have adult conversations.

Parents are asked to please leave bottles and pacifiers at home. This is for both hygienic reasons, and so that other children do not accidentally confuse someone else’s property for their own.

We also ask that siblings other than the ones enrolled in our preschool stay at home. CA Licensing does not allow us to have children in the classrooms or playground who are not enrolled in our preschool.

### PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

Each week your child will have the opportunity to play outside on the playground. In order to ensure your child’s safety, we ask that you stay nearby while your child is playing and within arms reach if your child is climbing. Please do not bring drinks out on the playground, as it is likely that you will need both hands to assist your child. We ask that you stay away from the windows near the other classrooms as not to disturb the other children or teachers from other classes, since the windows in the other classrooms are floor to ceiling.

**\*\*Shoes must be worn at all times.\*\***

### DISCIPLINE

We feel that all our children are in the process of learning appropriate behavior and it is our responsibility to guide them on the right path. The initial responsibility for disciplining a child belongs to the adult who is accompanying the child. If St. Stephen’s staff observe activity that is dangerous to any of the children present and the parent does not step-in in a timely manner, that staff member will intervene.

We feel that it is important that children are guided toward age appropriate behavior using positive techniques such as logical or natural consequences, redirection, and anticipation or avoidance of problems. We use encouragement of appropriate behavior rather than competition, comparison or criticism. Staff members never use corporal punishment.

## SAFETY

Because of the children's age, we like to keep rules simple – basically, children are not allowed to do anything that may hurt themselves, others or school property.

Here are some general guidelines that parents should use to keep their children safe:

### Classroom Rules

1. No climbing on furniture.
2. Children eat only at tables. No food or drink allowed in any carpeted area.
3. Doors may only be opened by adults, as they are very heavy and could seriously injure small fingers.
4. Please leave your cell phones in your car or away with your personal belongings so that the teachers and your child will have your undivided attention and take advantage of every opportunity for engagement while at school.

### Playground Rules

1. Swings
  - sit on bottom or swing by self on tummy
  - no spinning
2. Slides
  - feet first
  - "train" sliding is OK, if parents are within arm's reach
  - curvy slide from top to bottom only
  - short double slide or wavy straight slide, OK to go up or down
3. Tree House
  - two feet on the floor
4. Wheel Toys
  - one child per toy (except those with multiple seats)
  - no crashing
  - stay on bike path around large grass area and sandbox
5. Sand Toys
  - must stay in sand box
  - sand stays in sand box
6. Rubber Chip
  - no digging
  - may not be taken to sand box

## **SCHOOL CLOTHES AND SHOES**

We strongly encourage that your children wear play clothes for school. Many of our activities are messy and we want the children to be comfortable as they experience each activity and not worry about getting “good” clothes dirty. Please be sure to label all outerwear.

Preschool children are very active. Our large playground offers them many opportunities for gross motor activity. **For their safety and comfort, children must wear rubber-soled shoes which fit their foot securely.** St. Stephen’s Preschool is a “**tennis shoe only**” preschool. Shoes must be closed-toed, rubber-soled, and attach firmly to the foot with Velcro, laces or buckles. Slip-on shoes, dress shoes and boots of any kind are **not acceptable** footwear.

## **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays may be celebrated at school. All children will have a birthday celebration day scheduled close to their birthday or, for students with summer birthdays, at some other time during the year. You may bring in a treat for your child’s class to share on the day. The treat will be in addition to the children’s personal snack. Some suggestions for something special are mini muffins, ice cream cups, cupcakes, cookies, or popsicles.

**Please do not bring balloons for classmates.** Often the balloons pop or fly away, and the children are disappointed.

### **Holiday Celebrations / Gift Exchange**

At Halloween and Valentine’s Day, parents will be invited to bring in a **small** token for children to exchange. Please understand that everything a child receives must fit in the lunch-sized bag that the children have decorated.

At Christmas, in lieu of exchanging tokens with classmates, St. Stephen’s Preschool will “Adopt a Family” from HillSides, an Episcopal Outreach program for abused and neglected children.

Many holidays are observed within the classroom; however, only Halloween and Valentine’s Day will be recognized with token exchanges among students. Please do not bring gifts for classmates to school for other holidays, as the teachers are not permitted to distribute them.

## **III. NUTRITION**

We promote good nutrition at St. Stephen’s. Snack time is a learning time when we talk about the “growing” food children need to eat and how it helps to make strong bodies.

## **SNACK**

Each day, children will bring a personal snack from home. We strongly encourage you to pack a small, nutritious snack for your child and save the “treats” for home. Class snack time is not intended to be the child’s lunch.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS, you may not bring hot beverages (“Starbucks”, hot chocolate) to school. Our Licensing Agency does not allow any liquids above 120° F in areas where children are present.** If you desire, you may bring a cold drink for yourself in a non-breakable container (no cans please), but please be sure to place it out of the children’s reach!

## **ALLERGIES**

All food allergies need to be noted on the Parent Questionnaire. If your child has a particular food allergy, please be proactive and speak up when we plan for our “potluck” celebration snacks throughout the year. Everyone will understand your concern, as we all want your child to be safe.

## **IV. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

### **EMERGENCY CARE & DISASTER ACTION PLAN**

The school has a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan covers the jobs each staff member will perform in the case of an emergency, emergency supplies, and emergency food & water. At the beginning of the school year, you will receive a copy of the emergency assignments for the year.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

The preschool has fire drills each month. Occasionally, they will occur during Parent-Tot class time. The alarms are loud. Please help your child to follow the teacher to the “safe” area.

## **V. PARENT PHONE & E-MAIL LIST**

To allow parents to communicate with each other, a phone & e-mail list will be provided. Please no business solicitations or bulk e-mails to your fellow Parent-Tot parents!