

## Faculty

Our Playschool staff possesses formal education, training, and work experience in early childhood education. By attending conferences and workshops that equate to fifteen hours annually, visiting other early childhood programs, and reading professional publications, they keep current with the latest in educational principles and methods. The teachers either meet or exceed Colorado Department of Human Services' requirements. All teachers have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. The staff is available to answer any questions you may have about your child and our program.

## Preschool/Playschool Committee

The Preschool/Playschool Committee performs required administrative duties as the "working" governing body of the programs. The committee is composed of an assigned church elder, parents who are church members, the Director, the Assistant Director, and the Director Substitute. They orchestrate with the church elders to ensure that the purpose and policies of the Preschool/Playschool programs are maintained.

## Communication

The school strives to form a partnership with you, the parents, through clear, concise communication. Most of our school communication is delivered through all-school emails.

Our goal is to use these to inform you of:

- School happenings-fundraisers, service projects, family events, etc.
- Additional details to the monthly classroom calendars
- Change of information
- Parenting information-links to websites (i.e. "Bright Ideas") to help with day-to-day parenting concerns
- Individual classroom reminders and clarifications.

Each classroom has its own informative and comprehensive monthly calendar. A paper copy will be placed in your child's basket and can also be found on the school website listed under "Current Parent – Class Calendars". Additional reminders are written at the bottom of the sign-in sheet at each classroom and important reminders are written on a white board. The teachers also post a "Daily Sheet" with details of the day's happenings at the table where you sign your child in every morning.

The teachers have assigned work emails in order for there to be a bridge of communication between teacher and parent. Their work email addresses will be listed at the bottom of the class lists that will be distributed to parents in September. Please be prudent with this email privilege. Teacher work emails should not be used to report student absences, late arrivals, etc. Absences and late arrivals should be reported to the school office.



## **CURRICULUM**

A balance between free choice and structure provides each child opportunities for personal growth through experiences that encourage personal care, self-confidence, self-control, problems solving, and the acceptance of responsibility. Individual and small group activities are included in each day's schedule as are group sharing experiences and outside play. Special activities and resources are planned to integrate with the unit of study.

### **Group Sharing Experiences**

The group sharing period denotes any time when the group as a whole participates in an activity. Included in the group sharing experience are stories, conversation, music experiences, finger-plays, and visual aids. Bible stories, Bible verses, and Bible-related songs are used in the "worship" experience. The group sharing experience is important in helping each child feel a part of a large group and in providing opportunities for interaction among the children.

### **School Experience & Artwork**

Most children are eager to share experiences with their parents. Your response is very important - so listen attentively, give good eye contact and ask open-ended questions. Concerning art, a good comment is "tell me about your picture." Remember, there is no right or wrong way for a child to create art (trees can be purple and the sky green). To keep your child enthusiastic about bringing home his/her work, establish a place where your child can display it (refrigerator, closet door, bedroom door, or wall). This helps promote healthy esteem by showing you value his/her work.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

In the fall, your child's teachers will schedule a parent/teacher conference in order to answer questions concerning school, and exchange information about your child and discuss social emotional goals for your child. The fall conference will happen during class time with one of the teachers while the other teacher remains in the room with a substitute teacher to help care for the children. In the spring, there will be a written document to review observations of your child's growth and development in the classroom setting. If a situation arises, we will schedule a conference concerning the child's behavior, social, or physical needs.

### **Screen Time**

The children may have the experience of viewing a Christian or secular DVD that compliments the teaching themes. A permission form must be signed allowing the viewing of a DVD and for your child to participate (see permission form in enrollment packet). The maximum length of time for viewing is fifteen minutes and a teacher will interact with the children, so that the device is used as a teaching tool. The subject matter details will be posted on the "Daily Sheet". The Toddler class will not have screen time until all the children in the class are two years of age.

## Blended and Restricted Families

In situations where a blended family situation exists, it is the responsibility of both parents to keep the school current with all necessary and legal documents regarding custody arrangements and how email communication shall be conducted.

If there is a restraining order in place, please bring a copy of the order along with a picture of the restricted party to the school office.

## Special Needs

The school is in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act for children with special needs. A child with an identified special need (emotional, behavioral, and/or physical) and has an IEP or IFSP will be considered for acceptance in the program based on each individual need and situation as determined by the Preschool/Playschool Committee. If the director/teacher has concerns regarding a child's developmental profile, it will be necessary for the child to be formally evaluated to determine if the child should continue in the Playschool program or requires intervention services to meet his developmental and academic needs.

## Release of Child

Children will only be released to registered parents or to the person parents have listed on the enrollment form in the child's folder. We must have written authorization from the parent for any person not listed on the initial enrollment form (including carpool). On occasion a parent may want to give a one-time release authorization to a particular person(s). The parent will provide a note that is signed and dated stating the person's name and the date(s) involved for permission of release. If the person is unknown to the staff member, then photo identification must be provided to determine that the person is named on the enrollment form or in the parent's note.

The preschool cannot legally deny release of any child to a parent or guardian unless we have a written court order or just cause. The Playschool staff will not allow a child to leave with any inebriated person or a person under the influence of any legal, illegal, or prescriptive substance that we suspect could interfere with the safety of the child. This school must immediately report the incident to the police and/or the Department of Human Services. **No drugs, alcohol, or smoking are allowed on or in the premises.**

## Sign In/Sign Out

The sign-in sheets are located outside the child's classroom. The parent or designated person shall sign the child in and out for each session and check the box that states sunscreen has been applied to the child. This is a mandate from the Colorado Department of Human Services. There must be written authorization from the parent for any person other than parent to pick up a child (including car pools).

## Identifying Children

The teachers will do a head count at the beginning of class and then during transition times exiting to the playground and upon re-entering the classroom. In the event that a child becomes lost, the teacher will make certain that the other children are safe and notify the director. Steps will be retraced to locate the child.

## Visitors

All visitors must sign in at the school's office upon entering the premises. Signing in shall include name, date, time, and purpose of visit. If the individual is unknown to school staff, he/she must show photo identification. The visitor will wear a nametag to identify him/her as a visitor to the premises.

## Clothing

Dress your child in appropriate clothing that is comfortable and can be subjected to the dirt of the playground and activity of the classroom. The child's footwear must be safe, so it should be closed-toe shoes (no sandals, jellies, Crocs™). We will be outdoors almost every day, so dress your child accordingly. Hats, mittens and boots are a must on cold, snowy days. **OUTDOOR CLOTHING MUST BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

## Personal Belongings

The school and teachers are not responsible for your child's personal belongings. Please do not allow your child to bring money or priceless items on school property.

## Party Invitations

Personal invitations to birthday parties and other non-playschool activities are not allowed to be placed in children's baskets.

## Snacks

We share your sense of dedication to nurture your child's proper growth and development through nutritious snacks. Parents will participate by providing nutritious snacks for all the children on a rotation basis. The snack assignments will be posted on the monthly calendar. Please refer to page 19 and bring two food items, one from each column of suggested nutritious snack items. These must be prepackaged from commercial sources and received sealed. Children will be offered water during snack time. Due to a potential choking hazard and allergies, please do not bring nuts. If your child has a food allergy, please communicate with the teachers so that a safe food plan can be created. Teachers will assign snack close to your child's birthday so you may bring a special, commercially made birthday treat (no homemade items).

## Holiday Snacks

Teachers schedule holiday snacks for Pumpkin Day (in lieu of Halloween), Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and End-of-Year. Two parents will sign up to bring a healthy snack item, a special treat, and decorative napkins. Teachers will serve the treats at snack time, so drop them off with your child at the beginning of class.

## Lunch

Every day the child attends school, he will need to bring a nutritious lunch (meets 1/3 of the child's nutritional requirements – [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)). The parent is to provide the child with a lunch that is in a paper bag or a lunch box with the child's name written on the outside.

## **Lunch** (cont.)

Food items that are **NOT** considered safe for children younger than four years old are: hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, nuts, raw peas, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of meat and cheese, or chunks of raw carrots. Staff will not serve the food items listed above (whole) to children younger than four. Cut foods, such as grapes, hot dogs, and carrots into lengthwise pieces that children can swallow safely. THANK YOU for your assistance with this.

Lunches need to be finger foods only (**no utensils**) so your child can feed himself. We do not refrigerate or warm food in the microwave. We recommend you limit sugar and offer the child a chance to sample new foods including ethnic foods and fresh fruits and vegetables. The Colorado Department of Human Services requires an ice pack in lunches to keep perishable items cold; i.e., meats and dairy products. Please comply with this regulation to keep your child safe and healthy. A note will be sent home with the child if the lunch is found to be insufficient, and the teacher will give a verbal reminder. If necessary, the Director will speak to the parent about ideas and needs for a child's nutritious lunch. Please refer to pages 18 and 19 for nutritious and healthy lunch and snack ideas.

Students and teachers will sit down together to eat lunch, which provides opportunities to share intimate conversation and build relationships, and for manners to be modeled.

## **Blanket/Pacifier/"Loveys"**

In the school setting, we encourage independence from a security object (a "lovey") such as a pacifier, blanket, toy, etc. This helps your child to have a higher degree of participation in the class and to develop internal regulation and coping skills.

In the Toddler classroom, we do allow a blanket/pacifier to be packed in your child's diaper bag. The teachers will use it as needed to comfort your child during the course of the day. Our goal is to have your child involved in activities and too busy for a "lovey."

In the Young 3's classroom, there is no need for "loveys." Please leave them at home or in the car.

## **Diaper Bag/Back Pack**

Every child should bring a diaper bag/backpack to carry items to and from school and with an extra change of clothes/diapers, and child's name should be written on the outside of the diaper bag/backpack.

Toddlers: Every class day, please bring a diaper bag/backpack with your child's name on it. The bag should include:

- 2-3 disposable diapers
- A change of clothes (including socks)
- Labeled blanket/pacifier/lovey (optional)

Young 3's: Every class day, please bring a diaper bag/backpack with your child's name on it. The bag should include:

- 2 diapers (if not potty trained)
- A change of clothes (including socks)

## Guidance and Behavior Management

We believe it is important for children to learn how to make good decisions and choices for themselves. Each teacher is able to effectively and positively reinforce children's positive behavior and re-direct any behavior that is harmful to a desired behavior. An early learning setting is ideal for teaching children social-emotional skills, self-regulation, identifying feelings of self and others, learning to share, cooperative play with classmates, developing problem-solving skills, and enhancing resiliency. Teaching these skills in the earliest years is what is best. Social and emotional competence is the foundation for success in school and is linked to being a future high functioning adult in society.

Our philosophy of behavior is based on two principles that are developmentally appropriate. The **first principle** is the reinforcement of positive behavior. We state and model expectations in a positive manner. We guide the young child to learn what acceptable behavior is and encourage positive social interaction with other children. **The second principle** is for the child to have the opportunity to make choices and to experience natural consequences. Age-appropriate guidelines for behavior are enforced with pre-determined consequences that are suitable for the young child.

We strive to allow children to settle their own differences as much as possible. As we observe the children, and as conflict arises, we interact and model as needed to encourage a positive resolve. We assist children with vocabulary that could be used in solving a social problem. It is our desire for children to develop skills to solve their own problems of interaction. We acknowledge positive behavior at all possible times and we seek ways to accentuate the positive in all children.

When inappropriate behavior does occur, we feel it is important for the child to understand why his/her behavior is inappropriate and assist the child with vocabulary he/she might use to solve the problem. It is important that the consequences for inappropriate behavior make sense to the child. If the behavior continues to be a problem, the Director will be called in to observe and may take the child to the office for a short time. The parent will be informed of the child's behavior and the steps we have taken.

If the child is involved in multiple incidents, the Director, teaching staff, and parents will conference. The school takes a proactive approach to challenging behavior by partnering with parents and possibly involving a mental health consultant to reduce the likelihood of expulsion. The Director and teachers can assist the parents in assessing services of a mental health consultant to support early intervention as necessary. A child will not be referred for mental health services without parental consent. Should these behaviors continue, the Director and Pre/Play Committee will determine whether continued enrollment is in the best interest of the child and the program.

Cherry Creek Preschool/Playschool does not allow corporal punishment. We will make every effort to help each child be successful in the classroom environment.



## **Health** (additional information in COVID Addendum and Waiver)

Within the school setting, teachers encourage healthy habits. Children are reminded to use tissues when needed and to cover their mouths using their elbows when sneezing and coughing and must wash their hands. All children and teachers wash their hands upon entering the classroom in the morning, after using the bathroom, before and after eating, before using water tables, and after handling classroom pets. The school uses all reasonable precautions to ensure a healthy environment.

The school office will notify you when there is a contagious disease in the school or when we know your child has been exposed. In order to safeguard the health of the school, please keep your child home if he/she has one or more of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours:

- A cold with sneezing and coughing
- A temperature over 100.4 degrees
- Conjunctivitis or discharge from eyes
- Diarrhea
- Nasal discharge (discolored, yellow or green)
- Rash
- Runny eyes
- Sore throat
- Stomach pain
- Taking an antibiotic for a contagious illness less than 24 hours

Be sure your child is free of the symptoms mentioned above for at least 24 hours before returning him/her to school. If the child is too sick to go outside, he is probably too sick to be with children and should remain at home.

For communicable diseases, please contact your pediatrician about when your child may return to Playschool. This policy/procedure is in the best interest of all the children. Thank you for your cooperation.

## **Reporting Illness to School**

Please contact the school's voice mail at (303) 771-1364 to leave a message concerning your child's absence and reason. State the child's name and class. Should any of the above symptoms appear in your child while at school, the Director will notify you and your child will be safely isolated, waiting for immediate pick-up.

## **Infectious Diseases**

All staff are trained in the use of Standard Precautions for infectious diseases. For all incidents when ANY child is bleeding, the staff uses gloves and cleans up with a disinfectant. If we experience a large group outbreak, we are required by the Colorado Department of Health to report suspected outbreaks to our local public health agency (Tri-County Health Department) within 24 hours.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We take every precaution to ensure your child's safety in the school setting. We have communicated with the local police and fire departments to create safe procedures for all emergencies. Every teacher knows all of the emergency policies and can carry out the procedures as needed. Every teacher has a cell phone for emergency calls and each room is equipped with a first aid backpack – includes a flashlight, band aids, bandages, baby shampoo, gloves, bottled water, 24 lollipops for stress, tissues, and the classroom emergency phone number list.

The school staff is certified in First Aid, CPR and Standard Precautions. The Director, the Assistant Director, the Director Substitute and Administrative Assistant are certified to administer medications to the children who have a completed plan of care on file.

### **Injury**

In the event of a child's injury, the protocol is as follows: Assess whether a minor or major injury.

Minor Injury (an abrasion, scrape, cut or bump) – the teacher will wash the affected area, apply ice if needed and place a band aid on it. An accident report will be completed and signed by the teacher. The Director will place the original report in the child's file and give the parent a copy. The parent will be informed of the injury when the child is picked up.

Major Injury (broken bone, head injury, breathing issue, etc.) – the child will be kept stable and safe by the teacher and the parents will be contacted immediately by the Director. If they cannot be reached and it is determined immediate medical attention is needed, 911 will be called to request professional assistance. If emergency personnel determines the child must be transported to a medical facility and the parents have still not been located, the Director or Assistant Director will accompany the child, taking his/her full file which contains the medical release form. Throughout this procedure someone will be assigned the task of locating the parents through use of all available phone numbers: home, cell, work, emergency contact person, etc.

### **Allergic Reaction of a Child**

If a child with an identified allergy and has a completed plan of care has an episode requiring medication, he will be brought to the Director's office. The identified plan of care will be followed and the parent will be contacted. A medication administration log will be completed and signed by the teachers and administrative staff on duty. The Director will retain the original report in the Medical Log (refer to medication policy on page 11).



## Parent Emergency

If a crisis occurs and you need to reach the Director or classroom teacher immediately, please call the church office at (303) 779-9909. Request that someone hand deliver the urgent message to either the Director or your child's teacher; or request that if at all possible, the Director or teacher please speak to you on the phone. The crisis must involve your child's safety. Otherwise, leave a message at (303) 779-9909 ext. 5110 (Director), ext. 5113 (Administrative Assistant), or (303) 771-1364 (school voice mail).

In an emergency the parent/guardian may give a one-time verbal permission and the teacher or school staff must ask for a photo identification to verify identity. A copy of the photo identification will be placed in the child's file.

## Late Pick Up or a Child Not Picked Up

Picking your child up PROMPTLY at or before dismissal time will alleviate concerns your child may experience.

Please call the school Administrative Assistant at (303) 779-9909 ext. 5113 if an emergency detains you. You are encouraged to add this number to your cell phones. Five (5) minutes after the close of a class session with no communication from the parents(s), a staff person will:

1. Call one or both parent(s), guardian(s), (home, cell, and work numbers)
2. Call the emergency number provided for an authorized pickup, other than the parent(s), guardian(s), (i.e. home provider, other family, etc.)
3. At 1:25 pm, children who are not picked up will be taken to the Preschool office to wait for parent pickup.
4. If circumstances keep the parent from being able to pick up their child, parents must make other arrangements with responsible adults for the child to be picked up. The parents must inform the preschool who will be picking up the child. We cannot release the child to an unauthorized person.
5. If there is no response to the calls that have been placed after an hour upon closing the school, then Arapahoe County Department of Human Services will be contacted.
6. The Director or Assistant Director will remain on site until the last child is picked up.
7. If late pick-up fees apply (page 17), then the parent needs to pay at that time.

## Snowstorms

Parents need to listen to the radio or TV for announced closures or storm schedules. School is cancelled when the Cherry Creek School System closes due to weather. If Cherry Creek Schools activate a Delayed Start due to snow, the Playschool schedule remains the same. Should a storm suddenly develop, parents will be called to notify them to pick up their children immediately. Sufficient staff will remain to guarantee the children's safety and comfort until pick up is possible by the parent or his/her designee.

## Inclement Weather

If there is inclement weather with unsafe conditions and the temperature goes below 20 degrees or above 90 degrees, then the children shall play inside the church in Room 204, where appropriate equipment (including large motor) will be provided.

### **Emergency Evacuation/Fire Drill**

Periodic drills are practiced throughout the school year as required by the Colorado Department of Human Services. Upon hearing the church's fire alarm, all children will exit the building and go to the south perimeter of the parking lot by the tennis courts. The children will be accompanied by the teachers at all times. The teachers will exit with the First Aid backpack, class roster of names, and emergency phone numbers should parents need to be contacted.

If there is a need to evacuate the building and we cannot return to our building for an extended length of time, the children and staff will walk to the Community Center. The teachers will exit with the First Aid backpack, class roster of names, and emergency phone numbers should parents need to be contacted. The Director and Administrative Assistant will call parents to inform them of where to pick up their children.

### **Shelter-in-Place/Tornado Drill**

Periodic shelter-in-place drills are practiced throughout the school year as required by the Colorado Department of Human Services. For a tornado drill, children will kneel along an inside wall, heads down (turtle position), hands covering the back of their necks. The children will remain there until the "all clear" signal is sounded, then the staff will escort children either to their classroom or a safe location. The teachers will exit with the First Aid backpack, class roster of names, and emergency phone numbers should parents need to be contacted.

### **Lockdown Drill**

During the school year a lockdown drill is practiced as required by the Colorado Department of Human Services. The children and staff will move to a safe location inside the building and out of sight of a threat. The building is secured and no one, other than emergency personnel, is allowed in or out of the building until the threat has passed. The teachers will exit with the First Aid backpack, class roster of names, and emergency phone numbers should parents need to be contacted. These drills are conducted in conjunction with the Director of Facilities and/or a police officer, and the Director.

### **Reuniting with Children**

The parents will be contacted by the Director, Administrative Assistant, and Assistant Director using the phone numbers listed on the emergency forms, as soon as it is safe and appropriate for parents to be on site. The parents will be given the location of where the children are and advised to stay calm and be patient as each child is safely released to a parent/guardian.

### **Adaptation of Plans for a Child with Special Needs**

Each child with special needs will be assessed to know how to safely and quickly participate in each drill. A designated staff member will be assigned to care for that child as needed.