

Cary Presbyterian

Preschool



Love First, Then Teach

2025/2026 Handbook

Revised 7/2025
614 Griffis Street, Cary, NC 27511

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Preschool Ministries Program

Mission

Love First, Then Teach

Cary Presbyterian Preschool (CPP) exists as a community-based mission of Cary Presbyterian Church. We provide a developmentally appropriate preschool where children of all faiths, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds are embraced, taught, and cared for as a reflection of Christ's love for all people.

Philosophy

Under the guidance of the Preschool Ministry Board (PMB), the program director and staff provide an environment where children learn to love, care, share, speak kindly, respect and accept differences in people, as Christ would have us do.

About Us

Cary Presbyterian Preschool is a non-profit organization sponsored by Cary Presbyterian Church. It is operated under the policies and by-laws set by the Preschool Ministry Board. The PMB requires fire and safety inspections, safety drills and strict sanitation guidelines.

Religious education is not offered through our preschool program, but teachers may offer a gratitude prayer before lunch. Cary Presbyterian Church extends an invitation to any family looking for a supportive faith community to visit on Sunday mornings.

Cary Presbyterian Preschool is a place where every child is accepted as a unique individual — each with their own talents, abilities, and developmental clock. Our curriculum includes experiences which promote cognitive, language, motor and social/emotional growth. Our teachers provide a Play - Based learning environment in which individual strengths are nurtured. We strive to promote balanced growth in all areas of development.

We believe that children learn best when they can explore and manipulate materials, discover through play, and interact with adults and other children. Our teachers act as facilitators in the learning experience. They provide a warm, loving, secure environment supported by a daily routine. The teachers provide children with many new materials and concepts to explore and plenty of opportunities for success. These opportunities help build a love for learning and positive self-esteem.

About our School

Registration

Registration begins in January for current students and church members. Please refer to the website for registration information.

Each child must have a completed registration form, medical and immunization forms, and sign off on having read and agreed to the policies outlined in this handbook. It is imperative that parents keep forms updated with current information — especially emergency, medical emergency information and persons authorized to pick up your child.

Class Requirements

Eligibility for classes is based on birthdate and the Wake County Kindergarten cut-off date of August 31.

Tuition and Registration Fees

The application, enrollment fee, playground and tote bag fee are due upon registration. Tuition is divided into nine equal monthly payments.

Tuition Payments are made through Tuition Auto Draft. Monthly and yearly receipts are available upon request.

Federal Tax ID #

Our Federal Tax ID # is 56-1382024

Withdrawal

One month's written notice is required before withdrawal from the program. You are responsible for the next month's tuition after notice has been given. Please obtain the appropriate form from the Director. **Payment for the month following the withdrawal notice is required whether or not the child attends school.**

Calendar

CPP operates from September - May. We follow the Wake County Public Schools traditional calendar, including Teacher Work Days and Vacation Days. Student orientation is conducted the first week of school. The calendar is subject to change. Please see the website for specific dates.

Attendance Policy

Please communicate with your child's teacher for any changes in your child's attendance, absence, late arrival or early pick-up. Repeated absences without communication with the school can result in withdrawal from the program. If you are going to be late to pick up your child, please call the office and send your teacher a message via the Remind App. **Note:** If you arrive more than 5 minutes late to pick up your child, a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed.

Lunch

Please send a nutritious lunch and a water bottle with your child to school every day. Children will be assisted as needed, but we ask that you send items they can handle independently when possible. Please send resealable containers when possible. **You will be notified if there are any serious allergies that require us to eliminate certain foods in a classroom, particularly peanut or tree nut products.** Please use ice packs to keep food at safe temperatures. Glass containers are not allowed in the classroom.

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays in the classroom with a crown and a birthday sing along. We do not allow outside food for health and safety reasons. If you would like to send a non-food related treat home with classmates we are happy to do so!

Appropriate Clothing

For health and safety reasons, children need to be appropriately attired at all times in clothing and shoes that do not hinder movement and play. **Closed toed shoes** and **socks** must be worn at all times; no flip flops or crocs. Parents provide a seasonally appropriate change of clothes, labeled in a Ziploc bag to be kept in the classroom.

School Safety/Classroom Visitors

All entrances to the preschool and the church are locked 24/7. You will need to ring the doorbell, or call the office to gain entry.

Communication

The majority of communication will be done through email and the Remind app. Please inform the office with any changes in contact information. This information is strictly for use within CPP, and will not be released to outside individuals.

Pick-up & Drop-Off

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure the safety and well-being of their children during pick up and drop off at school. **Permission is required in writing for whomever is picking up your child**, either on the registration form or via a written note, or email.

Car seats are required by law: "Children under age 8 and less than 80 pounds must ride in a weight-appropriate child safety seat that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards at the time of manufacture."

Smoking/Tobacco & Weapon Policy

Smoking, smokeless tobacco or e-cigarettes/vaping is not allowed in the building or on the church property. Weapons of any kind are not allowed, including toy weapons.

Photo Policy

Teachers take photos of the children throughout the day to share with your child's preschool class families. We use some of these photos for social media. Please note on the application if you prefer your child's pictures not be shared on social media. **Professional Photographs** will take place in the fall. Purchase of these pictures is optional.

Parent Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held once in the first semester and as needed in the second semester or by parent request. Parents and teachers should use these conferences to discuss their child's growth, and any areas of concern. The staff at CPP recognizes and appreciates the individuality of each child in our program. An important part of our responsibility to you, the parents, is to observe your child's daily activities, choices, and learning style. We will provide you with this information using a developmental checklist completed by your child's teacher.

Developmental Checklists

We monitor these five areas of development: social/emotional, communication, fine and gross motor, and cognitive.

[Important Milestones: Your Baby By Five Years | CDC](#)

[Developmental Milestones: 4 to 5 Year Olds - HealthyChildren.org](#)

Children develop and gain skills during the school year but children grow and develop at their own rate. We always encourage you to speak to your child's pediatrician about any concerns.

Developmental Screenings

If your child has had any developmental screenings (speech/OT/behavioral and others), we require you to note this on your application and attach a copy with your registration forms. We will schedule a parent conference prior to the start of school to discuss how we can best support your child in the classroom.

Other Services

Project Enlightenment is a service of Wake County Public Schools, and provides support to preschool children and their families. If you have developmental concerns, we can request a consultation for you. The consultant arranges to observe your child in the classroom and meet with you to discuss their findings. There is no charge for this service.

Speech and Language – We are happy to refer families to local providers if you feel your child is in need of services.

Conscious Discipline

Conscious Discipline is an adult first, brain based practice that teaches adults how to remain in an Executive Brain State. It is built on safety, connection and problem solving. Conscious Discipline uses a simple brain model to help us (teachers & parents) understand children's behavior in order to apply effective solutions. Our primary job as adults (teachers & parents) is to remain calm or regain our sense of calm. A child cannot calm down in the face of an adult who is yelling or otherwise distressed.

Our school uses two Conscious Discipline Curriculums: Baby Doll Circle Time in the Toddlers (2-3 year olds) and Feeling Buddies Curriculum in ages 3+. These two curriculums focus on the skills of attachment, attunement and social play. Recognition of one's own feelings, self regulation process, labeling feelings and managing emotions are introduced in the 3's and strengthened in the PreK classes. We also host a variety of fun, relaxed parent education events titled "Building Connections" AND send a digital newsletter with Conscious Discipline education, tips and training resources. At CPP we work to unite Home Families with School Families and engage parents as partners in building healthy, brain-smart families that help children grow and learn!

Safety Drills and Emergencies Drills

Safety Drills:

We practice the following during the school year-

- Shelter in Place (in the event of severe weather) will be in the Church Choir Room
- Fire Drills (we announce over the walkie talkie to void the loud alarm)
- Hide and Seek Drills - this is a lockdown drill disguised as "Hide and Seek" with the director. Children wait quietly with their teachers and a lantern in the classroom restroom for a few minutes until the director "finds" them.

Emergency Drills:

If we need to evacuate the CPC campus children will be taken off site, either on foot or by vehicle. The Cary Presbyterian Church Bus and staff vehicles will be used as needed. Car seats are not available, but we will make every effort to transport the children as quickly and safely as possible. Parents will be notified **when the children and staff have arrived at an alternate location** and will be asked to pick up their child immediately. The staff will remain with the children until all have been picked up.

Evacuation Sites:

Walking – St. Paul's Preschool located behind the CPC parking lot

Off-site Vehicle – Kirk of Kildaire Church in Cary or St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Apex

Inclement Weather/Closures

When inclement weather threatens, listen to local TV and radio stations for Wake County Public School decisions regarding the school schedule. CPP will also notify via email and the teachers' Remind apps.

If Wake County....then CPP will...

- WCPSS opens on a 1 hour delay CPP will open on a 1 hour delay.
Dismissal time remains the same
- WCPSS opens on a 2, or 3 hour delay, CPP will be closed.
- WCPSS is closed, CPP is closed.

If weather becomes a problem **during** the school day or WCPSS closes for any reason, please pick up your child as soon as possible so that everyone can get home safely. If WCPSS closes early, CPP will most likely close early as well.

If your child's class misses five days or two weeks of school (whichever is less) make up days will be scheduled. The Director & PMB will determine when days will be made up.

Facility Cleaning

Our facilities are cleaned daily by a professional cleaning company. Our staff follows sanitation guidelines with approved cleaning solutions. Toys, touch surfaces, and fabrics are cleaned on a regular basis. Carpets are cleaned twice per school year, and on an as needed basis.

Playground and Church Grounds

Use and Rules

The playground is open daily after school beginning at 12:30 pm for families to play and socialize. Parents must discuss and follow the rules with their children. Please do not let children play behind the shed or outside of the sandbox in the wooded area.

- Children must be supervised at all times
- No glass containers of any kind
- Shoes must be worn at all times
- Please do not remove sand from the sandbox; rocks and mulch should not be played with
- If you dig holes in the sandbox, please be sure to fill them in for the safety of others
- Please do not throw sand/mulch or put sand/mulch on the equipment
- No tree nut or peanut products are allowed on the playground
- Please keep all snacks on the picnic tables
- Please leave tables, chairs and other equipment in its location
- Use equipment as intended by the manufacturer; no climbing up the slide, no standing or climbing under picnic tables, no climbing on fences and gates
- Clean up all trash
- Keep gates closed at all times
- No dogs

Use of Church Grounds

For safety reasons, the church grounds are off limits after school. Children must stay with parents at all times when arriving and departing CPP. Please be respectful of the church property and do not allow children to climb trees, play in garden beds, and run unsupervised.

Health and Safety

Injuries:

If your child sustains a mild injury while at school, we will give you a telephone call, and have an Injury Incident Report for you at pick up time. If a life threatening injury occurs, 911 will be called and your child will be transported to the hospital listed on your application.

Please only send healthy children to school!

If your child is not feeling well, please call the office or send a Remind to the teacher to let us know. If your child is diagnosed with a virus or communicable illness by your pediatrician, please let the office know as soon as possible so the class can be informed.

We have adapted the following from WCPSS guidelines to help you determine when to keep children home. If any of these symptoms are present, your child may not attend school. We will use them when deciding whether or not to send children home. We do recommend that even when these symptoms are not present, if your child seems unwell and is unable to participate in school activities, please keep your child home.

Please adhere to the following guidelines to help keep our children and teachers healthy!

Exclusions from Preschool:

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher. Must remain at home until **fever-free for 24 hours without medication.**
- Nausea & vomiting – child should remain at home until s/he has been **symptom free for 24 hours.**
- Diarrhea – Must remain at home until **symptom free for 24 hours.**
- Severe headache
- Red, watery eyes with yellow drainage or other signs of infection
- Undiagnosed rash

Medical Form/Immunization Record

All children are required to have a completed Medical Form and Immunization Record on file before the start of school. We do not require Influenza, or the Covid Vaccine. A delayed vaccination schedule is acceptable with a note from your child's pediatrician.

Severe Allergies, Asthma & Medical Concerns

We do our best to provide a safe environment for children with allergies, asthma and other medical concerns. Because our preschool space may be shared with other groups, we cannot guarantee complete safety.

Parents are required to fill out an Allergy Action Plan to be turned in prior to the start of school. **It is also important that other parents cooperate with any classroom adjustments.** All medical forms are available in the preschool office. All medications and forms need to be on file before your child begins school. Children with **severe allergies** requiring avoidance of certain foods or other substances, or who may exhibit major reactions to substances or situations need to complete a "Medical Action Plan."

If there are **other medical concerns**, parents should fill out the appropriate medical form specifying symptoms and treatment. We do not administer "over the counter" medications, sunscreen, chapstick, or bug spray. Please apply these before school starts. We encourage mosquito patches on clothing; the playground is surrounded by trees.

Behavior and Discipline Policy

Love First, then Redirection

All behavior is a form of communication. Redirection can shift a child's focus from a negative behavior to a more positive one. Many times a child's negative behavior is an example of missing skills, needs or wants. Children never have a "bad day" at CPP! If repetitive behaviors occur, on a regular basis, staff will document behavior and communicate with the Director and parents.

A behavioral plan will be created when necessary. This is done to ensure the child's needs are being met, and for staff to formulate a plan on how to best support the child in the classroom.

The goal of CPP's Behavior and Discipline Policy is to assist children in developing emotional regulation and self-discipline through respectful interactions supporting the child's emotional growth. The early years are a time of immense cognitive, physical and emotional growth for young children. Young children are still egocentric, meaning they still think mostly of their own needs and wants as opposed to the needs of others. Because of this, it is not unusual for young children to use physical or verbal aggression in an attempt to meet their needs. It is our job to guide children through behavioral challenges by utilizing the Conscious Discipline approach; setting clear boundaries and following through appropriately and consistently. Staff help children understand the

expectation for reasonable behavior by discussing, giving examples and by redirecting children to appropriate activities. Gradually, children learn self-control and gain a sense of pride in their ability to care for themselves and each other.

Repetitive and Disruptive Behaviors

If concerning or disruptive behaviors occur on a regular basis, staff will document behavior with an ABC Behavior Chart. This is done to establish patterns of behavior, and record events. The director and staff will formulate a plan on how to best support the child in the classroom. Disruptive behaviors include, hitting, kicking, spitting, teasing, and any other behavior that can cause physical or emotional harm. Once behaviors have been documented with our ABC chart, a meeting will be held with teachers, the director and parents. A behavioral home-to-school plan will be developed collaboratively with parents and staff to measure and monitor behaviors with scheduled updates on progress. If it is determined that the behavior plan is not effective, outside services will need to be provided by the family.

Physical and Emotional Behavior

When there is an incident that involves physical or emotional harm to another child or teacher, parents will be contacted immediately and receive an Incident Report documenting the event. If the behavior occurs a second time, the parents will be called to pick up the child immediately. The child can return to school after a behavioral plan is in place.

Emotional and physical harm of any kind will not be tolerated to support the safety of all children. If it is determined that the behavior plan is not effective in the outlined timeframe, outside services will be required and need to be provided by the family.

Parent Responsibility

CPP maintains a safe, caring, and respectful environment for children, staff, and parents. Parents are partners with teachers in their child's social, emotional and physical growth. Parents, children, and staff are expected to maintain respectful relationships with each other. It is not appropriate for parents to approach other parents or children to address incidents that occur at the Preschool. If parents have a concern about an incident, or anything that occurs in the classroom, they should contact the director immediately.

It is inappropriate for parents to discuss other children's behavior issues that are occurring in the classroom. If your child has concerns about a classmate, please do not coach them to not play with that child. This can be harmful for the child and the classroom culture. Parents demonstrating inappropriate behavior may be terminated from the program.

Dismissal Policy

The Director and teachers will work with parents to do everything we can to ensure success within our program. The Director and PMB will determine if there is a need to dismiss a student who is unable to adjust to the classroom environment within a reasonable amount of time. For the safety of children and staff, behavioral issues relevant to the safety of the child, classmates, and/or staff, are causes for dismissal and will not be

tolerated. Dismissal will also be considered if the staff is unable to meet the physical, social or emotional needs of the child.

This list is not exhaustive and decisions will be made by the Director and the PMB on a case by case basis. In the event of dismissal, no refund is given.

Drop Off/Carpool/Pick Up Procedures

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures for the Two Year Classes and Playgroup Class

- The Two Year Classes and Playgroup Class will be dropped off and picked up at the classroom via the front entrance of the preschool. **New this year!!! For safety and security concerns, drop older siblings in the carpool line first, then, park in the front and walk siblings in for the Two Year and Playgroup Classes.**

Carpool Procedures for the Three Year Classes and Pre-K Classes

- The Three's and Pre-K classes will be dropped off via carpool in the morning. Carpool begins each day between 9:20 - 9:25 AM in the circle adjacent to the playground. Please remain in your vehicle until carpool begins.
- Carpool drop off is at the back circle, adjacent to the playground.
- Four vehicles at a time will be allowed between the Drop Zone Stop Signs. All cars pull in and pull out at the same time. Do not leave the designated drop zone area until a teacher has given you the signal to do so.
- Please have your child ready when it is your turn for drop off; shoes on, coats on, snacks finished, etc.
- When in the drop off zone, wait with your child next to your vehicle until a teacher meets you to escort your child to the building.
- If your child is not ready to separate from you when it is your turn to drop off, no worries at all. Please park and walk your child to the carpool entrance once the carpool has concluded.
- Please be mindful when in carpool - no cell phones please. Carpool moves quickly! Please be vigilant and watch for children and parents outside of their vehicles. We love seeing your children wave from your vehicle as they are approaching the drop zone. Please do not let them lean out of the car window.
- Carpool concludes typically at 9:35 am. If you arrive after 9:35 am, please bring your child to the front preschool entrance.

Afternoon Pick Up

- Pick up for all classes is in person and at 12:30 pm except for Extended Day Pre-K Class pick up which is 1:15 PM. Doors will open at 12:25 PM. Please line up outside of your child's classroom
- If you are going to be more than a few minutes late, please call the office. We depend on parents and caregivers picking up on time so our teachers can begin to wrap up their day. Our Late Pick Up Policy is in the Parent Handbook.
- When you arrive for pick up, please line up outside of your child's classroom for dismissal!

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