



ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PARISH

IN THE BEGINNING

PRESCHOOL

BORN OF GOD

Parent Handbook

St. John the Evangelist Parish
833 Main Street, Agawam, MA

413.372.6624 (Direct Preschool Line)

413.786.8105 (Parish Office)

sje.inthebeginning@gmail.com

Table of Contents

Welcome

- Mission Statement 3
- Preschool Goals 3
- Philosophy. 3
- Licensing Authority 3
- Staff Qualifications 4
- Volunteer Screening/Training 4

Program Organization

- Ages of Children Served 4
- Hours of Operation 4
- Calendar 4
- Schedule of the Day 5
- Explanation of Daily Activities 6
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd 6
- Faith in our Program 6
- Dress Code 7
- Birthday Observances 7
- Graduation 7

Program Fees

- Weekly Tuition Rates. 8
- Enrollment Procedures. 8
- Toileting. 8-9
- Non-Discriminatory. 9
- Application Fee/Regulations. 9
- Holidays. 9
- Absence. 9
- Late Fee. 9
- Payment Options. 10
- Financial Aid. 10
- Voucher 10

Child's Records

- Individual Records 10
- Confidential 10
- Conferences 10
- Progress Reports 11
- Immunization Records & Requirements 11
- Referral Policy. 11
- Photographs. 12

Parent Communication	
- Partners to Parents	12-13
- Visits	13
- Newsletters/Facebook Page (private)	13
Child Illness	
- Medication	14
- Plans for Sick Children	15
Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting	
- Procedure for Identifying & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect	15
Emergency Care Procedures	
- Severe Weather Conditions	16
- Fire Drills	16
- Unauthorized or Suspicious Persons	16
- Evacuation/Emergency Drills	17
- Crisis Plan	17
- Emergency Information	18
Appropriate Behavior Guidance	
- Appropriate Behavior Guidance	18-19
- Suspension & Termination	19
List of Nutritious Foods	20
Signature Page	21

WELCOME TO “IN THE BEGINNING” PRESCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of “In the Beginning” Preschool is to provide preparation for kindergarten in this community of St. John the Evangelist Parish, sharing joy and Christian hope. We empower students by challenging their developing minds and nurturing their spirit, while guiding them to lead with faith and excellence, and drawing each child into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

PRESCHOOL GOALS:

- to provide a warm, loving, and supportive environment for every child in our care
- to help each child develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and spiritually
- to provide an authentically Catholic experience and learning environment
- to develop respect and empathy for self and others
- to give each child the tools to build up a positive self-esteem, and to develop interpersonal relationships and friends



PHILOSOPHY

“In the Beginning” Preschool recognizes parents as the primary caregivers and teachers of their children.

We believe that each child is unique and deserving of respect for his/her needs through active learning. We believe in challenging their existing level to promote the child’s health, ability to learn, emotional wellness, and respect for cultural diversity.



LICENSING AUTHORITY

Our License of Authority is the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), 1441 Main Street, Second Floor, Springfield, MA 01103.

- Phone number: 413-788-8401.
- Website: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-early-education-and-care>

Please feel free to contact them to review our compliance history with the regulations. The certificate of licensure will be posted on the premises of the school, in the main foyer, at all times.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All staff are EEC qualified for their position upon hire. Some may be in the process of completing their education. Assistants must be 16 years or older and will work under the supervision of a teacher. All staff members are expected to have a kind, responsible, and respectful personality and relate/work well with children. “In the Beginning” Preschool staff reinforce a comfortable, safe environment for your child, allowing parents peace of mind.



VOLUNTEER SCREENING/TRAINING

Every volunteer must pass a Background Record Check (BRC), that includes a CORI, SORI, DCF, and fingerprint check through EEC, and complete the VIRTUS training through the Diocese of Springfield. This must be completed two weeks before the date of volunteering. Volunteers will always be supervised by a staff member.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

AGES OF CHILDREN SERVED

“In the Beginning” Preschool provides care for children aged 2.9 years to 6 years of age, preparing each child for kindergarten readiness.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our center will be open between the hours of 7:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday including summer months. *We will be closed for February and April vacation weeks.*

CALENDAR OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

“In the Beginning” Preschool is closed for the following dates:

*there will be no reduction of tuition fees for holidays

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veteran’s Day

Thanksgiving Day and day after

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

New Year’s Eve (closes at 2pm)

New Year’s Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

President’s Day

Patriot’s Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day



SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

Before School Care

7:00-8:55 Drop off, free play
8:55 Clean up

School Day

9:00-9:15 Snack Time
9:15-9:30 Bathroom break
9:30-10:00 Circle Time
10:00-10:30 Art/Learning Activity
10:30-11:00 Learning Centers (one of these must be teacher led)
11:00-11:55 Gym or Outdoor Activity
11:55-12:05 Bathroom break
12:05-12:30 Angelus & Lunch
12:30-12:45 Rotating Centers
12:45-12:55 Gross motor/Interactive movement activity
12:55-1:05 Bathroom break
1:05-1:10 Story Time
1:10-2:50 Rest/quiet Time, quiet time
2:50-3:15 Snack Time
3:15-3:25 Bathroom break
3:25-4:00 Art/Learning Activity/Rotating Learning Centers

After School Care

4:00-5:00 Free Play
5:00 Closed



EXPLANATION OF DAILY ACTIVITIES



Free play: Children choose from a wide variety of activities: dramatic play, sensory tables, blocks, art, manipulatives.

Circle time: Boards, songs, finger plays, and stories are used during this group time. Calendar and weather are discussed along with other related subjects to that day's theme of learning.

Gross Motor play: Children are given the opportunity each day to work on their large motor abilities.



Nap/Rest Time: Children rest on their mats quietly or are provided with quiet activities while others nap. At this time, children get a chance to relax. A stuffed animal, blanket, and crib sheet may be brought from home. All bedding is sent home weekly to be washed.

Story time: Children sit and listen to stories read by the teacher or on tape to strengthen his or her vocabulary and attention span.

Meals & Snacks: Children will be expected to sit and talk quietly with staff and peers while enjoying their snacks and meals. They will be spaced for social distancing. Children are required to bring their own lunch in a box with their name on it. Lunches are not refrigerated – an ice pack or thermos must be provided for cold lunches.

Peanut Free: If there is a student currently enrolled in the school with peanut allergies, each family will be informed and then be required to keep all snacks and lunches peanut free.

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a Montessori inspired program that teaches the Catholic faith to young children. This takes place in a room named the atrium, where the children are given presentations of different historic events or explained the parts of the Mass and Sacraments. Here at “In the Beginning” Preschool, we will be implementing this program as a part of our weekly curriculum.



If you have questions about this program, more information can be found at cgsusa.com, or by reaching out to our staff.

FAITH IN OUR PROGRAM

Classes will regularly be visiting the church for time in prayer and reflection. Each student is expected to make these trips with the class.

Non-Catholic students and Catholic students alike will be exposed to the same religious materials and are expected to attend Liturgies and other para-liturgical prayer services. The materials and curriculum of “In the Beginning” Preschool will be exclusively based in Catholic beliefs and ideals - no exceptions will be allowed. Parents interested in learning more about the faith are encouraged to contact the Parish Office or ask a staff member for resources.



DRESS CODE

Parents are expected to dress their child in a way that promotes self-respect, dignity, distinction, cleanliness, good health, and in line with Catholic social beliefs. Rompers and one-piece outfits will not be permitted, as it makes toileting difficult for your child. If a dress is worn, please wear shorts underneath.

In the winter and in cooler weather, students must have a sweater, coat, hat, and gloves. We will continue to go outside as often as we can, even in winter months, rain, or snow, so please dress children accordingly for the weather.

BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCES

Small, individually portioned birthday treats may be brought to school for students. Please ask about allergies before bringing in any snacks and bring enough to share with your child's entire class. If you want to give out invitations to birthday parties, please be sure to invite the entire class so no child has hurt feelings. Our staff will be more than happy to assist you and your family in any way that we can, but please understand our privacy laws will prohibit us from sharing certain information.



GRADUATION

Preschool graduation takes place at the beginning of June for those who will be entering kindergarten in the fall. Information will be made available as the date approaches, and families will be notified via newsletters.



PROGRAM FEES

WEEKLY TUITION RATES

Preschool (2 years, 9 months - Kindergarten)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday	\$195
Tuesday/Thursday	\$130
Monday-Friday	\$250

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Please call the preschool or Parish Office for an application. If we are at full capacity, you may have your name put on our waiting list. We will refer to the waiting list as openings occur.

Registration requires the following steps:

- an appointment and tour with the Pastor and Director, or designated appointee
- an orientation into the program; including mission statement and goals of the preschool, expectations for family commitment to the mission of the school, registration forms, time to share your family's interests and needs, information sharing about your child's therapeutic, educational, social and supportive services (if there are any currently), and discussion on the developmental history of your child before they entered our program
- a meeting time with our staff, and specifically, your child's Lead Teacher



TOILETING

Many of our students are toilet trained, but some young children are still gaining control of their bladder or bowels. If your child has a toileting accident at school, staff will follow proper cleaning procedure and send home the soiled clothing. On your child's first day of school, we ask that you provide us with an extra set of clothes for your child (including extra shoes). After an accident, please make sure to send another change of clothing the next day. If your child is still struggling with their potty training, we ask that you send your child in pullups and supply for the following week.

In the Beginning Preschool Handbook - Updated September 13, 2022

If your child is having toileting difficulties, we will work with you. Since toileting is an especially crucial step in your child's development, we encourage you to take an active role to help make the experience a positive one. Your child will still be allowed to attend our school if they are not toilet trained. If your child is not toilet trained at the time of admission to "In the Beginning" Preschool, we will work with you to potty-train them during their time here. Children will always be allowed to use the bathroom, but we have scheduled times throughout the day where we go as a group.



NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATUS

All children and families, regardless of their religion, race, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation or disability will be welcomed as members of our "In the Beginning" Preschool family.

APPLICATION FEE/REGISTRATION

A one-time, non-refundable enrollment fee of \$25.00 per child, or \$50.00 per family will be charged upon enrolling your child into the program. This enrollment fee will hold your child's slot.

HOLIDAYS

Regular tuition rates apply during weeks containing holidays for which the Center is closed.

ABSENCE/LATE DROP OFF

If a student is absent from school, we ask that parents call "In the Beginning" Preschool by or before 9:00 am on the day of the absence. If we do not receive a call by that time, a parent will be contacted to ensure the safety of the student. No tuition refund will be provided for absent days.

We ask that each child be to the center before the beginning of circle time at 9:20 am. If your child will be arriving after that time, please contact the school and let us know. Children will not be allowed to arrive any later than 11:00 am without a doctor's note.

LATE FEE

The center closes at 5:00 pm every night. If the parent is late to pick up their child, they will receive a late fee of \$25.00 for any part of every 15-minute interval until the child is picked up. If you know you will not be on time, please call ahead and let us know. This call will not excuse you from the extra fee.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Payments will be accepted via the Brightwheel app. Payments will be sent out every Friday for the following week and are expected to be paid by the Monday before services are provided. Services will not be offered until payment is received.

FINANCIAL AID

Two fundraisers will be hosted by the parish of St. John the Evangelist throughout the calendar year to help support families with tuition rates. If you need help with payments, reach out to the Director to see if you qualify for financial assistance.

VOUCHER

Vouchers are offered through our licensing authority, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), in conjunction with [Seven Hills Child Care Resources](#). For more information on this, please speak with a staff member and we can help you through the process.

CHILD'S RECORDS

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

There will be individual records kept on file in the school office for each child. Upon request, a parent shall have access to their child's records within two business days. A child's parents have the right to add or request the deletion of any information, comments, data, or amend any part of their records.



CONFIDENTIALITY

No information is ever given out about children at “In the Beginning” Preschool without written consent of parents, unless subpoenaed by a court of law. Parents will be notified if a child's records are subpoenaed. Children's files are kept always locked in the office. All staff members are briefed about confidentiality during their orientation and reminded about the policy as the Director feels is necessary.

PROGRESS REPORTS

“In the Beginning” Preschool teachers will routinely have progress reports with their students. **There will be progress reports for preschool aged children three times each year: October, January, and May.** Parents will be given a copy of this progress report, and a copy will be kept in the child's file.

CONFERENCES

Parents are allowed to request a parent/teacher conference with their child's teacher at any time throughout the school year. If your child's teacher needs to speak with you, they will send home written suggestion times for said meeting.

Parents may, at any time, request a conference with their child's teacher to discuss the progress report, or in relation to their child's education.



IMMUNIZATION RECORDS & REQUIREMENTS

“In the Beginning” Preschool is required to comply with the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Health, as well as EEC standards.

- DPT - Series of 4 doses and a booster by 5th birthday.
- Polio - Series of 3 doses and a booster by 5th birthday.
- MMR - 1 dose and a booster by 5th birthday.
- HIB - Complete series or one dose at/or after 15 months.
- Hepatitis B - series of 3 doses.
- Varicella - 1 dose of chickenpox vaccine or signed statement by parent/guardian stating the day, month and year your child had the chickenpox disease.
- Any additional immunizations as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

A child's immunization record must continue to be updated, if indicated, in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Our staff will continue to advise parents of immunization requirements for kindergarten entry.

Every effort will be made to assist parents, as needed, to meet the above program requirements.

REFERRAL POLICY

We accommodate children that need services documented through the Early Intervention Program, whether those services need to be provided on site or at the public school. We give them the space they need and provide activities that will support their work. Those going to the public school can be put on or taken off the bus here at “In the Beginning” Preschool.

When a staff member has a concern about a child, he or she will provide written documentation to support these concerns to the Director. The Director will then conduct several observations of the child and make recommendations to the teacher(s). The parent will be notified of any concerns and a conference will be scheduled. The Director will attend the conference, provide documentation of concerns and strategies to be implemented at school. If a referral for further evaluation is recommended the Director will explain that process to the parents. All documentation will be placed in the child's file. No formal referral can be made without parental permission.

In the Beginning Preschool Handbook - Updated September 13, 2022

Agawam Public Schools Special Services Office Telephone Number is 413.821.0557

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs and videos may be taken of your child to be used for publicity, including displays, bulletin boards or other types of program publicity along with media interviews. Parental written consent will be obtained prior to the use of any pictures for publicity.

Photographs and videos may be taken of your child for private use within our school and shared within our community via social media. If you prefer these photographs of your child to not be taken, an opt out form will be made available to you.



PARENT COMMUNICATION

PARTNERS TO PARENTS

We, at “In the Beginning” Preschool, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. We are so excited to be with you on this journey and provide support for you and your family. Your choice of “In the Beginning” Preschool involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.



Good example is the strongest teacher. Here at “In the Beginning” Preschool our teachers will strive to provide your child with only the best examples of faith, family, love, learning, and support. Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

As partners in the educational process, parents are asked to help develop a routine for their child that encourages and fosters healthy behaviors and habits that will transfer to the classroom. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- going to bed early on school nights;
- arriving at school on time;
- having a nutritional lunch and snack each day.

In addition, we ask parents to please:

- notify the school when the student will be absent or tardy;
- notify the school of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- meet all financial obligations to the school;
- inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- read school notes and newsletters and show interest in the student's total education;
- support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.



VISITS

Parents are always welcome and encouraged to come and visit their children during their time at the center, as long as the visit is not disruptive to our classrooms. The children are always our priority, and our focus will be on them and not the visitor. If you have a special talent or interest you would like to share with our center, please speak with our director.

NEWSLETTERS/FACEBOOK PAGE



Regular newsletters for communication will be sent home with your child. These will come in the form of monthly newsletters, weekly newsletters, daily notes on progress with your child/updates to our center or policies. Please read these so you are properly informed of all that is happening at “In the Beginning” Preschool.

Most communications will take place in our private Facebook Group, “In the Beginning” Preschool Parents. Please join this group to remain up to date with all that is happening with our school. If you have any questions or need help locating the page, ask a member of our staff.

It is essential that there is open communications between parents and staff. Concerns and issues arise from time to time. We would like to follow these steps. If a parent has a concern about their child, he/she should contact the child's teacher. The teacher may be able to address the problem right away, or a convenient appointment will be made to discuss the problems. If a teacher has a concern about a child, that teacher will notify the child's parent and arrange to discuss the problem. If the parent or teacher is unable to resolve the problem, then a meeting will be set up with the Director.

In the Beginning Preschool Handbook - Updated September 13, 2022

CHILD ILLNESS

If your child is sick (fever, vomiting, diarrhea), please do not send him/her to school. If your child becomes sick during school, you will be called to pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached, we will reach out to another of your emergency contacts.

No child is denied admission nor excluded for a long-term period based solely on healthcare needs or medication requirements. To ensure that the health and safety of a child is not at risk, and to ensure that the health and safety of those who may come into contact with the child, the following procedures are practiced:

- Rash of undetermined origin: Children may return when rash is no longer present or with a note from a doctor which states the rash is not communicable.
- Vomiting, diarrhea, fever: Children may return when they are symptom free for 24 hours without medication.
- Communicable diseases - Child can return when symptoms have passed, or with a note from the doctor stating that disease is no longer contagious.



MEDICATION



If a child must take any medication in school which is prescribed by a doctor, that medication must be brought to a member of our staff in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- Child's name
- Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine
- Signed medication order, including dose, frequency, and date

All non-prescription medication (cough drops, Tylenol, etc.) must be brought to our staff with the following information:

- Doctor's note/signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine
- Child's name
- Frequency, dose, and date

There will be a form provided for either type of medication, ask a staff member and we will get you a copy. We ask that you do not leave the medication in your child's bag but bring all medications directly to a member of our staff. The first dose of all medications must be administered at home.

PLANS FOR SICK CHILDREN

If your child has received any medication or had an injury within the last 24 hours, please let us know so we can monitor for allergic reactions or other symptoms. Children may respond to any of these in unexpected ways during their school day.

If a child should become ill while in care, the child will be relocated to a quiet area away from the other children but under the supervision of a teacher. The child will be made comfortable, and the child's temperature will be taken. The parents will be called and given the details of the child's illness by a member of our staff. Children who are mildly ill may remain in school if they are not contagious and they are able to participate in the daily program including outdoor play.

If a child has a fever equal to or greater than 100.4 degrees, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc. he/she will be offered their mat on which to lie down. If it is determined that it is in the best interest of the child that he/she be picked up as soon as possible, the parent will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible. Quiet activities, such as books or puzzles, will be made available to the child.

A child who has been excluded from childcare may return after obtaining a note from their pediatrician's office stating that they have been evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner, and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk to himself/herself or to the other children, or when all symptoms have passed.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING

PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

All staff members are mandated reporters according to Massachusetts General Law C119, Section 51A. This means that if a staff member has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child, he/she must file a report with the Department of



Children and Families. See attached information for definitions, reporting, procedures, etc.

The following procedures will be followed:

- A staff member who suspects abuse or neglect must document her observations including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information. The staff member will discuss this information with the Program Director.
- The Program Director or the staff member with the assistance of the Program Director will make a verbal report to DCF, to be followed by a required written report 51A within 48 hours.

Department of Children and Families Telephone Number is 413.452.3200

- If a staff member feels that an incident should be reported to DCF, and the Program Director disagrees, the staff member may report to DCF directly.
- All concerns of suspected abuse and neglect that are reported to DCF will be communicated to the parents by the Program Director unless such a report is contra-indicated.

PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT WHILE IN THE CARE OF THE CENTER

It is the commitment of “In the Beginning” Preschool to protect all children in care from abuse and neglect. The following are procedures for reporting suspected child abuse/neglect while the child is in our care.

- Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child will be immediately reported to the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Early Education and Care. A meeting will be held with the staff member in question to inform him/her of the filed report.

Department of Children and Families Telephone Number is 413.452.3200

Department of Early Education and Care 413.788.8401

EMERGENCY CARE PROCEDURES

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

“In the Beginning” Preschool follows the Town of Agawam School System weather policy with regards to inclement weather, i.e., snow days, severe weather emergencies. If there is a two-hour delay for Agawam Schools, the center will open at 9:00am. Information about our center openings will also be sent out in messages on the Brightwheel app.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills will be conducted within the first few days of the school year and will be practiced routinely in the classrooms. Exits are clearly marked on each area of the preschool and exit routes for each classroom are posted on the walls. Different routes will be practiced in order to be familiar to all.

A log will be kept on the main desk in the foyer with all attendance records and emergency information, for easy access for our staff. Documentation is recorded on the Fire Drill Log, located in the emergency file.



UNAUTHORIZED OR SUSPICIOUS PERSON

Visitors must enter the building through the foyer, ring the bell, and meet with a staff member at the reception desk before entering the school. If the person is unauthorized, our staff will call the police at once. Anyone watching the children outside or making the teachers feel uncomfortable will be reported to the director and police. All staff will be notified of any sexual offender living in the area.

EVACUATION/EMERGENCY DRILLS



In the event of an emergency that requires an evacuation of “In the Beginning” Preschool, one of the following plans shall be implemented. In all situations, the caregivers when evacuating shall take the following measures:

- Check attendance and compile an accurate attendance list (includes: students, staff, and visitors.) **This list will be on the Cook classroom desk, and will be taken in any emergency that causes an evacuations.**

- Account for all students, staff and visitors during the evacuation process, (classrooms will be checked, and attendance will be continuous taken)
- Transport all necessary medications, supplies, and records
- Coordinate all actions with community public safety and/or emergency management officials
- Confirm required transportation resources and arrival time
- Notify families of evacuation and host facility information
- Make arrangements for support of children at host facility until reunited with families or return to evacuated facility
- Maintain a record of expenses and log of actions taken by staff during evacuation such as names of contacts, times of calls, departure/arrival times, etc. to document evacuation process
- Take a cellular telephone if available for emergency notifications

If the emergency is confined to the immediate area of the school, e.g., fire or hazardous materials release, and the children cannot remain on the premises, the children will be relocated to the church building across the parking lot. They will remain at this location accompanied by caregivers while parents/emergency contacts are notified, and arrangements are made to either transport home or care taking for the remainder of the day.

If the emergency requires us to leave the entire campus of St. John the Evangelist Parish, our staff will transport all children to the Fire Department across the street. Parents will be notified with any changes/movements of their children while in our care.

CRISIS PLAN

“In the Beginning” Preschool has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedures to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building may be evacuated, and the children removed to either the Church, or the Fire Department across the street.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file at the school office the following information:

- Parents names, address, home and work phone numbers
- Email address to communicate with a parent
- Emergency phone number of a friend or relative
- Physician's name, phone number and medical alert information

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE



Children are encouraged to participate in the establishments of rules, policies, and procedures as far as is appropriate to their age and level of understanding. During Circle Time, there will be ongoing discussion of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. All children will be treated equally and with respect. In order to maintain a sense of community, we will follow a specific behavior guidance policy.

Our staff works hard to model the kind of social skills they wish for the children to exhibit, while giving them an environment and daily schedule that encourages their growth and development. Our teachers are trained to be responsive to the needs of the children, and to set realistic expectations.

Teachers need to model appropriate behaviors and positive attitudes. They will do this by focusing on the positive. Teachers will tell the children what they want them to do, need them to do, or expect them to do. The focus will not be on what they don't want them to do. (Example: a teacher might say, "I need you to speak kindly to our friends." The teacher will not say "Don't yell.")

The following are not allowed for any reason:

- corporal punishment, including spanking
- cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment
- denial of food, or using methods such as force feeding
- disciplining for a child soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing, forcing a child to remain on the toilet, using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting

- excessive timeouts - timeouts will not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within the educator's view (children will not be confined to a chair, swing, highchair, crib, or playpen or any other equipment)

The Department of Early Education and Care does not allow any licensed childcare program to use discipline techniques that require the use of any physical restraints.



SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

If a child's behavior causes harm to the other children or the teacher, then:

- the child will be removed from the area
- his/her behavior will be addressed when the child has calmed down
- the child will be asked to acknowledge the hurt that he/she gave to another individual
- if the child continually hurts others, then a parent conference will be set up. We will take every step possible to avoid the suspension or termination of your child due to a challenging behavior. This meeting is set up with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination
- If after meeting with the parents the behavior continues, the Lead Teacher or Program Director may ask for another consultation where they can offer suggestions of referrals for evaluations or other supportive services. Additional training will be provided for our staff
- The Lead Teacher and/or Director will also develop a plan, with the parents, for behavior intervention at home and at the center

The teacher will keep the director informed of improper behavior, and this information will be kept in the child's file. If a child displays behavior that puts children and staff at risk, then the parent will be called. Inappropriate behaviors will be documented. When the behavior is consistent, the referrals have been made, parent meetings have been held, and the center cannot meet the child's needs, a written notice of a one-day suspension will be given to the parent. If the behavior continues, then a 3-day written suspension will be given. If behavior continues, then the childcare will be terminated without notice. The center will try to not enforce this policy; however, we must protect the other children and staff. Each written notice will state specific behaviors and the steps that we have gone through to get to this point. It will also state the conditions for a child's return if there is a return. It is not our intention to terminate a child. We would like each child to develop interpersonal skills and develop respect and empathy for others. Sometimes the center is just not a good fit for the child, and it makes it difficult for a child to grow his/her potential. Then the termination will be necessary.

LIST OF NUTRITIOUS FOODS



When bodies are properly nourished, children can join in more active and engaging play and learning. Please send your child with the proper amount of food for lunch and snack each day, as well as a water bottle that we can refill as needed.

The following are examples of foods that are encouraged for children's lunches and snacks:

- Sandwiches with meat, or another protein
- Fresh fruits and vegetables (cut up to bite-sized pieces)
- Dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.) – Please be sure to supply a spoon for yogurt!
- Whole wheat cereals or breads

Candy and high-sugary drinks will not be permitted for lunch or snack. Candies will be sent back home in the lunch box.

We also have a pamphlet with foods that are not permitted at preschool. If you need one, please ask a member of our staff and we will happily get one for you.

Date _____

I, _____ have received and reviewed the
Parent Handbook of “In the Beginning” Preschool.

Parent signature