

Parent Handbook



1066 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
(412) 531-2644
www.stpaulsnurseryschool.com



Affiliated with St. Paul's Episcopal Church

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Contact Information	4
Hours of Operations	4
Mission	4
History	4
NAEYC Accreditation	4
Philosophy/ Educational Beliefs	5
Learning Outcomes and Goals	5
Visits and Tours	7
Staff	7
Teacher to Child Ratios	7
Professional Development	8
Board of Trustees	8

CURRICULUM

Play-Based Curriculum	8
How We Plan for Children to Learn Through Play	8
Class Descriptions	9
Extended Programming	11
Summer Play Program	11
Children with Special Needs	12
Child Assessment and Observation	12
Developmental Red Flags	13
Challenging Play and Behavior	13
Sample Daily Schedule	14
Outdoor Play/Big Room	14
Separation	14

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Child Health Assessments and Immunizations	15
Healthy Snacks and Lunches	16
Nut-Free School and Allergies	16
Hand Washing	16
Illness and Sick Policy	17
Absences and Illness	17
Medication Administration and Storage	18
Emergency Procedures	18

COMMUNICATION

Home Visits	19
Home Room Parents and Parent Mailboxes	19
Conferences	19
Newsletters	19
Message Boards	20
Email	20

Social Media	20
Website	20
Cell Phone Use	20
Class Lists	20
Addressing Concerns and Issues	20
Confidentiality	21
Parent Support and Education	22
SCHOOL CALENDAR and EVENTS	
Calendar	22
Events	23
School Delays and Closings	23
Field Trips and Neighborhood Walks	23
Birthdays and Holidays	24
Volunteering	25
ENROLLMENT AND TUITION	
Enrollment	25
Tuition and Fees	26
Waitlist	26
Class Progression	27
Withdrawal Policy	27
Scholarships and Tuition Assistance	27
United Way Donations	27
SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
Equal Opportunity	28
Open Door Policy	28
Drop Off and Pick Up	28
Custody/Guardianship	28
Parking Lot	29
Security System	29
Child Abuse and Neglect	29
Safety	30
Accidents and Incidents	30
VISITORS	
Visitors	<u>31</u>
Non-Enrolled Minors	<u>31</u>

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Contact information

Physical Address

The Nursery School is located on the lower level of St. Paul's Episcopal Church at the corner of Washington Road (or Route 19) and Mayfair Drive.

Director and Office Manager Contacts

Director - Joan Easton, jeaston@stpaulspgh.org, (412) 531-2644.

Office Manager – Martha Hudak, mhudak@stpaulspgh.org . All issues pertaining to tuition, lunch bunch, or any other miscellaneous financial matters should be directed to her.

Hours of Operation

The Nursery School has two sessions—a morning session 9:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., and afternoon session 12:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. A school administrator usually is available via phone between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mission

The mission of St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School is to: *Provide a play-based early childhood program that utilizes best practices while nurturing the uniqueness of each child.*

History

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School was founded in 1957 by St. Paul's Episcopal Church Rector, Dale David Doren, and a small group of parishioners. Today, the Nursery School enrolls approximately 195 children between the ages of 18 months and 6 years in various classes.

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School has a tradition of providing a high quality program which is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and licensed by the Board of Private Academic Schools and Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

NAEYC Accreditation

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation is a voluntary system that measures the quality of early childhood education programs. Schools that meet the NAEYC standards provide a safe and healthy environment for children, a well trained staff with access to educational materials and a curriculum that is appropriately challenging and developmentally sound. St. Paul's has been an accredited school since 1988. Our staff is dedicated to continuing this tradition of excellence.

Philosophy and Educational Beliefs

Our school follows a play based, developmental philosophy that largely draws from research regarding children and learning. We use many different teaching approaches to meet learning goals.

St. Paul's Nursery School believes that children learn best when;

- Provided a nurturing and child-centered program with diverse teaching strategies.
- In a program where the burden of responsibility is not placed on the child to meet the needs of the program, but rather where the program individualizes to the needs of the child.
- Parents and other involved adults have active partnership and meaningful involvement with the school, staff, and their child's education.
- Teachers are highly educated and provide developmentally appropriate practices.
- The focus is on the whole child; all domains of development (social, emotional, intellectual, and physical) are viewed as equally important.
- Appropriate early childhood curriculum addresses the variability of children's overall development, interests, culture, and individual learning styles.
- Provided opportunity for cooperation and problem solving with both adults and peers to generate and transfer knowledge from an already learned and established context to a new experience or new context.
- Encouraged to become age-appropriately independent and self disciplined, and when they are helped to comfortably persist at attempting new challenges and activities.
- Given the opportunity to make new discoveries and find out information through their own and combined efforts with teachers and classmates; as well as given the opportunity to experience the natural consequences of mistakes in learning and then given the opportunity to revisit and figure out adjustments and a new understanding for correct solutions.
- Provided an environment of respect that allows them to feel competent and independent, connected to others and understand how their world functions, and allows them to feel safe and secure enough to express their genuine thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

Learning Outcomes and Goals

Through play, children actively pose problems, explore solutions, and develop understandings of real world concepts of form and function. By comparing and contrasting information gained from each new experience to what they already know, they are actively constructing knowledge of the way the world works to meet learning outcomes and goals.

To address the whole child, we provide opportunities for children to progress and master developmental tasks in the following *interrelated and equally important* areas:

Physical Development and Health

Each of the classes has the opportunity to use the Big Room daily for gross motor activities such as climbing, tumbling, bike riding, and building with large blocks. When the weather permits, the children go outside to the fenced playground where they enjoy the freedom to play in the sand, the water source during warm weather, and on the playground apparatus. There is a playhouse for socio-dramatic play, a large outdoor easel for art, a swooping xylophone for music, and tables for snacks and other activities.

The teacher may choose to take nature walks through Bird Park where the children can observe animals, birds, flowers, trees, and leaves. Some outdoor experiences may build upon the indoor activities and subject areas of study.

Social and Emotional Development

The development of a strong social emotional foundation is as important as any academic content to the success of children in school. We support children's social emotional development by facilitating play interactions and helping to resolve conflict between children. We focus on social relationships, self concept and awareness, self-regulation and emotion health throughout our curriculum.

Approaches to Learning

A positive approach to learning is one of our overarching goals. Initiative, curiosity, persistence, attentiveness and cooperation are all facilitated by Imaginative play. Play is the single most important source of curriculum activity and the primary catalyst for *all domains of learning* during childhood. We want the children to learn to ask questions, use their senses in learning, show interest in topics, take appropriate risks and engage in increasingly more complex play.

Language and Emergent Literacy

Literacy is the development of the ability to listen, speak, read, and write. Literacy skills develop progressively and interdependently in children. Children's literacy development will be fostered through conversation, books, print knowledge, phonics, comprehension, and writing.

Mathematics Knowledge and Skills

The ability to think logically and reason to notice and understand relationships and to find order in the world help develop knowledge of mathematics in young children. Mathematics for young children is not simply counting or recognizing numbers; children will also learn mathematics by sorting, classifying, estimating, recognizing patterns, and exploring objects.

Science Knowledge and Skills

Young children are natural scientists. They are naturally curious about their world and are eager to explore it. We want children to observe their surroundings, make predictions, and test ideas in order to understand and make discoveries about the world around them. We will explore concepts of chemistry, biology, physics and the environment.

Creative Arts Expression

The arts (visual arts, music, and movement) are important ways for children to express themselves. Art will assist children in using symbolic "language" to express, understand and interpret events in their lives.

The visual arts provide children the opportunity to work with a variety of age-appropriate media. The focus of our art is on the process rather than the finished product.

In music education, children participate in singing and playing musical games with the music teacher who visits each class weekly with various musical instruments. Music is developmentally appropriate and emphasizes process instead of performance.

Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

Preschoolers enjoy learning about people—past and present—and how they live, work, and get along with others in the world. Our teachers explore culture, history and families throughout the school year. The surrounding community and its activities offer many opportunities for children to learn about their world, how it works, and what it all means.

We provide the needed flexibility, adaptability, and scaffolding necessary to challenge and engage a wide range of varied skills, interests, and abilities within a group. We provide a balance of age-appropriate active and quiet activities, indoor and outdoor activities, small and large group activities, and individual activities throughout the day to support their learning. We provide learning experiences that reflect the unique interests of the individual class groups and that are grounded in meaningful child-centered everyday life experiences that include play.

Visits and Tours

Prospective families and community members are encouraged to visit the school to determine if the school is the right fit for their child. While we offer a play-based curriculum, this may not meet the needs of every family. To schedule a tour or visit, please contact Leigh Carlson-Hernandez, Director, via phone or email.

Teaching Staff

Teacher Excellence

The teaching staff is one of the most important aspects of the Nursery School. St. Paul's teachers are required to have a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development or related field. Over 80% of the staff has taught at St. Paul's for five years or more, and many have taught for over ten years.

All teaching staff belong to the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children (PAEYC). They have been trained in infant/child CPR and other first aid techniques and have obtained their Act 33 Clearance to work with children.

Teacher to Child Ratios

One of the most significant indicators of quality in a school is a low child-to-teacher ratio. The lower the number of children assigned to one teacher, the higher the quality of education. St. Paul's historically has one of the lowest ratios in the area.

Teachers supervise toddlers (two-year-olds) by sight and sound at all times and supervise preschool children (three years and older) primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound alone is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently). Teachers are positioned so they can hear and see children for whom they are responsible.

Ongoing Professional Development

An educated staff is important to the success of a high quality program. We offer the opportunity for employees to extend their learning and skills through ongoing professional development via quarterly training by professional consultants from the fields of early childhood education, psychology, occupational therapy, and/or speech and hearing. We also provide funding for employees to attend local, regional, and national conferences

Board of Trustees

Description

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School, Inc. ("the Corporation") is governed by a Board of Trustees, and each member serves a renewable two-year term. The Bylaws require that at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the Board members and two of the six officers of the Corporation be members of St. Paul's church. In addition, the Church's Rector , *The Junior Warden of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Director of Children's Ministry* , and the Nursery School's Director sit as ex-officio members on the Board of Trustees. The Church Vestry also appoints a Vestry member as liaison ex-officio member of the Board.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall accountability for the Nursery School that includes financial, legal, long-range planning, and program oversight. The role of the Board is to operate at a policy or strategic level rather than manage everyday operations of the school itself, which is the responsibility of the Director and staff. The Board consists of forward-thinking people with varied backgrounds and skills that are indispensable to the school. Members bring a breadth of professional expertise as well as experience at St. Paul's Nursery School to their tasks.

Becoming a Trustee

Nominations for the Board of Trustees occur during the Spring of each school year. The Nursery School Board is interested in individuals with backgrounds in finance, law, education, marketing, communications, or psychology. If you or anyone you know would be interested in becoming a Trustee, please let the Director or the current Board President know of your interest.

CURRICULUM

Play-Based Curriculum

We use a blend of play-based curriculum models in our program. Each teaching group designs and implements an engaging program that appropriately addresses the age, abilities, interests, and learning styles of his/her group of children to meet learning goals.

How We Plan for Children to Learn Through Play

The teachers take advantage of the children's high interest and engagement in areas of play by planning around a topic and incorporating learning goals and objectives for children's learning into well-planned play experiences.

Throughout planned play experiences the teacher supports learning of mathematics (number and operations, geometry and spatial sense, and patterns and measurement) by introducing these concepts in a meaningful context. She also integrates language and literacy goals and objectives by helping children to discuss and document their play and by providing fiction and non-fiction books on the specific topic of study.

The teacher sets up the environment to stimulate play related to the topic of study by posting pictures both familiar and unfamiliar to the children, posting children's drawings and teacher's photographs, and supplying a variety fiction and non-fiction books on the topic of study. These will all serve to pique children's interest in play and provoke discussions about the topic. By creating an environment that invites children to play, the teacher will also get more children invested in the play activities, and will be able to individualize for children's needs and interests within the context of a group topic.

The teacher introduces a variety of open-ended materials for children to explore including different sizes, shapes, weights, and textures. The greater the variety of materials available, the wider the range of children's experiences will be, and the more information they will have on which to base their generalizations and theories.

Class Descriptions

All classes are served a nutritious snack, play in the Big Room or outdoors, and explore music with the music teacher. The older preschool and pre-k classes also enjoy small group art programming with our art teacher.

Parent/Toddlers

The Parent/Toddler program is for children who are between the ages of 18 months and 2½. This class meets one day a week, and the children are accompanied by an adult. Toddlers have the opportunity to explore in a peer group setting. Under the guidance of the teacher, the program uses play as a mechanism for social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Toddlers will be offered a wide variety of age-appropriate toys, puzzles, manipulatives, art materials, water, and sand for sensory exploration within the classroom. Adults attending the class enjoy an atmosphere of nurturing support with the teacher and other parents and caregivers. Adults attending class often share and exchange experiences, ideas, child-rearing practices, and family development.

2½-Year Olds (Young Preschool)

The 2½-year old program is a school "adjustment" year where children are introduced to school as a fun and nurturing experience. The emphasis is on sharing, cooperating, social skills, autonomy, problem-solving, and becoming a part of the group. The children learn through play and hands-on exploration of their environment and materials available in the classroom and throughout the school. We provide a language-rich environment by exposing children to varied vocabulary through games, stories, and conversations with teachers and peers. The children may choose to explore various art media by participating in process oriented, open ended art activities. They will have monthly classroom visits by the art teacher in the Spring

3-Year Olds (Preschool)

The 3-year olds continue to grow socially as they become more actively involved in cooperative and socio-dramatic play with peers, and within a group. They have the opportunity to learn to problem solve. Language, vocabulary, and literacy are fostered through rich experiences including puppetry and flannel. Vocabulary is increased through conversations and small group discussions. Math and science are introduced through naturalistic hands-on exploration that includes cooking, sorting, and classifying materials in the course of many daily activities. Three-year olds will have the opportunity to explore many types of art media and may choose to create two- and three-dimensional open-ended art projects and monthly classroom visits by the art teacher starting in mid Fall.

4- and 5-Year Olds (Older Preschool and Pre-K)

The focus of the 4- and 5-year old program is on the development of self-initiative and encouragement of critical thinking skills, the development of appropriate independence, and the exploration of topics and expanding knowledge about subjects and themes that are of interest to the children. Children participate and learn through more complex and creative socio-dramatic play. Language and early literacy skills are encouraged through t books, classroom discussions, and exposure to written words. This includes dictation of stories, job chart, labeling of items within the classroom, and writing simple messages. Ample opportunity will be provided for children to write out letters and words during their play and in the context of working on themes and projects.

The math and science curriculum expands as children explore, manipulate, and organize concrete objects. Children will have the opportunity to measure, compare, balance, and classify while building with unit blocks and other materials. During science, children learn to make predictions and test their ideas. Children's knowledge of their environment will be expanded as they explore outside on our playground and in Bird Park. The four- and five-year olds have the opportunity to participate in our expanded art program weekly with our studio arts teacher. They will learn the fundamentals of art, role of the artist, looking at art, and creating with a variety or mediums.

Kindergarten Explorations

Morning Kindergartners extend their learning two afternoons a week by exploring exciting themes of interest through hands on projects and activities designed to encourage children to make connections between people, places, things and events. The daily schedule will include opportunities for kindergarten students to play and learn about their world through projects, and outside explorations in Bird Park and on our playground, weather permitting.

Lunch and More

Lunch and More provides children with the opportunity to bring their lunch, and extend their day until 1:55 pm. Lunch and More focuses on expanding children's experience through projects and exploration of the world around them. The Lunch and More curriculum will include:

11:30 – 1:00 pm – lunch in followed by art enrichment and/or hands on science activity.

1:00 – 1:30 pm – Big Room or Outdoor Exploration

1:30 – 1:55 pm – Snack (provided by the school) and story/literacy activity.

The curriculum, which will be geared to pre-kindergarten (4's and 5's) age children, will take into consideration that these children are extending their day after a busy morning.

Extended Programming

Lunch Bunch

Overview

Lunch Bunch children enjoy lunch and an additional 50 minutes of play before or after their school session. Morning session children should be picked up at 12:20 p.m., and children in the afternoon session should be dropped off at 11:40 a.m. Lunch Bunch typically is staffed by two teachers. While at Lunch Bunch, children enjoy the Big Room or outside playground (weather permitting), work on arts and crafts, and occasionally listen to stories read out loud.

Parents should pack their child's lunch while being aware of the school's nut-free guidelines.

Please see the safe-to-share snacks and treats list.

Registration Process

A nominal fee is charged for participation in Lunch Bunch, and the program is broken into three (3) sessions throughout the Fall/Winter/Spring. The Office Manager distributes sign-up sheets in parent mailboxes with registration and payment information for each session. Sign-up forms are distributed shortly after school starts for enrollment in the first session. Participation in the lunch program is limited, and children are accepted on a first come basis.

Early Drop Off/ Late Pick Up

Our school provides the option for families to drop off a ½ hour early in the morning and pick up a ½ hour late in the afternoon to accommodate their schedules. The availability of this service is subject to interest yearly. Please let the Director know if you are in need of either service.

Summer Play Program

Overview

St. Paul's Nursery School operates a community summer play program that occurs Monday through Friday, 9:15 a.m. until 11:45 a.m., and runs for six (6) weeks during June and July. Each week is assigned a topic that the children will explore during their playtime. Children have the opportunity to play outside (weather permitting); however, each day's program begins in the classroom before moving outside.

Experienced teachers are hired to staff the Summer Play Program, and occasionally older high school or college students will act as assistants to the lead teacher. There are three (3) classes available, and children will be placed in the appropriate group depending on their age.

Registration Process

Registration forms typically are available in late Spring, and children are accepted on a first come basis. Children who are eligible to attend must be three years old by January 1st of the year of the summer program to be attended. All children must be potty trained. Tuition payment for up to three weeks of the Summer Play Program is due at the time of registration. If registering for four or more weeks, the balance will be due by the first day of the program.

Reminders

Please pack a snack and beverage for your child to enjoy while at camp. Snacks must follow the school's nut-free guidelines. We also encourage children to come to camp wearing their bathing suit under their clothing, and sunscreen and/or insect repellent needs to be applied before coming to the Summer Play Program. Your child will need to bring a towel, and pack a change of clothing.

Children with Special Needs

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in school. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

To address the needs of children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) we will:

- Ask all families to complete a request form for a copy of a child's IEP/IFSP. This request will be placed in each child's file
- File all copies of IEP/IFSPs in child's file in order to be readily available to share with teaching team
- Provide copies of IEP/IFSP goals to the child's teacher(s) and discuss strategies for meeting the goals
- Ensure all teachers are trained on how to implement an IEP/IFSP. Training will be documented in each teacher's professional development record

- Contact early intervention staff/consultants to schedule periodic meetings with child's family and teacher(s) to discuss the child's progress and to increase strategies in adapting IEP/IFSP goals in classroom activities and routines
- Request permission from families to attend any meetings with the early intervention team related to changes to the IEP/IFSP
- Monitor teachers' work towards supporting the child in meeting IEP/IFSP goals
- Request additional help from early intervention team if needed

Teaching Team will:

- Observe and document the child's progress towards goals weekly and use their notes to individualize lesson plans
- Prepare for and conduct family conferences at least 2 times a year to share progress on IEP/IFSP goals, the child's development, and participation in the classroom
- Meet with the family to plan for and discuss transitioning to new classrooms or programs

Child Assessment and Observation

Curriculum and assessment are closely tied. Classroom- or home-based assessment tells teachers what children are like and allows them to modify curriculum and teaching practices to best meet the children's needs. Curriculum also influences what is assessed and how; for example, a curriculum that emphasizes the development of self-regulation should be accompanied by assessments of the children's ability to regulate their attention, manage strong emotions, and work productively without a great deal of external control. ***-2003 Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SD)***

High-quality programs are "informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development. These assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communications with families and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children develop" (Commission on NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria 2003, np)

Assessments are used to understand and support learning as well as to identify children who may need additional support or services. Assessment methods include observation, documentation of children's work, checklists and rating scales, and portfolios.

When Developmental "Red Flags" Arise

All children face challenges; however, most of them will be able to cope given support and guidance from the teachers and environment already in place. Some children may need additional support to overcome those challenges in their development. St. Paul's Nursery School does not specialize in special education but collaborates and work closely with special education professionals from DART and other agencies. The teachers and Director have extensive knowledge in typical child development across all domains and can identify red flags in development when they arise through observation and assessment. When a concern arises, we will:

- Discuss our concerns with the family
- Review any assessments, and observations about perceived area of atypical development
- Make recommendations about next steps which can include further observations, monitoring of development, or outside evaluation.
- Provide the family with information about agencies/professionals to contact for evaluation and additional support
- Support the family through the evaluation process and collaborate with agencies and professionals to meet the child's specific needs

Challenging Play and Behavior

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions. We utilize the *I Can Problem Solve for Preschool* curriculum to teach and support children in their social emotional development including emotional intelligence and conflict resolution.

Teachers monitor play constantly to focus on the developmental needs of the group. They will promote coping skills in the areas of cognitive, social and language development that will assist children in monitoring their own behaviors. When a child's behavior/play becomes hurtful to self, others or property, teachers will take a proactive stance by facilitating solutions to the undesirable behavior, including use of positive guidance, re-direction, and setting clear-cut

limits that encourage the child's ability to become self-disciplined. These strategies include:

- Using the opportunity to listen to children's words to increase understanding of children's thoughts, feelings and issues
- Problem solving with the children involved or using creative redirection techniques
- Working to involve families in the process of helping children with developmental and growth needs
- Offering opportunities for dialogue between staff and parents
- Providing information, support and knowledge to parents and
- When necessary, recommending community programs that may be available as additional resources, including family resource specialists and play therapists

Sample Daily Schedule

(Schedules vary by classroom)

Arrival

Free Play

Adult and Child Directed Activities

Clean up

Big Room /Playground

Art or Music

Circle Time/ Group Meeting

Snack
Departure

Outdoor Play/ Big Room

Regular activity and outdoor play are very important for young children. In general, a child who is well enough to be at the School is well enough to play outdoors. This provides fresh air and movement needed for your child's general well-being and healthy development. You can help your child enjoy outdoor activities by making sure that s/he is properly dressed for the weather. In winter, this includes boots, warm coat, sweater, snow pants, mittens and hat. Children will possibly play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk.

Weather conditions that pose a significant health risk include wind chill at or below 25°F and heat index at or above 90°F, as identified by the National Weather Service. Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk will be identified by reference to AirNow.gov. Under such air quality conditions, children will remain indoors. Children with respiratory health problems such as asthma will not play outdoors when air quality is approaching unhealthy levels.

Separation

Every child and parent approach separation in his or her own unique way. Some children come to the Nursery School eager and ready to start a new adventure. However, many youngsters feel shy and anxious and may need extra reassurance and patience from parents and teachers.

Below are some suggestions to help deal with the beginning of the year separation:

- Allow your child to express his/her concerns and give your child the opportunity to talk about them
- Never compare your child to another student in the class who may be having an easier time adjusting
- Allow your child to bring a reassuring plaything from home that can be kept in his/her backpack
- Read a book about school to help your child prepare and cope
- Once you have said goodbye, please leave! The child who has trouble separating will find it harder when the parent is still visible or lingers
- Children take their emotional cues from parents; so be positive, confident, and reassuring when you talk about school

The teaching staff and director will help children and parents as they navigate separations. Many of us are parents and have experienced separation issues personally with our own children. We want to work collaboratively to make sure your child's experience at school is a positive one. For more information about separation visit our blog.

Backpack Use and Things from Home

Children may want to bring a backpack to school to transport artwork and handouts at the end of the day. Please clearly mark your child's name on the backpack.

A familiar object from home can serve as a transition object—an important bridge from home to school to help your child adjust and play at school. However, there are cons as well. For example, toys can get lost or broken or can be sources of conflict or one-upmanship as children try to outdo each other with what they bring to school. Therefore, children may be asked not to bring toys from home at all or to be kept in their backpacks during class. Teachers will communicate with parents as the need arises.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Child Health Assessments and Immunizations

Families must submit a completed Child Health Assessment form indicating that all immunizations are up to date as well as results of current physical examination no later than 6 weeks after entering school each Fall. If indicated necessary follow-up information related to abnormal tests or screenings must also be provided and placed on file with child's medical form. If child is overdue for any routine health services or screenings indicated on the medical form, the parent must provide evidence of an appointment for those services for the child to remain in the school. All health records of the students are kept on file in the Director's office. Allergies are posted in three places: the child's classroom, the Director's office, and the kitchen.

Every year, we check with the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org, for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our policy relating to attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are that unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Healthy Snacks and Lunches

The school provides a morning and afternoon snack. All of our snacks are Nut-Free and include a variety of fruits and vegetables, crackers, pretzels and cereal. A snack menu is posted on the bulletin boards. St. Paul's strives to provide nutritious and interesting snacks for your child.

Nut-Free School and Allergies

Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if students, parents, and the school administration work together to minimize risks and provide a safe, educational environment for food-allergic students.

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to have a Food Allergy Action Plan completed by the child's treating doctor detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care prior to the first day of school. A meeting with the director and teacher will be scheduled to review each child's Food Allergy Action Plan at the start of school. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the classroom, Director's office and kitchen. Employees are

trained to be familiar with and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

To better insure the health and safety of all of the children at St. Paul's Nursery School, peanuts, peanut butter, and other foods containing nuts are not served to the children during school hours. If your child is part of Lunch Bunch your child's lunch should not include any foods that contain peanuts, peanut butter, or any other type of nut. Employees will check lunches and foods in question will not be given.

Please be aware that there are many hidden sources of nuts or nut products included in different kinds of foods. **Baked goods can be a hidden hazard to many of our children with nut allergies.** Thus, any treats or snacks brought into school for distribution to the children WILL NOT be distributed.

Allergy or any other special health needs information should be completed on a separate form provided by the school called "*Special Health Care Plan*". Parents of children with special needs other than allergies should contact the director for guidance regarding necessary documentation and advance planning with employees.

Hand Washing

Because hand washing is the most important preventive measure to avoid the spread of disease, we teach and monitor hand-washing procedures that involve the use of liquid soap and running water, with vigorous and thorough rubbing for at least 10 seconds (the length of the alphabet song). , followed by paper towel drying. All employees and the children wash upon entry, before snacks, before and after play in the water table, after messy activities, and after re-entry from the outdoor play area. Adults also wash hands after assisting with toileting, handling garbage or cleaning, or administering medication.

Illness /Sick Policy

St. Paul's relies on the adult family members' thoughtful assessment of each child's health before sending him or her to school. Please keep him or her at home if any of the following symptoms are evident. Any of these may indicate the beginning of an illness, which might be easily communicated to other children or employees. You will be called and asked to pick up your child if they exhibit any of the following symptoms. *(This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.)*

- Symptoms that prevent your child from participating in activities
- Oral temperature above 99 degrees within the past 24 hours.
- Diarrhea
- Rash, bump or other out-of-the ordinary skin conditions
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours

- Excessive running nose
- Deep or dry cough
- Continuous sneezing
- Sore throat, strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics
- Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Unusual fatigue, irritability, or listlessness
- Head Lice

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething)
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.
- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to school until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected

Blood Borne Infectious Diseases

A written policy statement on Blood borne Infectious Diseases is detailed in our operating policies and available in the Director's office. If a child becomes ill with a vaccine preventable disease the child will immediately be excluded from the school until a health care professional gives written notice that the child is no longer contagious.

Absences and Illness

When your child will be absent from school, please call the Director's office. In addition to general concern, the school needs to know whether other parents need to be notified if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease.

When your child is ill, please keep him/her at home. **New colds, gastrointestinal upsets, and fevers tend to be highly contagious and need to be isolated to minimize spreading to others.** In addition, a child who is not well must use a tremendous amount of energy to carry on in a group of vigorous and active peers.

You will be notified if your child might have been exposed to a vaccine preventable illness such as chicken pox or infectious disease or condition such as head lice.

Medication Administration and Storage

St. Paul's Nursery School does not administer any type of medication except for those needed for life saving situations. These include Epi-pen, rescue inhaler and Benedryl. We only administer these

medications when brought in by the child's parent in its original labeled container with the child's name and detailed directions for administration to be filled out on the school's medical authorization form kept in the director's office.

- **Prescription medications** require the school's medical authorization form signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

Parents should apply sunscreen with minimum UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or insect repellent containing DEET prior to school arrival if warranted. Typically the children are not in school long enough to require another application of sun screen or insect repellent during the school day, but if considered necessary by the parent, the school only applies appropriate sun screen or insect repellent provided by the family in their individual child's back pack and with written parent authorization. At this time, our area is not designated by health authorities as high risk for insect-borne disease; but if that changes we will inform all parents.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency information is kept on file in the Director's office and each classroom. The information includes the child's physician, hospital preference, and emergency telephone numbers. Should an emergency occur (accident or serious illness), the child's needs will be met first and then every effort will be made to contact the parents and/or others designated on the emergency card. Should a hospital trip be necessary, the child's teacher or school's Director will accompany and remain with the child until the parent(s) arrive. Emergency cards **MUST** be kept up to date. Please inform the school immediately if information changes. Each year in January parents are reminded to inform school if there are any changes on their emergency card.

COMMUNICATION

Home Visits

We want your child's experience at St. Paul's Nursery School to be a positive one. Realizing that any transition can be difficult for both parent and child, home visits by the child's teacher are planned in the weeks before the beginning of school. The family and teacher meet in a familiar environment to the child. Your child's classroom teacher will discuss with you classroom expectations, your goals for your child and any concerns you may have starting school.

Home Room Parents

At the beginning of the school year, one or two Homeroom Parents will be chosen for each classroom. *Please feel free to volunteer for this wonderful opportunity!* This person(s) will act as a point of contact for all of the parents in the class, will help support the teacher when necessary, notify parents of delays or cancellations and will take responsibility for the classroom's participation in school-wide events and fundraisers. The ability to make phone calls to the other parents in the class will be a primary responsibility for this person(s).

Parent Mailbox

Parents are given a mailbox that will be used for adult communications such as permission forms, school flyers about upcoming events, etc. *It is the Nursery School's policy to use parent mailboxes ONLY for school-wide communication.* Please do not use the mailboxes for any type of outside solicitation or information about other organizations. **Be sure to check your mailbox on a regular basis!**

Conferences

Family and teacher conferences occur twice a year, once in the Fall and Spring. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. Your child's teacher will show you the written results of the continuum of developmental goals which are based on the teacher's observations of your child during their school day. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences with the teacher and/or Director regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Newsletters

Every other month the Nursery School publishes a newsletter with a calendar of upcoming events and other important information. This newsletter typically includes a lead article by the Director, information about upcoming school activities and/or fundraisers, and other topics that pertain to your child's education at St. Paul's Nursery School.

Each classroom teacher regularly updates families about current classroom activities such as upcoming field trips, class projects, and photos of the children that are needed.

Message Boards

Please regularly check your child's class bulletin board that is located immediately outside of the classroom. Important information such as sign-up sheets for activities, teacher conferences, and classroom and/or school-wide volunteer opportunities may be posted on the board.

There are three (3) main school-wide bulletin boards. They are located: a) in the hallway by the mailboxes; b) directly beyond the middle set of double doors near the Big Room; and c) outside of the Office Manager's office. Please check these bulletin boards as they will have information about school-wide events, educational topics, parent resources, snack schedules, and social activities.

Email

We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters, and general updates.

Social Media

In the age of technology we utilize social media such as Facebook and Twitter as one avenue to keep families informed about activities and experiences at the school. Photos of children and activities are posted as well as articles and useful links. Parents must give consent to have their child's photo posted, and we never post children's names online.

Website

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School maintains a website at www.stpaulsnurseryschool.com . Our Website was completely redesigned in July 2012. It provides a wide variety of useful information and updates including details of our history, philosophy, information on our classroom enrollment, school calendar with information about upcoming events, and links to newsletters.

Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend in the school dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with one another about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child, other children and adults who may wish to communicate with you, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the school.

Class Lists

Class lists are produced at the beginning of the school year and are distributed in the parent's mailbox. These lists are for school use only and should not be shared.

Addressing Concerns and Issues

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School is committed to ensuring the delivery of high quality education and care to all children. Working in partnership with parents to resolve any concerns and complaints about their child's well-being, is a key part of how we deliver on this commitment. It is our intent to ensure that parents have access to support and advice when attempting to resolve a concern or complaint. When employees work with parents to resolve a concern or complaint they will follow a process that is founded on fairness, impartiality, accessibility, respect and responsiveness.

Parents can expect that their concern or complaint will be responded to in a courteous, respectful manner and that employees will work in partnership with them to resolve their concern or complaint. In return, we ask that parents are respectful, co-operative and courteous to employees and that they are realistic and reasonable about what course of action is required to resolve their concern or complaint.

Confidentiality should be adhered to throughout the resolution process. This means that the complaint should only be discussed with those people directly involved in the resolution process. Observing confidentiality helps to protect the rights of everyone by limiting knowledge of the details of the complaint to those who will work together for a resolution. In addition, it helps to limit damage to any existing trust between the parties, thereby facilitating a resolution and developing greater confidence in one another.

The preschool teacher should always be the first point of contact. The parent needs to find an appropriate time to talk to the Preschool teacher or other relevant employees to discuss the concern. If the concern is about a teacher then the parent may prefer to talk to the Director. If the complaint involves the Director then the President of the Board of Trustees should be contacted. If the parent is not satisfied after speaking with the teacher, they may choose to discuss the concern with the Director. She will work with the parent and the employees to resolve the issue. The parent may write to the Director (who will then acknowledge receipt of the complaint with a written response as soon as possible). The Director will consider the most effective way of resolving the concern or complaint, based on:

- Information provided
- The preschool's parent complaint procedure
- Consideration of any legislative and policy implications
- Advice from the Board of Trustees if applicable

This process does not apply to matters where there are legislated requirements or existing policies and processes.

Examples include:

- Staff disputes and grievances
- Mandatory reporting responsibilities
- Some health, safety and welfare related issues.

Confidentiality

A limited number of individuals have access to children's files. These individuals may include the child's parents or legal guardian, program administrators and teaching staff who are directly responsible for the care of your child. Otherwise, child files, and the information therein, are strictly confidential, and are stored in a secure location. Each piece of information is maintained based on a strict "need-to-know" basis. Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released, with the exception of that required by law. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

All employees receive training in NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct which, among other issues, addresses the appropriate handling of confidential information.

Parent Support and Education

A library of parenting and child reference books is available in the Director's office. Any of these books can be checked out by completing the library card located in the front of the book. Place the

card in the gray box labeled "Parents Bookshelf Cards" which is located on the bookshelf with the books.

We strive to create and maintain a welcoming, inclusive environment not only for our children but all family members and those affiliated with St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School.

SCHOOL CALENDAR and EVENTS

Calendar

A school calendar is distributed at the beginning of the school year that outlines the first and last day of school, holidays, and employees in-service day(s). You can download the calendar from our website. Additionally, a monthly calendar is printed in the Nursery School newsletter.

Parent Orientation

Parent Orientation is held for parents in the evening early in the Fall. This is an informational discussion about the Board of Trustees, school events and policies. All parents, new and returning, are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Open House

Open House is held in the evening each Fall. This is a time for the Nursery School child to show his/her school to family members. Everyone is invited—from siblings to grandparents. The students get their rooms ready in preparation for this event, so it is a special and memorable evening for everyone involved

Beginning of Year Parent/Teacher Gathering

The Homeroom Parent(s) and the class teacher choose a date and time early in the year for a gathering for the parents to:

- o Allow the teacher to meet with the whole group to discuss what is and will be happening in the classroom. This discussion may include upcoming plans, holiday party details, field trips, toys from home, gathering curriculum ideas, parent participation, and other areas of interest or concern.
- o Provide the parents and/or caregivers a chance to visit with each other and become acquainted. It also can provide a time to set up a telephone chain and discuss specific responsibilities for holiday parties and other various school or class functions.

Teacher In-Service Days

To continue to grow and develop as educators we schedule four teacher in-service days per year. The school will be closed for the day during those sessions. Please refer to your school calendar.

Events

Fall Fundraiser

Each year in November, St. Paul's Nursery School holds a major fundraiser. Parents are assured a fun night out to meet other school parents, mingle with teachers, and enjoy delicious food and drinks. Invitations to this event are distributed to all parents in their school mailbox.

This event is an opportunity to raise funds critical for maintaining highly qualified teachers, keeping tuition costs low and enhancing the school environment and educational programs that the children enjoy at the Nursery School. The fundraiser includes a basket raffle in which each classroom is assigned a theme, a silent auction of unique items, and a live auction. With every family's involvement, this is always guaranteed to be a successful event!

Santa Breakfast

Santa Breakfast is held on a Saturday morning in December for the children of St. Paul's Nursery School and their siblings. There is a wonderful array of activities and performances to captivate and entertain the children, and a continental breakfast is provided. The school's music teacher plays a sing-along of holiday carols. Additionally, there is a puppet show, a craft arranged at all of the eating tables, and a visit from the jolliest of all elves, Santa Claus.

Invitations are distributed to parents in their mailbox prior to the event. Don't forget to bring your camera so that you can take a picture of your little one(s) on Santa's lap.

School Delays and Cancellations

When extreme weather conditions exist, we follow the Mt. Lebanon School District for delays or cancellations. In the event that Mt. Lebanon is not in session we will announce delays and cancellations on the television WPXI Channel 11 and on Facebook. Whether the Nursery School is closed or not, please use your common sense. If you are not comfortable driving on the roads, do not take the chance.

Field Trips and Walks

Field Trips

Teachers plan field trips to enhance the experience of the class. Each trip is decided **independently** of other classes, is at the teacher's discretion, and is based on the group of children and the relevance to classroom interests and curriculum. Most school field trips are taken by the classes of older children (4- and 5-year olds). A notice of the upcoming field trip is posted on the teacher's bulletin board outside of the classroom. St. Paul's makes every attempt to minimize the cost of the field trip to families, and any cost that the family would have to incur will be included in the notice.

Each child must be accompanied by an adult other than the teacher(s) at all times during a field trip. Families are welcome to bring their other children, please discuss this with the teacher.

Neighborhood and Nature Walks

Teachers plan walks outside of the school premises as they wish and as weather permits. The Director always is notified prior to a class taking a walk so that he/she is informed about the destination and expected length of the walk. Teachers also take first-aid supplies and a cellular

phone with them on the walk, and children always use the sidewalk or designated path while walking to and from the outing. Additionally, parents are required to sign a release form at the beginning of the year that gives permission for their child to take neighborhood or nature walks.

Birthdays and Holidays

Celebrating Your Child's Birthday at School

St. Paul's Nursery School wants to ensure that each child's birthday is celebrated with his/her school friends and that a memorable day is created. Each classroom celebrates in their own unique ways so please check with your teachers.

Invitations to Other Birthday Parties

Please do not send invitations to your child's birthday party to Nursery School for distribution **unless every child in the class** is to receive one. Please remember that children's feelings easily are hurt.

School Holidays and Reminders

Holidays are celebrated in the classroom, and each teacher determines which holidays are appropriate to celebrate and the date of the celebration. We try to be inclusive of all of the families' backgrounds and cultures when celebrating. Parents usually help with the preparations by volunteering to bring paper supplies (cups, plates, and napkins) and drinks (one or two containers of juice). **Please NO FOOD or CANDY**

Halloween

There is not an overarching school policy in regard to Halloween. Please trust the teacher's judgment about what is appropriate for the individual class. The children typically do not wear costumes to class as there are many other appropriate times for young children to wear costumes while they are with their parents.

Christmas/Holiday Gifts

Christmas is a time for giving, and you and your child may wish to give your child's teacher a gift. Please know that there is no expectation on the teacher's part for holiday gifts. You are encouraged to keep the gift small and simple—something made with the child is always appropriate. Please be sure to check with your Homeroom Parent because sometimes he/she will coordinate a holiday gift from the entire class.

Valentine's Day

Please check with your child's teacher before planning valentines. In any event, **do not** put the name of the recipient on the outside of the envelope. Simply include the correct number of cards for everyone in your child's class. Names on envelopes add confusion to a hectic day and make it very difficult for the teacher. Additionally, please **do not include any candy or food** with the valentine.

Volunteering

We have an open door policy and family participation in our school community is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a snack with your child. St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School is proud of the volunteer spirit that is present among families, staff, alumni, and the community at large. You are encouraged to give a bit of your time and energy and get involved.

Volunteer participation can take many forms. Each year parents are involved in planning and staffing several events, including our annual Fall fundraiser, Santa Breakfast and classroom parties. Parents and employees work side-by-side to make these events happen each year, volunteering their time to support the St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School community.

In addition, many opportunities to participate in the community occur throughout the year; in past years events have included discussion groups, classroom gatherings, and other happenings developed collaboratively by employees and parents. This year we will be distributing a newly revised Volunteer Survey to all families shortly after Parent Orientation. Our goal is to use the information provided to more effectively seek volunteer assistance from parents.

ENROLLMENT and TUITION

Enrollment

General Description

Enrollment in the Nursery School is open to all persons without regard to race, gender, color, national origin, or religious or political beliefs. Additionally, there is no requirement for children enrolled in the school to be potty-trained. Enrollment will be according to the following priorities:

a. Priority I

- Children currently enrolled in the Nursery School.
- Children of employees of St. Paul's Nursery School
- Siblings of children currently enrolled in the Nursery School
- Members of St. Paul's Parish who do not currently have children enrolled in the Nursery School.
- Siblings of children who have previously attended the Nursery School.
- Legacies—Children whose parents attended the Nursery School.

b. Priority II

- Children of members of the community who have been wait-listed since the enrollment period of the previous year.

c. Priority III

- All other members of the community.

Deadlines

Enrollment for currently enrolled children and their siblings generally occurs in January. Forms are distributed to families in their school mailbox and can be turned in or mailed in anytime during the initial enrollment week. After the initial enrollment week, Priority II and Priority III members may return their forms.

Special Classroom Requests

Requests for specific classroom placement may be made and will be honored, if possible. However, all placements are made at the discretion of the Director. Information about the status of your application will be distributed as soon as it is processed. Please contact the Director if you have any questions about enrollment.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition Procedures

Tuition is based on an annual fee that may be paid monthly, quarterly, or annually. The first month's tuition for the following school year is due in May. Subsequent payments are due by the 10th of the month from September through April. A tuition schedule to keep track of monthly payments will be distributed for each child. For your convenience, your tuition can be electronically transferred from your bank account on the 10th of each month by ACH (Automatic Checking) Transfer. To sign up, complete the authorization agreement form that you may obtain from the Office Manager or from the forms section on our website.

Arrears

After the 10th of each month, a late fee of \$2 per day will be charged. Tuition accounts that are three (3) months in arrears will result in the child's exclusion from school unless special arrangements have been made with the Director. The Corporation reserves the right to legally recover monies for services received.

Enrollment/Re-enrollment Forms

The Enrollment Form (for new students) or the Re-enrollment Form (for current St. Paul's students), accompanied by a registration fee, should be submitted to the Office Manager. The **non-refundable** registration fee is \$60 for the first child and \$40 for each additional child. Please make checks payable to St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School. Anyone who registers and is accepted into the school after May 10th will owe a registration fee plus the first month's tuition at the time of registration.

Tuition Costs

The cost of tuition will be determined each year by the Board of Trustees and communicated to current St. Paul's Nursery School families with the Enrollment Policies and Procedures Form.

Waitlist

When classes fill, families have the option to be placed on a waiting list. To be placed on the wait list the registration fee is required. If a student is not placed in the school, the entire registration fee will be refunded. Registration fees paid by check will only be deposited if the child is placed in the school.

Typical Class Progression

The typical progression for students is as follows:

- a. Children enrolled in morning sessions (9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.) will remain in the morning.
- b. Children enrolled in afternoon sessions (12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.) will remain in the afternoon.
- c. Children will have the choice of remaining at the same days per week or adding one (1) day per week. (For example, Tuesday/Thursday children may remain in the 2-day per week classes or move up to the 3-day per week, M/W/F, classes.)
- d. If a child desires to switch from morning to afternoon or vice versa, they may request to do so and, if space is available, their request will be granted. If a child desires to move from a 2-day per week class to a 4-day per week class, they may request to do so and, if space is available, their request will be granted.
- e. Essentially all currently enrolled children are guaranteed a space following the typical progression. Other requests will be granted only if space permits.

Withdrawal Policy

If a child is withdrawn by May 10th, all tuition paid will be refunded except for the non-refundable registration fee. If the child is withdrawn after May 10th, there will be no refund given, except in cases where the child withdraws prior to July 15th to attend a kindergarten program. Withdrawal may be made with one (1) month's written notice to the Director. Otherwise, payment will be expected for that month. Tuition will be pro-rated as in accordance with the one (1) month written notice effective date.

Scholarships and Tuition Assistance

St. Paul's provides tuition assistance to families in need. The purpose of this program is to facilitate diversity at the school, to provide assistance to families with temporary financial difficulties, and to assist those who have suffered a catastrophic change in their financial situation. A Tuition Assistance Application may be obtained from the Director.

There are also scholarships available for extended programs such as Lunch Bunch, Lunch n More and summer play camp. Please inquire about the process for applying for these scholarships with the Director.

UNITED WAY DONATION

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School participates in the United Way Donor Option Plan. In the past, the Nursery School has received many generous donations from this plan as a non-profit human service agency. These donations are used to help fund our tuition assistance program

If you wish to choose the Nursery School to receive part of your annual United Way donation, the designated code name is **St. Paul's Episcopal Sc**, and the code number is **2774**. These designations should be included on your pledge form to ensure that St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery receives your contribution. If you have any questions or would like a pledge form, please call the Nursery School to speak with the Director or the Office Manager. We thank you for your continuing support.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equal Opportunity

At St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, , marital status, sexual orientation, special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to come into the school at any time when the children are present either to visit or observe.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop Off

Arrival time is 9:00 a.m. for the morning session and is 12:30 p.m. for the afternoon classes. Please do not bring your child into the classroom prior to these times as this is when teachers prepare for the day's activities. Children must always be accompanied into their classroom by an adult. You are free to bring your child after the start of class, if necessary, although please keep in mind that it is more difficult for a child to integrate into the group when they arrive late and everyone is already engaged.

Pick Up

Pick up is at 11:30 a.m. for the morning classes and 3:00 p.m. for the afternoon session. Please make every effort to arrive on time to pick up your child at the end of the day. Children become anxious and worried when their parent is late and their classmates have been picked up. Please call the Director's office if an emergency causes you to be late so that the teacher or Director can reassure your child of your whereabouts. Since teachers need to straighten their rooms and cannot safely watch children who have not been picked up, you may pick up your child in the Director's office if you are late.

Release of Children

Children only will be released to individuals listed on their emergency card unless you

have made special arrangements by either:

- *Writing your child's teacher a note informing him/her of the arrangements, or*
- *Calling the Nursery School to inform your child's teacher or the Director of the arrangements.*

Custody/Guardianship

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Parking Lot

Think of the parking lot as a source of potential danger to your child. Please drive carefully and slowly because a child could dash in front of you at any time. No child may go into the parking lot without an adult. Please pay special attention to the NO PARKING ZONE as it has been posted for everyone's safety when entering and exiting the building. **Please do not text or use your cell phone in the parking lot as it is a distraction.**

Please use courtesy and good judgment. For example, you may want to follow the example set by the employees and allow families with infants to park in the spots closest to the entrances. **Additionally, never leave small children or infants unattended in parked cars.**

Specially assigned spots, such as handicap and other reserved and assigned spots are not for general use.

Security System

Safety and security of the children and employees in our school is always a priority. Although the building's outside doors are always unlocked, the interior doors leading into the Nursery School remain locked. You must use a key fob to open these doors during school hours.

Please request a key fob for anyone who will be dropping off or picking up your child on a regular basis. There is a \$10 **annual fee** for each key fob. If needed, please obtain a Key Fob Request Form from the Office Manager or download from our website.

We ask all of the St. Paul's Nursery School Community to help keep our school safe by doing the following:

- Do not allow those without a key fob to enter the doors. If you encounter someone without a fob trying to enter the school please direct them to the doors by the office. They must ring the bell or knock and be let in by a employees
- Do not prop open any of the doors to the school
- Please notify an employee immediately if there is a door that is not locked that should be locked or a door that is not working

We ask all visitors such as outside consultants to sign in and out at the office. We do not open the door for anyone who cannot provide reason for being at the school.

Child Abuse and Neglect

St. Paul's Episcopal Nursery School has a strict policy prohibiting child abuse. Growth and self-esteem cannot exist in an environment where abuse is present in any form.

We are required by law to report all observations of potential abuse to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our school will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. Employees of the Nursery School will report any suspicion of abuse to the Director, or, in his/her absence, to the President of the Board of Trustees.

Under 55 PA Code #349, it is stated that an employee may make a direct report. The Nursery School policy, however, directs staff to review the evidence of suspected abuse with the Director or Board of Trustees President before making a report to the State.

Safety

Clothing

Please send your child to school in non-restricting, "paint-proof" clothes. Your child's attire should be comfortable and clothes should allow the child to use the toilet independently. During warm sunny weather be sure to dress your child in sun protective clothing and apply sun screen on your child with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to exposed skin.

Children who are not completely toilet trained should bring their own desired type of diapers or pull-ups from home in their back pack. Please have an extra set of clothes available in case of accidents. The staff will check diapers or pull-ups for wetness or feces at least once per school session (with-in 2 hours). Any time a child's diaper or pull-up is wet or contains feces a staff member will change the child using a pull-up or diaper brought in their back pack from home following school diaper changing procedure.

Shoes should be safe for climbing and running. Boots, sandals, flip flops and slippery-soled shoes create problems since they often restrict action by not allowing jumping and hopping. If a child insists on wearing them, please send a pair of sturdy shoes in his/her backpacks. *If your child is not wearing safe shoes, they will be restricted to certain non-climbing equipment while on the playground or in the big room.*

Accidents and Incidents

Safety is a major concern in preschool and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the school area in order to prevent injuries. All of our staff are First aid trained and will administer care in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive a verbal report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

VISITORS

The School maintains policies limiting the persons who may be present during school hours (8:30 am to 3:45 pm)

A. Visitors

- i. A visitor is any adult person who is not an authorized key fob holder.**
- ii. Any visitor to the school must enter through the doors closest to the school offices.**
- iii. All visitors must sign-in at entry**
- iv. All visitor must sign out at exit**
- v. All visitors must be escorted by a staff member to their destination.**
- vi. All visitors must have appropriate clearances if they will be unsupervised on school property.**

B. Non-enrolled minors

Policy Regarding Unenrolled Children on Premises During Program-Hours

- i. General Rule. The presence of individuals under the age of 18 on School premises during program hours when those individuals are not participating in a School program in which they are currently enrolled (“Unenrolled Child”) may distract the Director and staff members from their paid responsibilities, disrupt school activities, increase liability, and pose a risk to the health, safety and well-being of the children enrolled in School programs.
- ii. Any Middle School or High School student who has been approved by the Director to participate in an authorized Work/Study or Independent Study program or to volunteer at the School shall not be considered an Unenrolled Child.
- iii. Any Parent or Guardian who is bringing an Unenrolled Child onto School premises during program hours in order to participate in the Parent/Toddler class with an enrolled student, to pick-up or drop off an enrolled student, or to allow a short conference or communication with the Director or a staff member, shall directly supervise the Unenrolled Child for the full amount of time that the Unenrolled Child remains on School premises, including during any use of bathroom facilities, and ensure that the Unenrolled Child does not disrupt any School program or activities. Further, no Unenrolled Child suffering from any contagious illness should be brought into the School during program hours. Parents or Guardians needing occasional assistance in dropping off or picking up an enrolled student

may contact the Director, who may make arrangements to bring the enrolled student to the Parent or Guardian in the school parking lot or to take the child from the parent or guardian into the School.

- iv. The Director and staff members are not permitted to bring a child, grandchild, foster child, minor family member, or any other individual under the age of 18 under their care (“Dependent”) onto School premises during program hours except during those periods of time when the Dependent is participating in a School program in which he or she is currently enrolled or in a School program described in paragraph 7 below. The Director and staff members are expected to devote their full attention during program hours to their paid responsibilities and to make necessary arrangements for the care off-site of any Dependent, including during those periods of time prior to and following the Dependent’s participation in a School program in which he or she is currently enrolled.
- v. Violations of this policy by any parent or guardian should be reported to the Director for appropriate action, up to and including prohibiting the parent or guardian from bringing any Unenrolled Child onto School premises during program hours for the remainder of the School year. The Director shall report to the Board regarding multiple violations of this policy by any parent or guardian.
- vi. Violations of this policy by the Director or by any staff member may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination of employment. The Director and/or any staff member shall immediately report any violation of this policy by the Director or by a staff member to the Executive Committee of the Board or the Rector. The Executive Committee of the Board shall investigate and make any disciplinary decision concerning any violation of this policy by the Director. The Director shall investigate and make any disciplinary decision concerning any violation of this policy by a staff member.
- vii. An exception to this General Rule shall be established for any School-sponsored program to which unenrolled individuals under the age of 18 have been specifically invited. By way of example, and not limitation, the Director may choose to schedule a “Take Your Child to Work Day.” An Unenrolled Child on School premises for such a program shall be directly supervised by their Parent or Guardian at all times during their visit to the School, including during any use of bathroom facilities.