



**2023-2024**  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**SILVER SPRING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRESCHOOL**

**444 Silver Spring Road  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050  
(717) 766-9400  
[preschool@silverspring.org](mailto:preschool@silverspring.org)**

## **Welcome to SSPC Preschool!**

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church is very committed to providing a preschool which meets the needs of our church members and community. The preschool provides a happy, healthy, secure environment for young children under the guidance of committed Christian leaders. This Parent Handbook contains information about our program.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL**

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool will meet the needs of the church members and the community by providing young children with experiences at their developmental levels in a Christian atmosphere.

Children's early learning experiences are vitally important to their development. Their lively interests, interactions, exploration, and readiness to learn are inexhaustible and influence a lifetime of learning ability and later success.

The preschool recognizes the home as the most important school. Parent involvement in the preschool is important, as it will assist us in supporting and strengthening the growth of our children. The preschool will provide a supplemental environment, equipped for young children at their developmental level, to stimulate creativity, and to turn everyday interactions into learning adventures that young children enjoy, in a nurturing environment that will be an exciting part of children's lives.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop an awareness of God through Christian learning activities which will include simple Bible stories and prayers.
2. To develop an awareness of the wonder of God's world by exploring the children's environment and surroundings.
3. To develop individuality and encourage creativity by fostering feelings of positive self-esteem, comfort, and uniqueness in a healthy, loving, caring environment.
4. To develop sensitivity to others through socialization.
5. To develop enjoyable, creative, and positive learning experiences which facilitate and encourage a readiness to learn.
6. To enhance gross and fine motor development.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Teachers will be busy preparing their rooms prior to the start of class. Please stay with your children until the classroom doors are opened **AT 9:00am OR until** they have been admitted by a teacher. A staff member will record their arrival time and direct them to the hand washing/hand sanitizer station. At starting time, please do not linger any longer than it takes to say "good-bye" and share a hug.

Children will be dismissed from their classrooms. Please arrive **AT 11:30 AM** and gather your child, their personal items and exit the building promptly through the MAIN ENTRANCE.

If you will not be on time for pick-up, please send an email to the preschool at [preschool@silverspring.org](mailto:preschool@silverspring.org) as we are circulating through classrooms and not in the office to answer the phone.

**WE WILL NOT DISMISS A CHILD WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THOSE LISTED,  
unless we receive notification by note or email!!**

**Please be sure to list all phone numbers at which you are reachable, in the event of an emergency!**

## TUITION AND PAYMENTS

Tuition payments are based on the YEARLY cost per child broken down into nine equal monthly payments. Our 2-year-old program is Department of Human Service Certified which allows us to accept children 2 and older (not a typical preschool age). Therefore, those costs are slightly higher than our typical 2-day program for 3-year-olds.

Program	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	TUITION
2-year-olds: Ducklings	9-11:30		9-11:30			\$165/month
2-year-olds: Bunnies		9-11:30		9-11:30		\$165/month
3-year-olds: (2 days)		9-11:30		9-11:30		\$145/month
3-year-olds: (3 days)	9-11:30		9-11:30		9-11:30	\$165/month
4 & 5-year-olds (3 days)	9-11:30		9-11:30		9-11:30	\$165/month
4 & 5-year-olds (4 days)	9-11:30	9-11:30	9-11:30	9-11:30		\$180/month
4 & 5-year-olds (3 EXT)	9-1:30		9-1:30		9-1:30	\$200/month

Payments are due on the first of each month, payable one month in advance. While the Preschool will accept checks for your tuition, we suggest parents enroll in our Electronic funds transfer (EFT) to ensure tuition payments are not missed. EFT enrollments can be made until 9/15/23. After this date, all payments must be made by check or cash. SSPC Preschool charges \$20 for insufficient funds or incorrectly written checks. Families are notified and given a reasonable amount of time to bring their account up to date. In the event of account delinquency, the child may not be allowed to return until settled. **Please make checks payable to SSPC Preschool.** Tuition payments can be placed in the mailbox. \*Please make sure to write your child's name in the memo section of the check\*

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarship money is available for preschool families in need of financial assistance. Referrals are brought to the Preschool Director through teachers, church members or the preschool families directly. A scholarship application must be completed and then reviewed by the Preschool Director. Full and partial scholarships are given, depending on the situation.

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool offers additional programs throughout the year outside of the regular preschool calendar. The programs are optional and carry an additional cost. They are developed by our preschool staff to expand on the opportunities and experiences of our preschool students. These programs are subject to change based on participation and staffing. Examples of the programs offered include but are not limited to:

### **LUNCH BUNCH**

Lunch Bunch, an optional program, is offered on various days of the week from October to May. Lunch Bunch allows children from different classes to stay an extra 2 hours, eat lunch and participate in play with children and teachers from other classrooms. The program is offered to children in the 3, 4, and 5-year-old classes only. The students will bring their own, ready to eat meals. The cost of each Lunch Bunch is \$15.00 and is payable in advance. Lunch bunch payments should be made in 5 or 10 increments. Please note there are no refunds for unused lunch bunches. Lunch Bunch is from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and is typically offered in the Polar Bear room. A “time to sign up” will be released one month at a time for lunch bunch sign ups. \*Please note your child’s name and that your payment is for lunch bunch in the memo section of your check\*

### **FRIDAY FRIENDS**

Friday Friends, an optional program, is offered on one or two Fridays per month from the beginning of November through the middle of May. Friday Friends is offered to children in the 2-year-old classes who only attend preschool two days per week. This program is designed to give these children an occasional extra day at preschool. The children will have the opportunity to play with children and teachers from other classrooms. The cost of each Friday Friends is \$15.00 and is payable in advance. Friday Friends is from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. \*Please note your child’s name and that your payment is for Friday Friends in the memo section of your check\*

**These extra-program fees must be paid in advance. If cancelled within 24 hours of the scheduled program for any reason other than illness, payment is required. If payment is not made, the child may not be eligible to stay for these optional programs in the future.**

### **WEATHER RELATED DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS**

#### **SCHOOL DELAYS**

If SSPC Preschool delays due to the inclement weather or for any other reason, we will operate on a one (1) hour delay. Preschool will be held from **10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.** Class schedules will be modified accordingly. If there is an extended day class or Lunch Bunch, these classes will end at 2:00 p.m. School delays will be announced on the preschools Facebook page, as well as on the church’s website, [www.silverspring.org](http://www.silverspring.org). An email will also be sent to all parents. The preschool follows Cumberland Valley for DELAYS always, and typically for cancellations.

#### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

If SSPC Preschool closes school due to inclement weather or for any other reason, an announcement will be made on the preschool’s Facebook page, as well as on the church’s website, [www.silverspring.org](http://www.silverspring.org). An email/text will also be sent to all parents via our Remind App if you have subscribed.

#### **MAKE-UP DAYS**

SSPC Preschool will consider making-up preschool after our M/W/F or T/Th classes miss school for three (3) snow days. This means that if we have a fourth snow day for either schedule, we will do our best to make up any missed day of preschool from that day forward. Snow make-up days are not built into the school year and will only be made up as needed.

#### **WITHDRAWAL**

If you must withdraw your child from preschool, we request at least one month’s notice, if possible. **Our preschool is supported by tuition payments, and we will need time to fill your child’s place.** Exceptions are made depending on circumstances.

#### **ABSENTEE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

If your child is absent from preschool, please email their teachers. If your child will be absent from preschool due to vacation or other extended absence, please notify your child’s teacher.

### **ILLNESS/GENERAL HEALTH**

We request that you keep your children home when they are ill. Preschool is not a place for sick children. If your child has a fever, vomiting, stomachache, diarrhea, or congestion (due to cold or flu), please keep him/her at home. If your child becomes ill at preschool, we will call you to come and pick him/her up. Depending on the severity and type of illness, they may be asked to wear a mask until you arrive.

The health of the children enrolled in our preschool is highly important to us. Please be aware that it is by SSPC Preschool policy that we cannot provide care for children that have or show any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Constant runny nose that is yellow or green in color
3. Inflamed eyes, pink eye, or other infection
4. Any untreated, contagious, or persistent illness
5. Rash or other contagious skin condition
6. Diarrhea/Vomiting

It is our policy that a child who has shown sign of any of the above symptoms cannot return to preschool until your child is fever free and not showing symptoms without medications for **AT LEAST 24 hours**. This is to help ensure that the spread of the illness is limited.

The staff at Silver Spring Presbyterian Church Preschool will not administer medication to the students, including over the counter medications or creams containing antibiotic ointments.

### **VACCINATION POLICY & HEALTH FORM**

To protect the health and well-being of all the children and extended members of our preschool, we ask that all children have up-to-date vaccines. A Physician's Form showing completed vaccination information is required. We understand that under special circumstances children may be on an alternative/catch-up schedule. Therefore, we ask that information as to previously administered and upcoming (out one-year) immunizations be provided to the preschool. If the family is working closely with a doctor to ensure proper immunizations (according to the American Medical Association Pediatric guidelines) that child may attend SSPC preschool. If it is determined that the catch-up/alternative schedule is not being carried out, we reserve the right to withhold the child from school until the agreed upon immunizations have taken place. \*This should be given to the preschool at the beginning of the school year.\*

As with all medical information provided to the preschool, this information will be held in confidence as only the preschool director has access to the information. *Section 23.84(b) of the Immunization Code only pertains to the public school system. We have the right to refuse admission as a private preschool.*

### **ACCIDENTS/INJURIES/INCIDENTS**

You will be called immediately in the unlikely event your child has an accident at school. If you cannot be reached and it becomes necessary, we will call 911 and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital or urgent care facility. If your child has an accident while participating in a preschool activity away from school, we will call you and then call 911, if necessary. We will continue to try to reach you. In the event of a minor accident or injury involving a child at preschool, the teacher is required to fill out an accident/injury/incident report explaining what occurred. The report is signed by the teacher and preschool director and given to the parent or guardian. A parent or guardian must sign all INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS, and the person signing the report will receive a copy after all necessary parties have signed it. In the event a parent or guardian is unavailable to the sign the report a notation will be made in the students file and the report will be mailed to the parents or guardian. Copies of the report are kept on file by the teacher and the preschool director.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS REQUEST**

SSPC Preschool is very willing to work with families when a child has special needs or requests. PLEASE make the preschool aware of any special emotional or physical needs your child may have, such as allergies to foods and insects. During the school year, please update your health form if there are any changes. The more information we have about your child, the better able we are to assist in appropriate care.

### **CLOTHING**

Preschool is a time for play, craft activities and fun. Please dress your child in comfortable, manageable clothes and sneakers. Please send in disposable diapers for children who are not toilet trained and a change of clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name in case of accidents. As winter draws near, we will ask you to send in a warmer (and probably larger!) change of clothing---just in case. These will be returned at the end of the school year.

### **PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held in the Fall and Spring. The Fall conference will concentrate on your child's early adjustment to the class. The teachers will tell you about your child's favorite activities and friends. The Spring conference will be a more detailed assessment of your child's development in the preschool setting. A Kindergarten Readiness Checklist will be given to you if your child is preparing to go to kindergarten in the fall. Teachers will send home a weekly class newsletter. They will also place a quick note on the classroom chalkboard (for those of you who are able to pick up your children) outlining the day's activities. **Please read these as well as our school communications. If at any time you have any concerns or questions relating to your child's preschool experience, please reach out. We encourage you to take the following steps: 1. Talk to your classroom teacher about the situation. 2. Talk to the director, IF the situation is not resolved. 3. Request a meeting with the director, classroom teacher, and parents. 4. If necessary, meet with the Head of Staff.**

### **BUCKETS & WATER BOTTLES**

Buckets are used at SSPC Preschool as a way of transporting art projects, newsletters and other important paperwork back and forth to preschool. The bucket is purchased by the preschool parent and is transported back and forth to preschool each day. Please be sure your child's name is on the bucket! To teach the children to 'be green' and eliminate single-use plastic, we are asking parents to bring a reusable water bottle for their child in their bucket. Please note: 2-year-olds will not need water bottles as they are learning to drink from a cup as part of their curriculum.

### **SNACKS AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We love to celebrate birthdays at preschool! Please notify your child's teachers if you would like to bring a treat for his classmates and sign up on the snack calendar. If his/her birthday does not fall during the preschool year, you are welcome to celebrate a "half birthday" at another time.

If you would like to treat your child's class to a snack, please sign up on the calendar and take note of the preferred/discouraged snack items. Please remember to bring your child's water bottle daily.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

We want you to feel comfortable knowing your child is safe and secure while here at SSPC Preschool. In order for you to help us in this matter, please be aware of the following school rules:

- (1) **DO NOT** leave any child in your car while you go into the preschool to either drop off or pick up students. Please make arrangements with another parent or staff member to stand by your car if you must leave a child in the car.
- (2) Please escort all students to their classrooms! We have seen children running down the hallways unattended by their parents. This also pertains to after school when parents stay to play on the playground. If your child needs to use the bathroom, please escort him/her into the building.
- (3) To make the preschool as safe as possible, only the MAIN PRESCHOOL ENTRANCE may be utilized for entering and exiting the school. In addition, the interior doors will be locked Monday through Friday from 9:15-11:15 a.m. and from 11:45-1:15 p.m.
- (4) If someone other than the parent will be picking up a child from preschool, that individual will need to show their driver's license or other photo identification the first time. Anyone picking up a child from preschool (other than parent) will need to be listed on the Emergency Form.
- (5) The SSPC Preschool Emergency Planning Guide is on file in the preschool office for your review of emergency procedures.
- (6) Fire drills are scheduled every sixty (60) days so that children and staff are aware of our evacuation plan in the event of a building fire. The church office arranges the sounding of the fire alarm for this drill.
- (7) Every year, parents are asked to sign a Permission to Photograph form which gives the preschool staff permission to photograph their child(ren) throughout the school year. Photos may be used in newsletters, art projects, Fall Faire displays and others, throughout the preschool and church.
- (8) No child is permitted outside of the preschool classroom without a teacher or parent escort. All children are escorted to the bathroom, gym or playground by a teacher or parent. Children in the 3, 4 & 5-year-old classes may go into the hall to place items in their buckets with teacher permission.
- (9) Teachers will not take children to the playground if there is snow, rain or temperatures below **32 degrees**. The gym will be used for play in the event of inclement weather. Only one class is permitted on the playground or in the gym at one time. Playground/Gym rules are outlined in a separate document. **If you play on the playground with your child, please continue to use the school playground rules!** One teacher from each classroom is required to carry an emergency bag when leaving the classroom with the children. This bag contains all emergency forms which include parent phone numbers, allergy information, emergency kit, tissues, and epi-pens (if necessary).

### **BEHAVIOR / DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The staff of SSPC Preschool strives to nurture feelings of self-worth, security and uniqueness in a loving, caring atmosphere. We believe that discipline plays an important role in maintaining this environment. We realize that no child is perfect and that some children do and say things that they should not. Our policy below ensures the safety of every child enrolled:

Preschool teachers will set consistent and age-appropriate guidelines that will help children maintain self-control, refrain from harming themselves or others and make appropriate choices:

1. Acknowledge children for appropriate behavior and offer sincere praise.
2. Re-direct inappropriate behavior.
3. Keep rules few, simple and consistent.
4. Make natural and logical consequences for disobeying rules.
5. Maintain age-appropriate expectations.
6. Maintain consistency in classroom routine.
7. Keep attention to inappropriate behavior to a minimum. Try to work 1:1 when possible.
8. Use a quiet, matter-of-fact tone as opposed to an angry or excited tone.
9. Use time-out. Time spent in time-out is not to exceed one minute for each year of age.
10. Behavior that can be potentially unsafe should never be ignored.

**Any accident or incident** that a child is involved in which results in a physical injury will be documented with a typed report. This INCIDENT REPORT is intended to inform you, the parent or legal guardian, about behavior or a situation that has occurred. We encourage you to review the report with your child and to discuss, if necessary, better ways to deal with the situation that transpired. Should you have any questions or concerns about the report, the staff at the Preschool will discuss them with you. As with any disagreement, the viewpoint of the persons involved vary greatly. **Please remember that at no time is it acceptable for a parent or legal guardian to engage in an argument or threaten the staff who work with the children. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to: loud voices in front of the children, foul language or threatening physical harm. This type of behavior could result in your child's dismissal from the preschool.**

Should a child or parent cause damage to any Silver Spring Presbyterian Church owned property because of inappropriate activity or behavior, we reserve the right to assess the parent or legal guardian for any and all amounts necessary to repair the property. Likewise, we reserve the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of any child who is consistently unable to participate as part of the class as defined in the Behavior/Discipline Policy. Any child who has been terminated from the Preschool will not be eligible to re-enroll at any time in the future. Termination/suspension will be considered based on an excessive number of reports or if the severity of a specific incident is such that we feel the safety of the other children or staff may be in jeopardy. Such decisions are not considered lightly. When a decision of this nature is made by the Preschool Director and subject to the approval of Session, the circumstances surrounding the event(s) have already been discussed with all preschool staff involved and the parent/guardian of the child in question. Any incident which occurs in the SSPC program must be kept confidential; therefore, the outcome cannot be discussed with the parents of other children involved in the preschool. There will be no tuition refunds given for the month in which the child who removed from our program.