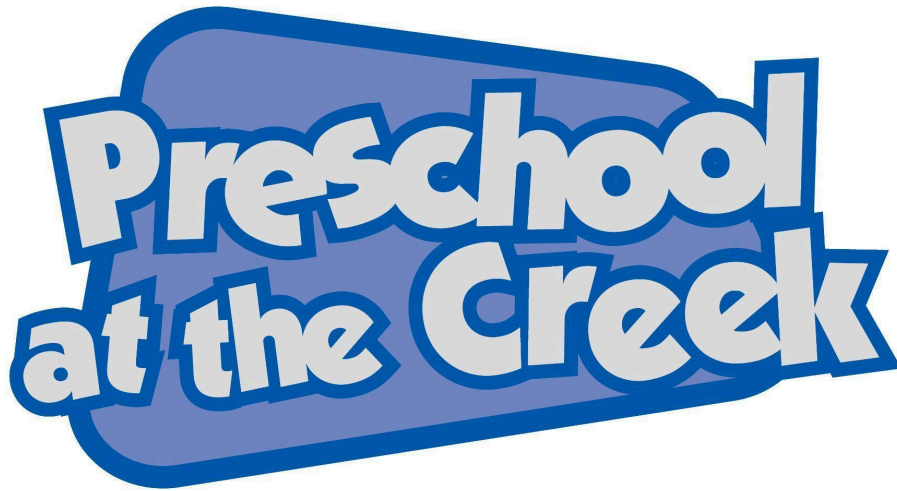


# Parent Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

Last Updated May 2026



A Weekday Preschool



~ 3229 Burlington Mills Road ~ Wake Forest, NC 27587 ~ 919-263-8022

[www.richlandcreek.com](http://www.richlandcreek.com)



## Welcome Letter

Dear Parents,

Welcome to *Preschool at the Creek*, a weekday preschool program and ministry of Richland Creek Community Church! Our program exists to provide you and your child an exciting Christ-centered preschool education. We will strive to provide the loving care and guidance that your child needs as he/she grows and develops while instilling biblical principles.

The Bible teaches us that the discipleship and education of our children is primarily the responsibility of parents (Deut. 6). Therefore, we are here to "assist" you in educating your child. We will always encourage parents to ask questions and become very involved in their child's educational process. Cooperation between parents and staff will contribute to a successful experience for your child.

This handbook is designed to help you understand our program's mission as well as the policies and procedures under which we operate. This weekday preschool was established to share the Gospel of Jesus, teach biblical principles, and provide a learning environment that will help preschoolers grow in all areas of their lives (Luke 2:52).

We will make every effort to inform you of any changes that take place in the Parent Handbook. Thank you in advance for your support as we work together toward a successful experience here at *Preschool at the Creek*.

We look forward to getting to know all of you and your sweet children this school year!

Sincerely,

Candace Hughes  
Weekday Preschool Director

Brice Poorbaugh  
Assistant Director

*All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children (Isaiah 54:13).*

# About Us

## **Vision Statement**

*Preschool at the Creek* seeks to instill excellence in academics, character, and service to God and others in a fun and safe Christian Environment.

## **Educational Philosophy of the Program**

*Preschool at the Creek* is a Christian preschool that emphasizes Christ-centered teaching. The Bible is the foundation for all activities and subject matter that your child will be exposed to.

We believe that the early years of your child's life are the foundation upon which future learning depends. "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Our aim is to provide an environment where your child will experience the love of Jesus through their time at preschool. Recognizing the importance of balanced growth, our staff will provide your child the opportunity for cognitive, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual development through our curriculum. We are committed to providing biblically based, age-appropriate experiences to allow each child to progress in these areas at his/her own level of ability, while enjoying feelings of success. This is primarily done through hands-on activities and positive Christ-like role modeling of the staff.

## **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students**

*Preschool at the Creek* admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the preschool. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## Statement of Belief

To view the Statement of Belief for Richland Creek Community Church please visit our website at <https://richlandcreek.com/about-us/what-we-believe/>.

## Purpose and Goals

- Help preschoolers understand God's purpose, plan, and love for them.
- Provide an academic atmosphere in which children are encouraged to be productive and creative learners.
- Develop an appreciation for education and a love of learning.
- Educate the whole child – cognitively, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually
- Develop quality friendships in a safe and comfortable environment.
- Develop a sense of responsibility and independence by teaching developmental skills and strengthening decision-making skills.
- Develop the ability to work and play in groups, as well as independently and promote healthy relationships with peers and adults.
- Effectively prepare your child for success in Kindergarten.

## Registration and Enrollment Information

### Registration Fees

There is a registration fee that **must** be paid at time of registration. Registration fees will be paid annually. This is a **non-refundable** fee and is not part of your tuition payment for the upcoming school year. These fees will cover operating and supply costs for the school year.

### 2026-2027 Monthly Tuition

Child's Age	Program Days and Hours	Registration Fee	Monthly Tuition Fee
Turned TWO by <b>8-31-2026</b>	TuTH / 9am - 12pm	\$260.00	\$260.00
	MWF / 9am - 12pm	\$300.00	\$300.00
Turned THREE by <b>8-31-2026</b>	TuTH / 9am - 12pm	\$260.00	\$260.00
	MWF / 9am - 12pm	\$300.00	\$300.00
	M-Th / 9am - 12pm	\$335.00	\$335.00
Turned FOUR by <b>8-31-2026</b>	MWF / 9am - 12pm	\$300.00	\$300.00
	M-Th / 9am - 12pm	\$335.00	\$335.00
	M-F / 9am - 12pm	\$375.00	\$375.00
Turned FIVE by <b>12-31-2026</b>	M-F / 9am - 12pm	\$375.00	\$375.00

## Procure

Procure is our primary source of parent communication. Procure is used for messaging, billing and payments, photos, etc. Please make sure you download the app on your phone and allow notifications in your settings. Messages sent in the app will be seen by your child's teacher, the director and the assistant director only.

## Financial Policy

All families enrolled at Preschool at the Creek agree to adhere to the following financial policy:

- Preschool at the Creek operates 9 months per school year with **equal monthly tuition payments.**
- Tuition is due on the first day of every month, starting September 2025.
- Your tuition fee will **not** be prorated for any days missed for holidays, sickness, vacation, or inclement weather.

- All tuition payments should be placed in the tuition dropbox to the left of the preschool office by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month or paid online. You can make a payment with a personal check, certified check, money order, or online in response to your invoice that will be emailed to you each month. All checks should be payable to **Richland Creek Community Church**. Please indicate your child's name in the memo area of your check.
- Paying with a credit card through Procure online will incur a processing fee of 2.7% + \$0.30 per transaction. These fees are subject to change without notice and are set through our payment processor. If you pay online with a credit card, you will see the charge as you enter your payment.
- Tuition will be considered late on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. There will be a **\$20.00 late fee** for all late tuition payments. **If all tuition and fees (including late payment fees) are not paid by the last day of the month, your child will be considered withdrawn from Preschool at the Creek.** If you are experiencing financial hardship, please speak to the Director. *Preschool at the Creek* reserves the right to dismiss any family for nonpayment of tuition or fees.
- There will be a \$25.00 fee charged on all returned checks. After the second returned check you will be asked to make all future payments with a certified check or money order.
- **A two week written notice is required if a child is going to withdraw from the program. Monthly tuition payments cannot be refunded or prorated for early withdrawal.**

## **Registration/Enrollment Procedures**

Enrollment operates on a “first come first serve” basis. Once all spaces have been filled, there will be a waiting list formed for each class.

The following items are due at registration:

1. Registration Fee (online payment, personal check, certified check or money order ONLY and please note your child's name in the memo).
2. Completed and Signed Registration Form (online)

The following items must be completed and returned prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Enrollment:

1. Child's Application
2. Child's Medical Report
3. Immunization History
4. Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
5. Discipline and Behavior Management Policy
6. "Getting to Know You" Questionnaire
7. Media Release Form
8. Student Directory Form
9. Financial Responsibility Policy
10. Emergency Medical Consent Form

Registration for the **2027-2028** school year will be held in **January 2027**. Details regarding future registration dates and procedures will be given at a later date.

## **Meet the Teacher Night**

Meet the Teacher night for the 2026-2027 school year will be on Tuesday, September 1st at 6:00 pm. A Parent Orientation video will be sent prior to this night. Classroom assignments will be distributed by this date.

## **Daily Operations**

### **Preschool Hours:**

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### **Preschool Office Hours:**

8:30 am - 1:30 pm

## **Arrival and Departure Procedures**

You will enter the building and walk to your child's class for both morning drop off and afternoon pick up. Procure is used to sign your child in and out.

Preschool drop off will begin at 8:55 am. Please arrive by 9:05 so that we can promptly begin our preschool day. At 9:05, doors will lock and anyone that arrives after that will be walked to class by a Director. All parents are expected to exit the building promptly after dropping off their child. Quick drop offs are much easier for our preschoolers and help alleviate separation anxiety.

Dismissal will begin at 11:55. **You will need your assigned pick up tag with you to pick up your child.** At 11:55, our front doors will unlock so that you can walk to your child's classroom. You'll wait in the hallway for the teacher to check tags and dismiss one child at a time.

**Your child will not be released to anyone that does not have the Preschool at the Creek pick up tag.** If someone arrives to pick up, but does not have the pickup tag, we will ask them to wait while we check their ID and verify that they are on the pickup list for your child. We will not release your child to anyone not on file prior to pick up. You are able to add people to your pick up list via the Procure app.

If for any reason we feel that the safety of the child is compromised by the state of the person picking up your child, we reserve the right not to release them. In the event that such a situation should occur, the child will be held in the Director's or a Pastor's care and the proper authorities will be notified.

All children must be picked up by 12:05 pm.

Preschool at the Creek cannot be held responsible for proper car seat placement. This is the responsibility of the parent/guardian picking up the child from school.

**Please remember to DRIVE SLOWLY and WATCH CAREFULLY for children when entering or leaving the church campus. Take notice of the one-way arrows in our parking lot.**

Children are not allowed to run through the halls, building or parking lot unsupervised. Children are required to stay with their parent/guardian at all times during drop off and pick up, including while in the parking lot.

## Late Pick Up Policy

Our teachers use the time after school for classroom sanitation and preparation for the following day, so it is crucial that your child is picked up no later than 12:05 pm as the planned school program is completed at this time. If a parent does not arrive and sign out a child before 12:05 pm, a late charge will be added to their account. **The late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged starting at 12:05 pm.** A written notice will be issued to you and the fee can be paid in addition to the next month's tuition. An abuse of this grace period is grounds for dismissal from the program.



The intentions of our sickness policy are to reduce the spread of illness among children and teachers. We also want children to have the proper amount of time at home in order to fully recover. We want to partner with parents so that we can sustain a healthy and safe environment for everyone.

Therefore, if your child is displaying any of the following symptoms, they will not be permitted to attend school. In addition, **your child must be symptom free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.** If your child is prescribed an antibiotic, they must be 24 hours into their dosage before returning to school.

The symptoms are as follows:

- Fever
- Cough
- Nasal Congestion
- Sore Throat
- Shortness of Breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Poor Appetite
- Vomiting (for any reason)
- Diarrhea (for any reason)
- Head Lice (*child must be nit free and approved by Director prior to reentering classroom*)

- Skin rash, excluding diaper rash
- Red, watery eyes or discharge in eye
- Fussy, irritable behavior, or your child's inability to perform all of the day's regular activities

If your child becomes ill while at school or exhibits any of the above symptoms, the Director will contact you immediately to pick your child up from school. If you are unavailable, your emergency contacts will be called.

## Medication



If your child should need medication on campus due to allergies (Epi-pen, Benadryl, etc.) or asthma (inhaler) you will need to fill out a medication release form. Turn this form in to the Director along with the medication that will be held in the preschool office. We are not able to administer over the counter meds or creams.

## Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

We follow the North Carolina Division of Child Development guidelines for our Discipline Policy. It is as follows:

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of preschool children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, this facility will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy:

### We:

- DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- DO reason with and set limits for the children.
- DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
- DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.

- DO listen to the children.
- DO provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
- DO provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
- DO treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
- DO ignore minor misbehaviors.
- DO explain things to children on their levels.
- DO use short supervised periods of "time-out".
- DO stay consistent in our behavior management program.

**We:**

- DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
- DO NOT make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
- DO NOT shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
- DO NOT deny food or rest as punishment.
- DO NOT relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
- DO NOT leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
- DO NOT allow discipline of children by children.
- DO NOT criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

**"Time-Out"**

"Time-out" is the removal of a child for a short period of time (3 to 5 minutes) from a situation in which the child is misbehaving and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The "time-out" space, usually a chair, is located away from classroom activity but within the teacher's sight. During "time-out," the child has a chance to think about the misbehavior which led to his/her removal from the group. After a brief interval of no more than 5 minutes, the teacher discusses the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown to the other children.

**Additional Behavior Policy**

When disruptive or aggressive behavior continues in a classroom after the teacher has worked through behavior modifications with the child, the child will be brought to the Director's office for additional assistance. Parents will be

notified. If a child's behavior does not improve, a parent will be called and the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day.

## **Services for Preschool Families**

Preschool at the Creek partners with the Wake County Public School System Office of Learning. Sometimes it is helpful to have an outside agency observe your child in the classroom if a teacher or parent is concerned about behavioral issues or developmental delays of a child. PATC teachers or staff may recommend an observation of your child and request your permission to begin the process if there are any concerns with your child's well-being in the classroom. Parents may also request an observation.

- Project Enlightenment is an early childhood education and prevention program of the Wake County Public School System for young children from birth through kindergarten. Project Enlightenment offers screenings for social, physical, behavioral, and emotional development.
- Child Find provides evaluations for Wake County residents, at no cost to the family, to children suspected of having a disability and assigns eligible children with disabilities to special education services. They serve children who are 3-5 years old, and not age-eligible to attend Kindergarten.

If your child is already receiving services such as speech therapy or occupational therapy, we are happy to work with any agency to make your child's preschool experience successful.

## **Behavior Modification**

Modifications may be suggested by a teacher, Director, parent, or outside professional to assist with a child's behavior. If the modifications are reasonable and financially feasible, we will begin a trial period of one week to one month. The length of time will be determined by the Director and teacher. Working together as a team is essential to providing the proper learning environment for your child. If modifications do not improve the situation in the classroom or if parents are not cooperative with modifications requested, PATC reserves the right to withdraw the child. If parents are uninterested in partnering with PATC to best support their child, the child may be subject to withdrawal.

Currently, the waiting time for the above services can be weeks to months. While in the process of waiting, if the child's disruptive or aggressive behavior cannot

be managed in the classroom with modifications, the child may be withdrawn from PATC before assistance can be provided. If services or assistance are eventually provided, it is up to the Director to determine if the child can return with the services assigned to them.

## **Discontinuation of Enrollment**

Preschool at the Creek reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of a child for various reasons:

- Tuition has not been paid as stated in the financial agreement, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director.
- Habitual late pickup of a child.
- Behavior that consistently disrupts the learning environment and/or poses a threat to staff members or other children. Examples are running away, climbing on or under furniture and tables, repeated defiance, etc.
- Aggressive behavior including, but not limited to, kicking, punching, slapping, bullying, using foul language, spitting, throwing chairs, pulling hair, and breaking things intentionally that cannot be corrected within a reasonable amount of time to be specified by the Director and teacher.
- Potty training issues that cannot be rectified within a reasonable time frame set by the Director.
- Any violent, obscene, threatening, intimidating, or harmful act or behavior by a parent or family member as deemed inappropriate by Preschool at the Creek can result in immediate dismissal.
- Blatant disregard for policies and procedures outlined in PATC Parent Handbook.

Preschool at the Creek reserves the right to refuse or discontinue enrollment if a child's behavioral, emotional, or physical needs cannot adequately be met by preschool staff after modifications and recommendations have been made. In such cases, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents to explore alternative options.

In most cases, parents will be informed of specific issues before a child is withdrawn from our program. An opportunity to rectify the situation may be given. If a child is dismissed from the program, tuition will not be refunded or prorated. Future re-enrollment, if requested, will be on a case-by-case decision from the Director and Assistant Director.

## Emergency Procedures



Preschool at the Creek conducts fire and tornado drills. Each classroom has an emergency evacuation route posted in the classroom. In case of a fire, the class will evacuate to an assigned area outdoors. In case of a tornado, the children will be evacuated to the inner wall of our lower level, away from all doors and windows.

In the case of a larger disaster or prolonged evacuation we have developed an emergency plan designed to meet the needs of the preschool. Numerous PATC staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR, as are several members of our pastoral staff, who will support teachers and students as needed. If at any time your emergency contact information changes, notify the office immediately.



## Student Accidents and Injuries

If your child is injured while at school, your teachers and Director will evaluate the extent of the injury. For light scrapes, bumps, and bruises, first aid (soap, water, ice and/or Band Aid) will be administered by a staff member. An incident/accident report will be completed for all injuries and signed by a parent and by a staff member. A copy of this report will be kept in the child's file. A copy will be provided for you upon request. If it is determined that treatment by a doctor is needed, we will make every effort to contact you. In the event of an emergency, we will make sure that your child receives the necessary emergency treatment until you can be reached. Each child must have an Emergency Consent Form signed by the parent on file in the office. Your authorization of the preschool to contact your family physician and to take whatever emergency medical procedures are deemed necessary is part of this agreement.

## Attendance

While attendance is not required, we do strongly suggest that your child maintains a consistent schedule in order to benefit properly from the program.

## Snacks

Every parent will be expected to pack a snack and a water bottle for your child each day. Students will have one snack time during their preschool day. We suggest that snacks be kept as nutritional as possible; fruits, whole grains, yogurt, apple sauce, crackers etc., and be filling as they will only eat once while at school. Please write your child's name on their snack and water bottle and place it in their book bag each day. It is not necessary to pack a lunch box filled with many snacks as they only have 15 minutes to eat.

**Preschool at the Creek is a PEANUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT, so please DO NOT bring any snacks with ANY peanut products in them. This includes items that are prepared in the same factory as peanut products.**

## Food Allergies

All children's allergies should be listed on registration and enrollment forms and confirmed with the teacher and Director. Please make a complete list of ALL foods that your child can not consume. All children's allergies will be posted clearly in all classrooms. Please be sure to notify your classroom teacher of allergies or any change in allergies as well. There are times that special birthday snacks or fun edible classroom activities are offered at school, we will monitor all classroom allergies prior to sharing these snacks with them.

## Special Celebrations and Birthday Celebrations



### Special Celebrations

Throughout the year we will have times where we have special celebrations (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, etc.). A sign-up sheet will be posted when necessary for supplies, food or attendance.

### Birthday Celebrations

We are more than happy to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Your teacher will be sure to make sure their birthday is a special day at preschool. You are welcome to bring **in store bought** cupcakes, cookies or other treats on

your child's birthday. All treats **must be store bought with a label and peanut free.**

Thank you in advance for being kind, compassionate, and sensitive when passing out birthday party invitations. **If you are not able to invite the entire class, please mail/email your invitations.**

## Inclement Weather Policy



In the event of inclement weather, Preschool at the Creek will relay information regarding closings or delays to the parents in the following manner:

- Sending out our decision in an email to our parent distribution list
- Sending a notification via Procure
- Posting our decision on Preschool at the Creek's Facebook page

As always, our goal is to keep all of our children, families and teachers as safe as possible while still making appropriate decisions regarding the preschool schedule.

## School Closure

Preschool at the Creek follows all government mandated closures. We will notify you via email, Procure and our PATC Facebook page in the event of any closures. **Preschool at the Creek is not obligated to refund tuition payments due to unexpected closures.**

## Dress Code

It is recommended that all children wear washable play clothes. The children will be involved in outdoor play as well as messy art projects throughout the day. Although we try our best to keep clothing clean, we cannot guarantee that your child's clothes will not get dirty.

Children are very impressionable; therefore, we ask that your child's clothing does not display violent play figures or any inappropriate logos/print. Clothing

should also be modest in nature. The Director will determine if something is inappropriate or offensive.

**If your child wears a dress or skirt to preschool, please wear shorts underneath.**

**All children are required to keep a complete change of clothing (including socks and underwear) in their book bag in case of an accident.**

Label each item with your child's name and place them in a plastic zip lock bag also with your child's name. If these clothes are used, be sure to replace them for the next school day. Please do not forget to change out extra clothes as the seasons change.

Please mark all jackets, sweaters, coats, hats and boots with your child's name. Many children wear identical clothing and without a name in each garment it becomes difficult for the teachers to identify its owner. The school will not be responsible for any lost clothing.

Please allow your child to wear shoes that they can run and climb in, so they can safely play on our playground.

## Special Circumstances

- All students must be able to communicate needs to their teachers. The child must understand and speak English well enough to tell a teacher if something hurts, that they need to use the restroom, that they are sick or hurt, or in the case of any other emergency.
- All children must be able to transition on their own from class to playground, gym, and chapel.
- We are not equipped to handle medical equipment at this time.

## Toilet Training

Toilet training is a parental responsibility that sometimes enters into your child's preschool day. As your child begins to toilet train at home we will continue to aid in this process at school in our 2's classrooms. We ask that until your child has had several successes at home with both BM and wet trips, please continue to put them in a pull up or diaper. Once they have become very successful at home in underpants, you and your teacher can then decide if your child is ready for underpants at school.

Signs of readiness include, but are not limited to: asking for diaper changes when they become wet or soiled, an understanding of opposites, the ability to dress and undress themselves, and the ability to communicate their needs clearly.

Please be sure to place your child in clothes that are easy to remove when going to the bathroom. Many toilet accidents are prevented if children can unbutton or unbuckle pants and belts without a struggle. For the younger children do not dress them in overalls or bodysuits and don't include belts, snaps, etc. "Pull-on" type clothes with elastic waists that can be easily manipulated by the child is preferred.

**All children entering into the three through five year-old rooms MUST be toilet trained prior to the beginning of the school year.** Frequent accidents occurring longer than a 2-week time frame in these classes will be addressed by the teacher and Director. A child is not considered toilet trained if wearing pull-ups or disposable underpants. Teachers can assist in the 4's and Transition to Kindergarten classes with buttons and zippers if needed, but they will not assist with wiping. Please practice independence in the bathroom with your child.

## Gross Motor Play and Safety



We believe that gross motor play is very important for the development of any child and we have set aside 25 minutes for recess/physical education per day. Please remember to dress your child appropriately in both clothes and shoes that they can run, climb and play in comfortably. Gross motor play rules are set and reviewed with children at the beginning of the school year, as well as daily reminders.

## Chapel



All children will attend Chapel led by our Children's Pastor, Pastor Mike Dowd, once per week. During Chapel we will learn a Bible lesson.

## **Music & Discovery**



Each class will have 20 minutes per week of music and movement with our music teacher. All classes participate in a Christmas Program, and our pre-K classes participate in a graduation ceremony in May. Discovery class is a STEM based program with classes held bi-weekly, with additional time allowed in our Discovery room at the teacher's availability.

## **Babysitting and Child Care**

Staff members of Preschool at the Creek are not permitted to babysit or care for PATC students off campus, or to drive them to and from preschool during the school year.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it to the proper authorities. Preschool and church staff will report suspected cases to Wake County Child Protective Services at 919-212-7990.