

# Peoples Church Preschool

## Parent Handbook

Rev. 01/2017

## ■ WELCOME TO PEOPLES CHURCH PRESCHOOL

Thank you for choosing Peoples Church Preschool. On behalf of our staff, welcome! We know you and your child will enjoy your time here. Parents, please feel free to stop by and spend some time with us whenever you have a chance. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the Director. She will be glad to help you in any way possible.

### **Our Purpose**

Peoples Church Preschool provides children with a quality preschool experience by creating an individual and reflective curriculum for each child. Our Infant, Toddler, and Twos classes begin the building blocks for learning challenging each child with elements of math, literacy, social studies, science, nature, peace and independence. Our preschool program helps prepare children for kindergarten by providing them with an opportunity to discover the world around them and to see how they fit into it. Our programs assist children in gaining growth socially, emotionally, and cognitively through play and learning experiences in a loving, caring and safe environment.

This publication is your guide to our school. It explains everything including operations, policies and procedures, safety, nutrition and communication. If you have a question that is not covered in this handbook, please contact the Director. We look forward to helping your child grow into his or her full potential and to building a lasting relationship with you and your family.

*Enrollment is offered to all children, regardless of race, religion, sex, ability, or national origin.*

## **Guiding Principles & Program Descriptions**

### **Relationship – Responsiveness – Respect**

#### **Our Values**

Our philosophy of care focuses on the whole child.

- We believe the early years of life build a framework for lifelong learning.
- We believe in the dignity and value of all children.
- We believe that social and intellectual skills are best learned in an environment where self-esteem is nurtured and respect is absolute.
- We believe that children learn best through active exploration, experimentation and problem solving in a safe and stimulating setting.
- We believe it is important to nature children’s intrinsic ecological identities with intention and action.

In keeping with this philosophy, Peoples Church Preschool provides a program that helps children develop a love of learning, a sense of independence, methods of self-control and the ability to interact positively with others.

## **Programs/Classrooms**

Peoples Church Preschool offers a developmental curriculum for children aged six weeks through six years. We also provide a school age program during summer.

Each of our programs has specific curriculum goals based on the way children develop and learn. In every program, attention is given to both the individual’s needs and to the interests of the group.

### **Infant Program - 6 weeks to 12 months**

The Infant Program provides an atmosphere that is responsive, nurturing and appropriate to each infant's stage of development. The room is filled with music, cognitively stimulating manipulative and opportunities for exploration. Children are introduced to Baby Sign in this classroom.

### **Toddler Program - 12 months to 2 years**

#### **Two Year Olds Program - 2 to 3 years**

Toddler and Twos classes focus on each child's natural curiosity and desire to make sense of the world through language experimentation, physical awareness and sensory exploration. Days are filled with science, math, reading skills as well as singing, storytelling, art projects and open-ended indoor and outdoor play.

### **Preschool 1 Program - ages 3 to 4 years**

### **Preschool 2 Program - ages 4 to 5 years**

### **Junior Kindergarten – ages 4 to 5 (final preschool year before Kindergarten)**

Our Preschool Programs offer a broad array of learning experiences, focusing on language development, exploration, observation and problem-solving. The comfort of daily routines is coupled with the excitement of new adventures in play and learning. We plan daily learning experiences that strengthen each child's skills and deepen their understanding of concepts.

### **Junior Kindergarten - year before kindergarten (5 years)**

Our Junior Kindergarten Program's teaching philosophy is influenced by the Reggio Emilia-inspired project approach and also incorporates a focus on letter recognition, phonics, math, and emotional intelligence. The curriculum will align with Michigan Public Schools Kindergarten preparedness guidelines and include an emphasis on field trips and the integration of hands-on learning experiences in our indoor and outdoor environments.

### **School Age – five years old or older by September 1 of the following school year.**

Our Summer School Age program focuses on fitness and fun all while keeping students engaged in problem solving, thinking logically, and keeping math and literacy skills sharp. Children will enjoy multiple hands-on experiences and trips into the community. This program typically runs from June until the beginning of September.

## **Suitable Environments**

Our environments are created to encourage age-appropriate learning experiences and child-initiated play. Room designs are interesting, stimulating and arranged so children can select from a variety of developmental activities. Classroom materials (pictures, books, materials and dolls) represent various cultural backgrounds.

Our Outdoor Classroom provides opportunities for children to problem solve, assess risk, cook in the Mud Kitchen, act on stage, play multiple musical instruments or tend the garden.

## **Our Staff**

We select staff on the basis of experience, rapport with children, educational background and continuing interest in professional development. Each classroom is headed by lead teachers and is supported by teacher assistants.

Lead teachers have specific training in early childhood development. Some are certified as Child Development Associates; others have associate, bachelor, or master's degrees in Early Childhood.

All staff members are encouraged to continue their education through ongoing workshops and conferences provided or paid for by the preschool.

## **Staff-to-Child Ratio**

Peoples Church Preschool meets or is better than state and National Association for the Education of Young Children requirements for staff-to-child ratios:

Infant Program (6 weeks to 12 months)	1:3 1/3
Toddler Program (12 months to 2 years)	1:4
Two Year Old Program (2 to 3 years)	1:4

Preschool 1 Program (3 to 4 years)	1:6
Preschool 2 Program (4 to 5 years)	1:8
Junior Kindergarten (4 to 5 years)	1:11
School Age (6-12 years)	1:12

## **Volunteers**

Peoples Church Preschool welcomes volunteers from local universities, colleges and the community to enrich the children’s learning environment. All volunteers, including parent field trip drivers, will have a criminal background check completed prior to beginning work with the children. Volunteers are supervised in the classroom by a lead teacher or administrator in the same way that teaching assistants are supervised.

## **Daily Operations**

### **Hours and Days of Operation**

Our school is open from 7:10 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are closed for the following holidays: New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas. Additionally, the preschool is closed for President’s Day (February) for an in-service staff professional development day. Parents are asked to pay for the days the school is closed in order to give our quality staff paid holidays.

Preschool may close at times of severe weather. (Please see information on closures below.) The Director reserves the right to cancel school on low attendance days, if necessary. Two-week notice, or more, will always be given.

### **Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Child**

Parents are asked to walk their child into the classroom each morning, announcing their arrival to the staff. Please assist your child in washing his or her hands each day upon arrival. Parents must clock their children in and out each day using their assigned personal identification number (PIN) through the Tadpoles app. We have found that spending a few minutes with your child at drop-off and pick-up, discussing the day or reviewing artwork, can make separation easier.

Upon arrival every day, parents of infants may fill out a brief form to help teachers prepare for that day’s care. If desired, parents may download the Tadpoles app to their smart phone or mobile device. The app allows any pertinent information about the child’s morning to be entered directly into the child’s Daily Report in Tadpoles.

We ask that parents always clock their child out using their PIN at the end of each day so that we have a record of who has picked up the child.

### **Custody Situations**

In cases of custodial situations, the custodial parent must be the parent to fill out the registration papers and emergency cards. In cases where the non-custodial parent is not allowed to have contact with the child, the school will need a copy of the divorce decree or restraining order. The school also needs to be notified of any changes in custody arrangements.

### **Change of Student Information**

The preschool requires immediate notification for changes in work or home address, work or home phone number, name, emergency contact information or health status. All emergency cards must also be updated annually.

### **Release Authorization**

Children will be released only to those individuals who have written authorization from a parent to pick up the child. An acceptable form of identification, such as a driver’s license, is required. Please be prepared to show picture ID if a staff member does not recognize you.

A Tadpoles PIN will be assigned to any authorized person (e.g., grandparent, nanny, etc.) who will regularly pick up a child.

## **Children Arriving Late and Absences**

Peoples Church Preschool requests that parents notify the preschool when the child will arrive late or will be absent. Please call the preschool before 10 a.m. on the day of absence or let the lead teacher know in advance of a planned late arrival or absence. Due to staffing and ratios, we may be unable to accommodate children arriving in the late afternoon without notification before 10 a.m.

## **Nutrition and Meals**

Parents are asked to provide a healthy lunch each day their child is in attendance through the lunch period. Though all lunches are refrigerated once they arrive at school, it is suggested that all lunches contain one or more ice packs to ensure that lunch items are served at the appropriate temperatures for optimum health. Packed lunches should be able to be served “as is” with the exception of the need to be warmed. Due to the number of children, we are not able to accommodate special preparation of lunch (cooking, cutting, and transferring).

## **Celebrating Birthdays and Other Occasions**

We encourage parents to come in and read a story or facilitate a special activity with the children to celebrate special occasions such as birthdays, holidays, etc. Every child’s birthday will be celebrated. Due to the number of birthdays celebrated throughout the year, bringing in sugary treats is discouraged. If you would like to plan a special activity, please inform your child’s teacher of any such plans the week before so it can be included in our daily schedule.

*Notification of any food allergies or restrictions must be provided to the preschool in writing.*

## **Party Treats from Home**

At preschool we strive to limit the amount of sugary foods presented to the children. There are many healthy alternatives such as making fruit smoothies or fruit kabobs with the children. If you do choose to bring in party treats, such as cake, cupcakes or ice cream, we will serve them at our nutrition break time, in addition to the regular and nutritious foods served.

Party treats should be commercially prepared, brought in unopened packages and approved in advance by the teacher. Please avoid foods containing peanuts or any of their by-products. Peanuts can cause severe allergic reactions in some children.

Please label the treats with your child’s full name, teacher’s name and classroom. Upon arrival, hand the treats to your child’s lead teacher, letting them know if the food requires refrigeration.

More healthy alternative suggestions - instead of bringing sweets, consider providing pizza, cooking with the children or facilitating a special activity.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are offered in all classrooms with the exception of Infants. The benefits of allowing children to have close up, hands-on experiences outside of the classroom are invaluable. For this reason our curriculum provides these opportunities for the children. The Toddler children travel approximately twice per year. The Twos Class children travel approximately 6 times per year. The preschool classrooms (P1, P2 and JK) will travel each month unless they have a visitor join them on a particular month instead. School Age students will travel almost weekly in the summer months.

Parents will be made aware of field trip schedules through classroom postings, emails and Tadpoles. The school’s policy requires teachers to have field trip information posted for parents at the beginning of each month so that there is adequate time for parents to make arrangements if they would like to chaperone for the trip. Every child is not required to attend each field trip; however, alternative care is not provided on field trip days. Each trip may involve additional fees. All payments for field trips will be collected in the preschool office. Each field trip will have a designated day (approximately 1 week in advance) on which all field trip fees must be collected. Paying after this time may affect your child’s ability to accompany classmates on the trip. Exact change is appreciated.

Peoples Church Preschool uses 7 passenger vehicles owned by the church, parent drivers, and CATA busses for field trip transportation. Parents driving on field trips will be asked to have a background check completed at the beginning of the school year and will fill out safety-related vehicle information for each trip. Typically, each parent will be asked to install their child's car seat in the field trip vehicle. On occasion, children may use CATA busses for transportation and in that case car seats are not necessary. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to join us for any of our off-site activities.

## **Toys and Other Personal Items**

To provide comfort to your child, we welcome a favorite stuffed animal or small blanket, but please leave other toys and personal possessions at home or in your car. At no time can personal items from home be placed in a child's crib.

There are several children's accessories that pose a choking hazard. Some of these include jewelry, hair ties, hair clips, clothing/shoe decorations, etc. Due to the possibility of ingestion or choking, parents are discouraged from sending these items to school. Earrings may only be worn if they have the original locking/screw backs. Hair ties, rubber bands, clips, etc. that are removed by the child will be placed in their locker or cubby and should be taken home at the end of each day. Clothing that has decorations, such as buttons, will be removed and replaced if the child is placing these small items in their mouth. Any clothing items that have loose or broken pieces will also be removed and placed in the child's locker or cubby to be taken home. Children will be checked at drop off and monitored throughout the day to ensure they are safe from this type of choking hazard (anything that fits in a choking tube).

## **Clothing**

Please dress your child in comfortable washable clothes appropriate for active days. Sneakers or similar non-skid shoes are best. Please avoid thong sandals, long skirts, platform shoes or other items that make it difficult for your child to run and play. Preschoolers do best in clothes they can manage themselves, such as simple T-shirts and pants with elastic waistbands instead of buttons or zippers. Please provide proper outdoor wear, including head and hand coverings and spare socks.

All classrooms spend daily time outside in all seasons. Make sure your child is dressed for the weather every day: hats, boots, scarves, snow pants and mittens in the winter, waterproof clothing is the best in the winter. In the summer children will need a swimsuit, towel and water shoes. Please bring at least one spare set of clothes for your child to leave at school to change into in case the clothes they are wearing get dirty. Please include a shirt, pants, underwear and socks. Check each day to see if the extra clothing needs to be replaced. If your child is still not using the toilet regularly, please leave *several* spare sets of clothing.

Please label *all* of your child's clothing and other possessions that are brought or worn to school, particularly lunch boxes.

## **Lost or Damaged Clothing or Personal Items**

Please mark all items such as hats and coats with your child's name. We do our best to ensure that clothes and shoes are not damaged during daily activities such as painting, playing on the playground and craft activities; however, accidents may occur. The preschool is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

## **Items Your Child Needs at School**

### **A Change of Clothes**

Each child must keep a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing at school. Please remember, as children grow, their extra set of clothing should be replaced. If your child needs to change clothes and an extra set is not available, we will call you to bring clothing to the school. Please make sure all clothes are clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **Nap/Rest Time**

For nap time, each child should bring a small blanket and small pillow. Our storage units cannot accommodate large blankets or full-size pillows. Bedding will be sent home on Fridays (or the last day of the week your child attends) for washing.

## Diapers/Wipes

Parents of children that are not yet toilet trained must provide their own disposable diapers, wipes and latex gloves.

## Potty Training

Peoples Church Preschool provides potty training in the Twos and Preschool 1 classrooms when the children are individually and developmentally ready. There are three signs of readiness we look for before beginning the training process:

- The child has a dry diaper for several weeks during the night and during nap time.
- The child is aware that he or she has had a bowel movement or urinated.
- The child can verbalize that he or she has a messy diaper.

## Emergency Closing

Severe weather or other emergency situations may cause the preschool to close. The church Facilities Director, Head Pastor, and Preschool Director will make a joint decision during severe weather days to determine if it will be possible to open the building. The decision to be open will be made unless it is determined that those responsible for plowing the parking lot and sidewalks (for safety and accessibility) will be unable to do so. We will attempt to make this decision by 5:00 am each day it is applicable. Families will be alerted to our status by the preschool's texting system, the preschool's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/peopleschurchpreschool/>), and via the four main local television affiliates, including WILX and WLNS.

If the building is closed, all activities of the day will be cancelled.

If severe weather should commence during the day, the same process shall be followed for cancellation of any evening Church and Preschool activities.

Emergency closing is uncommon. However, should it occur, refunds are not provided for first two emergency closings each year. However, children enrolled on a full-time basis may use accumulated free days. If the number of snow days exceeds two, there will be no consecutive charges for snow days.

## School Evacuation Plans

Fire, tornado and disaster practice drills are scheduled monthly at Peoples Church Preschool to ensure that all staff are prepared in the event of an emergency. In case of an actual emergency, parents will be notified of their child's well being as soon as possible.

## Adjusting to School

Starting school is an exciting experience for young children, but it can also be a difficult one. Though children may seem eager about a new situation, there is usually some difficulty separating from parents. The length and difficulty of the adjustment period will vary for each child. In fact, sometimes children will be so absorbed with the toys and the environment on their first day that they will easily separate from their parents. The separation anxiety often starts on subsequent days.

The following suggestions can help ease your child's adjustment to a new environment:

- Visit the preschool with your child prior to the first day of enrollment.
- Talk enthusiastically about teachers, routines, and activities.
- Be sure to say "goodbye" every morning, but avoid long exits.
- Reassure your child that you will return.
- Security items, such as blankets, teddy bears and family photos are always welcome.
- Be consistent, understanding and patient with your child. A period of adjustment is normal during a change in a child's life.
- Remember that transition issues can be freely discussed with your child's teacher or The Director.

## Transitioning Between Classes

Traditionally children will not move into the next classroom prior to meeting the minimum age requirement. As soon as the office staff is aware of availability in the older classroom, the enrollment space will be offered to the family of the oldest child in the younger classroom. Parents will be asked if they would like their child to transition at that time or if they would prefer to wait. Parents will be given at least 24 hours to discuss their wishes, including seeking opinions from their child's teachers. Should the parents take the space, they will be informed of the transition start date and the new classroom first-day date. They will be emailed a transition information packet and will also attend a brief orientation with the teachers in the new classroom.

Should the parent decline the space, it will be offered to the next oldest child in the classroom (if eligible) or to a family on the waiting list. In some classrooms, there are eligibility requirements beyond age. The Preschool 2 classroom is the first classroom where complete toilet training is required. Children that have not yet achieved this milestone will need to delay transition until that skill is mastered. The preschool partners with parents for all transitions because some children may be ready to move while others may need a little more time in their present setting. Because availability varies, children will not all be the same age when an opportunity to transition presents itself.

When transiting, each child will spend about a week in transition between the old and new class, joining the new classroom for a few hours each morning and/or afternoon to help with the introduction and adjustment period. Whenever possible, children will transition in pairs or groups, but this is not always available. Before your child moves, we encourage you to meet the new staff and get accustomed to their program, then share your knowledge and enthusiasm with your child. Most importantly, we will work as a team to help make your child's transition a successful one.

## Discipline, Biting & Disenrollment

### How We Approach Discipline

The word discipline is derived from the Latin word that means teaching, and our view of discipline holds true in that classic sense. Discipline is not a form of punishment, but a method of teaching. The children will learn trust, respect, consideration and love for others. The goal of discipline is to assist children in developing positive self-esteem, self-control, a sense of responsibility and an acceptance of and confidence in adult guidance.

At Peoples Church Preschool, we believe that a well-planned program, suitable environment and caring staff are the keys to helping children develop self-control and a love for learning.

Teachers guide behavior by setting good examples. They use their voices, hands, face, bodies and actions as tools for communicating. For instance, when a teacher needs to help a child gain control, he/she will use a calm but firm tone and words that help the child understand his own feelings and the feelings of others. When disciplining or comforting a child, the teacher will kneel down to the child's level so that he or she can look into the child's eyes as they talk.

Peoples Church Preschool has established the following guidelines for its staff:

- Corporal/physical punishment is prohibited.
- Behavioral expectations will be developmentally appropriate.
- Consistency is essential.
- Positive discipline begins with an understanding of children's developmental stages and with patience.
- Good behavior will be acknowledged and encouraged.
- Teachers will be role models for appropriate actions.
- Suggestions or directions will be given in a positive manner.
- Children will be given choices within their developmental capabilities.
- We will focus on the child's actions rather than his or her personality. We will make the child feel worthwhile, secure, cared for and valuable.
- We will use a kind, firm voice when disciplining. We will use words the child understands and a tone of voice to help the child feel safe.



- We will redirect children’s activities as a form of discipline. Examples include: moving the child from one play area to another and limiting access to objects that are used unsafely or inappropriately. These consequences will be immediate, of short duration and related to the act.
- Punishment will not be associated with food, naps or bathroom procedures.
- We will keep acts of misbehavior in perspective. We will involve a child’s parent in the disciplinary process when uncontrollable behavior and/or behavior harmful to others persists. If necessary, a parent conference to discuss behavior will be scheduled.
- We will ensure that our entire staff is trained in our discipline philosophy.
- Discipline of children will be the responsibility of all employees.
- We will maintain discipline guidelines set forth by our state licensing authority.
- We will remember that the goal of discipline is to help the child gain self-control by earning appropriate behaviors, rather than forcing the child to conform to adult standards.

## Discipline for Infants and Toddlers

Infants and toddlers need to be safe from harm and to feel secure within established limits. These limits are age-appropriate, reasonable, and consistent and allow a fair amount of freedom and flexibility.

At this early age, children comprehend words literally; therefore, teachers use appropriate words such as “gently”, “slowly”, and “carefully” with the appropriate gestures. Redirection and explanation are the forms of discipline we use. Here is an example:

With a block in hand, a toddler approaches another child in a threatening manner. The teacher diverts the child’s attention by redirecting and explaining, “The blocks are for building. Let’s build a tower together.”

## Biting

Biting is considered an age-appropriate behavior usually appearing in infancy and disappearing by the age of 3. Unfortunately, biting will occur in most early childhood settings. We take this behavior very seriously, however, and make every effort to minimize the biting behavior in our classrooms. When biting does occur, parents of both children - the child who bit and the child who has been bitten - are notified on the day the biting occurs. Two incident reports will be completed for each child for each incident. One copy goes home and one stays at the preschool. The identities of both children are confidential and will not be shared.

Children bite for many reasons such as:

- Teething
- Aggression
- Fatigue
- The need for attention
- Boredom
- Frustration
- Limited verbal skills

When a child develops a pattern of biting, the staff will closely monitor each biting attempt, noting the circumstances leading up to the situation. This will help the teacher to predict and prevent future instances. We also ask parents to reinforce the inappropriateness of biting when the child is home. Habitual biting will usually signal the need for a parent/teacher conference where discussions of underlying issues and strategies for problem-resolution will be mapped out.

## Disenrollment

In rare circumstances, children may need a level of care or attention that Peoples Church Preschool’s group setting cannot provide. Before making the determination that it is in the best interest of the child to find an alternative setting, we will engage in consultation and communication between parents, teachers, the Director and related professionals if necessary.

Disenrollment may also occur due to delayed tuition payments (see Financial Policies).

# Health and Wellness Policies

## Procedure for Emergency Medical Treatment

In the event of an emergency, the preschool will follow written instructions provided by each family and/or administer first aid and obtain emergency medical treatment in the child's best interest. At the time of enrollment, parents must provide written permission for emergency medical treatment.

Our staff is trained to recognize and respond appropriately to medical emergencies. Staff members have training in infant and child CPR, first aid, and basic infection control policies.

## Health and Wellness Procedures and Guidelines

Your child's health is extremely important to us. Upon enrollment, you will receive a health form that must be completed and signed by a physician. Immunizations must be kept up-to-date and a tuberculin skin test must be acquired as appropriate. Health forms must be updated annually for children 0-29 months and every 2 years for children 30 months and older.

A daily health evaluation is given to each child upon arrival at school.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted immediately. Children showing symptoms of illness must be picked up within one hour of family member or authorized emergency caregiver notification. If the child has not been picked up within one hour, families are charged a \$10 per hour fee until the child is picked up.

It is our desire to be partners in keeping your child happy and healthy, and to do so, we will take the following steps:

1. Make every effort to communicate with you regarding the health issues at the preschool.
2. Enforce hand washing procedures for staff and children, including hand washing upon arrival into the classroom.
3. Ensure that diapering is carried out in a designated area using disposable diapers, disposable paper linens and washcloths.
4. Ensure careful washing of children, removing saliva, nasal drips and disposable tissues.
5. Carry out daily washing and disinfecting of materials and surfaces.
6. Keep room temperatures at a comfortable level and air out classroom frequently.
7. Enjoy time outdoors each day throughout the year, unless prevented by inclement weather.
8. Exclude children from care who may be contagious or are so uncomfortable that their needs cannot be met at preschool. In making this decision, the whole child and his or her behavior with or without the symptoms listed below will be considered. The following list was developed in conjunction with health care professionals and in conjunction with requirements by the state of Michigan:
  - a. **When fever is present:** Fever is indicated by an auxiliary temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. If a child has a fever or has had a fever in the past 24 hours, he or she should not be brought to school. Presence of a fever is reason to call a parent to remove the child from school.
  - b. **Classroom behavior:** If a child is upset and cannot be made comfortable due to excessive nasal discharge, chest congestion, coughing, etc., the child cannot remain in school.
  - c. **Discharge from eye:** Eye discharge is often infectious and should be treated by a physician. If the discharge is continual, requiring frequent wiping and attention, the child cannot remain in school.
  - d. **Vomiting/Diarrhea:** If your child has vomited or has had severe diarrhea in the last 24 hours, he or she may not attend school. Please do not bring your child to school if these symptoms have occurred in the last 24 hours. If a child exhibits repeated (2 or more) episodes of vomiting or diarrhea at school the child cannot remain in care and the family will be notified for pick up.
  - e. **Rashes:** A child with an unidentified rash should not attend school until the rash is identified and/or confirmed to be non-contagious by a physician. A child will be sent home if an unidentified rash appears while at school. A child with a rash must have a letter from his or her physician stating that the rash is not contagious to others. No other wording is acceptable.
  - f. **Communicable Disease:** If your child shows any symptoms of an infectious disease (for example head lice, pink eye, ring worm, thrush), the child cannot remain in school. A staff member or a director can provide you with tips for preventing the spread of infection for each particular situation.

If Communicable Disease symptoms are present, generally, children must be picked up immediately and cannot return to school without:

1. A physician's note, stating that the child does not have the condition, or
  2. A physician's note with a diagnosis, stating the child has been treated for the condition and is presently not contagious to others. Peoples Church Preschool will abide by time periods designated by the Michigan Department of Public Health. The child cannot return to school earlier than this standard, even with a physician's note.
- g. **Allergies:** If a child is frequently ill and found to have allergies, a statement from the child's physician as to what might be expected in terms of symptoms and symptom relief should be on file at the preschool. In the case of food allergies, a written list and plan of action must be provided for the preschool.
- h. **Teething:** A 100 degree auxiliary temperature or higher is likely NOT caused by teething, nor is thick, colored nasal discharge. Studies show\* that children do not typically get high fevers (over 100 degrees) when teething. The most common symptoms of teething are irritability, increased salivation, clear runny nose and loss of appetite. Less common symptoms are diarrhea, rash and sleep problems.\* If a child is so uncomfortable that they require one-on-one care they should not attend preschool.
- i. **Viruses:** Certain viruses have a definable infectious period (for example, chicken pox can be contagious for 5-6 days after the rash appears). It would be helpful to consult your physician about the length of time your child may be contagious to others.
- j. **Outdoor Classroom:** Any child that is well enough to attend school indoors is well enough to attend school outdoors. No child shall remain indoors due to a cold or illness.

\*Taken from [health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/childrens-health/articles/2011/08/10babies-fever-may-not-signal-teething\\_print.html](http://health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/childrens-health/articles/2011/08/10babies-fever-may-not-signal-teething_print.html)

## Returning to School after an Illness

The following guidelines will be followed to determine when a child can return to school after an illness.

1. A child must be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducer.
2. A child has been on antibiotics or other medications prescribed by a physician for 24 hours.
3. A child has had no episodes of vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.
4. Symptoms relating to thick nasal discharge or coughing have ceased or 24 hours of antibiotics or prescription medication has been given.
5. Rash has subsided or has been confirmed as not contagious by a physician and that physician has provided a written note stating so.
6. Written notification from a physician that the child is not contagious to others and is able to return to school.
7. Eye discharge is no longer present or has been judged bacterial by a physician and treated with 24 hours of antibiotic treatment with a physician's permission.

## NAEYC Medical Guidelines 10.01.D

### Policies addressing the use of medications and special medical procedures needed by an enrolled child:

- a. Medications are labeled with the child's first and last name, name of physician, expiration date, and manufacturer's instructions or the original label that details the name and strength of the medication as well as directions on administering and storing.
- b. Medication is administered only with written permission of the parent or legal guardian and as prescribed or as recommended in writing or by another form of direct communication with a licensed health care provided for a specific child. A standing order from a licensed health care provider may guide the use of over the counter medications with children in the program when that order details the specific circumstances and provides specific instructions for individual dosing of the medication (such as diaper cream, baby powder, any types of lotion, chapstick, sun block, and insect repellent.)

- c. Teaching staff who work with children requiring special medical procedures are competent in the procedure and guided in writing by the prescribing health care provider.

## **If Your Child Becomes Ill While in School**

If your child becomes ill while in school, the primary caregiver will call the parent and provide an accurate account of all symptoms. When you arrive to pick up your child, you will receive an Illness Report listing all symptoms observed and the conditions under which your child may return to school.

### **Posting Illnesses**

If we are aware that your child has been exposed to a contagious illness, we will post a notification on our hallway Communication Station. This note will also list symptoms to watch for. We will always maintain appropriate confidentiality on behalf of the ill child.

### **Outdoor Play After Illnesses**

Pediatricians recommend daily fresh air, sunshine and exercise for children, even when they are recovering from an illness. When children are well enough to return to school, they are also well enough to benefit from mild exercise outdoors.

### **Medication**

Peoples Church Preschool will administer medications only with written authorization from a physician and the parent. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications. All medications must be dispensed from their original containers. Prescription medications must display a label that clearly states the child's name, date, doctor's name and the prescribed dosage.

Authorization forms are available from each classroom. These forms will allow staff members to administer over-the-counter medications for a six-month period with the parents' approval. At the end of those six months, a new form must be completed even if the medication has not changed.

Medications are to be carried into school by the parent and handed directly to the lead teacher or an administrator. For safety, medication is locked within each classroom at all times.

### **Incident Reports**

You will receive an incident report any time your child gets a bump, bruise, scrape or other minor injury. The report will explain what occurred and actions taken.

### **Reporting Suspected Abuse/Neglect**

Childcare workers are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Child Protective Services Unit of the Department of Social Services.

### **Health Requirements of Staff**

Each member of the preschool staff undergoes a health screening, including a tuberculin skin test, as is required by licensing.

## **Parent/School Communications**

### **Parent Information Areas**

Every classroom maintains a parent bulletin board or information center that is located near the classroom entrance. These boards are where lesson plans, special news and schedules are posted. Please check daily.

## Communication Station

This display case is located in the hallway between the Infant Room and Preschool 2. Watch this area for important information about preschool policies, manufacturer's recalls, or illness exposure.

## Administrative Emails

If you do not receive regular emails from the directors, please contact the preschool office at 332-2885 to confirm that we have your correct email address. The director sends regular emails full of important information such as reminders for upcoming family events and community events; and various deadlines such as Scrip orders, Scholastic orders, photo orders and various RSVPs.

## Financial Policies: Fees & Tuition

### Registration/Activity Fee

A non-refundable registration fee is collected upon enrollment. An equipment fee is collected at enrollment and annually thereafter in January for each child enrolled.

### Tuition Policy

You may pay tuition on either a weekly or monthly basis. Weekly tuition is due on Thursday for the next week, and monthly tuition is due the last Thursday of the month for the following month. We do not provide tuition refunds for scheduled holidays or for emergency closing days. Tuition increases occur annually at the beginning of January.

A late fee of \$25.00 is charged for each tuition payment not received by the end of the business day as outlined above. If your payments become past due, we may be forced to disenroll your child until payments are made current.

### Returned Checks

If a check is returned by the bank for any reason, we will charge a \$25 fee. The preschool reserves the right to require cash payments for tuition.

### Free Days

Tuition is due every day, Monday through Friday, from September to September. For a variety of reasons, there will be days that your child does not attend school.

- For full-time enrolled children (5 days per week), one *free day* can be earned for every 30 days the child is enrolled in school, up to a maximum of 5 per year.
- Free days must be used within a school year (September to September) and cannot be carried over from year to year.
- At no time can free days be taken in advance of being earned.
- Free days can be used for holidays, snow days, illness, vacation, or any day a child does not attend school on a scheduled day for any reason.

Please contact the preschool office to find out how many free days you have available at any time.

### Late Pick-Up

If you do not pick up your child by the preschool's stated closing time, a late charge will be assessed and must be paid before your child may return to school. Our programming ends at 5:45 p.m. All children must be picked up and out of the building by the closing time of 6:00 p.m.

A late fee of \$5 per every 5 minutes will be charged for those children still at school after 6:00 p.m. (For example: 6:01 to 6:05 = \$5 late charge, 6:06 to 6:10 = \$10 late charge, 6:11 to 6:15 = \$15 late charge.) This charge will be automatically added to your account and must be paid in full by the next tuition payment. After 3 late pick-ups additional charges of \$25.00 plus the late fee will occur.

In addition, late pick-ups after notification of your child's illness will result in a \$10 per hour charge (see Health Policies).

## **Schedule Reduction**

It is common for some parents to wish to change or decrease their child's schedule during the summer months. Please refer to the following policies to help guide you.

1. A schedule reduction can happen at any time without penalty. Schedule reductions must be made two weeks in advance of the week you would like your child's reduced schedule to begin. Schedule reductions must be for a minimum of two weeks, and there is no guarantee that there will be space available if you would like to add days later. Any family wishing to add days to their child's schedule will go to the top of that classroom's waiting list if there is not space available immediately.
2. It is permissible to disenroll for the summer term. If choosing this option please keep in mind that it will be necessary to re-apply upon return, which includes the application fee. In addition, please keep in mind that anyone choosing to disenroll for the summer cannot be guaranteed a space to return to in the fall; however, previously enrolled families will be given first choice of any available space.

## **How Parents Can Help**

- **Serve** – the Peoples Church Preschool Parent Group. Please contact the director for details.
- **Volunteer** – For event set up and clean up, May's Yard Day (playground enhancement), Open House testimonials, Picture Day, Classroom helper or guest, Folk Festival, etc.
- **Share** - any special talents with the children such as storytelling, musical instruments and occupations.
- **Chaperone** - a field trip (driving record and background check required)
- **Enlighten** - us with information about your family's culture, traditions, and celebrations so that we can expand upon them in the classroom.
- **Donate** - any unwanted household, work place or nature items to the school for children to use.
- **Assist** - teachers with special events, cooking projects, classroom visitors and field trips.