



PROVIDENCE CHURCH PRESCHOOL

2020-21 Program Parent Handbook and Google Form

After reading the handbook, please complete the Google Form located on the last page.
This indicates to us that you have read and understand our policies. Thank you!

Welcome!

We, the teachers, and the entire Providence family welcome you to the Providence Church Preschool program. It is a privilege to work with you and your children during their early childhood years.

This handbook outlines policies and procedures that are designed to help the program function well while keeping your child's best interests in mind. Please take time to read this handbook in its entirety. ***Please complete the google form attached at the end of this document to let us know you understand and agree to our policies.***

As parental involvement is key to a successful program, we welcome your presence, questions, and suggestions at any time. We strive to provide the highest standards in early education and a loving environment for your children to grow.

We have a list of extra precautions that we are taking in the midst of the COVID pandemic. Please see them listed on the first page following the Table of Contents. We look forward to a happy, productive year and getting to know you and your family.

Sincerely,

Anne Lynch, Director

Providence Church Preschool Board

Rev. Brandy Mullins
Michelle Hiott, Chair
Margaret Hyatt
Angela May
Morgan McQueeney

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Providence Preschool Policies During COVID-19

Providence Preschool is committed to providing the safest environment to our children, families, and staff by following these COVID-19 policies. This protocol was formulated using the CDC and DHEC recommendations, discussions with 8 other local preschool and daycare directors and a review by local doctors. These procedures will stay in place for an undetermined amount of time and may be revised using the recommendations of CDC and DHEC. Our facility is deep cleaned on a weekly basis and will be deep cleaned using CDC recommendations if a positive case is found in our facility. Our HVAC system has new ionization units that have the highest rated HEPA filters that help to remove viruses and pollutants from the air.

- We plan to open our doors on September 10, unless there is a stay-at-home order issued by our governor or by the City of Charleston.
- If we have a stay-at-home order that lasts until October 1, we will open then and may extend our school year through June.
- Upon arrival on campus, all children and staff will be screened for fever and symptoms. Any child or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees will not be allowed to attend school.
- If a child or staff member has a fever, they must be fever free without medication for 72 hours before returning to school and return with a doctor's note.
- Children and staff should stay home from school if they have:
 - *Any one (1) of the following
 - Fever (100 degrees or higher) or
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing or
 - Loss of taste or smell or
 - *Any two (2) of the following:
 - Sore throat and/or
 - Muscle aches and/or
 - Chills and/or
 - New or worsening cough
- Other symptoms may include fatigue, headache, congestion or runny nose. Given the overlap of these symptoms with other more common illnesses and the lack of symptoms in many cases, it is not possible to identify and exclude all cases of COVID-19 through screening of symptoms.
- If a child or immediate family member of that child tests positive for COVID-19, the child will need to remain home in quarantine for 2 weeks. Notification to the school is mandatory. A negative test is required to return.
- If a staff member or immediate family member of an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the staff member will need to remain home in quarantine for 2 weeks. Notification to the school is mandatory. A negative test is required to return.

- If a child or family member is sick and does not disclose symptoms, the child's spot may be forfeited at our school.
- If a child begins to show symptoms during school:
 - The child will immediately be taken to a designated isolation area with a teacher to stay and comfort the child. Both will be required to wear masks and stay 6 feet apart from each other.
 - Parents will be called **immediately** to pick up their child.
 - The child can return to preschool with a doctor's note as long as the child is symptom free.
 - If a child is tested for COVID-19, parents should inform the director that they met the criteria for testing. If a child is tested, parents of preschoolers in their class will be informed and notified of the results. If a child or immediate family member of that child tests positive for COVID-19, the child will need to remain home in quarantine for 2 weeks. Notification to the school is mandatory.
- Children and staff who test positive for COVID-19 and persons with symptoms of COVID-19 who do NOT get tested, should isolate until:
 - 10 days have passed since symptoms began AND
 - 3 days have passed since last fever without taking medicine to reduce the fever AND
 - They have an overall improvement of symptoms.
 - A negative test is not required to return.
- Classes will cohort. This means keeping the same children and staff together and limiting any interaction outside of the group. Children cohorted in a class together will be kept away from children in other classes, and staff will practice social distancing when around other staff members. Our goal is to contain the spread of germs from class to class. This means only one class will use the playground at the time and classes won't be combined for Chapel.
- If a child or staff member tests positive and was contagious in the facility, then the entire class will quarantine for 14 days. (Contagious period: If a child or staff member tests positive, they could be contagious with the virus for up to 48 hours before their symptoms began. If they tested positive but had no symptoms, their contagious period begins 2 days prior to the date the specimen for their test was collected.)
 - If proper cohorting measures were followed, only children and staff in the classroom cohort with the case and any other identified close contacts (Close contact: Anyone who spent fifteen (15) minutes or more within six (6) feet of the case during their contagious period) will be required to quarantine for 14 days.
- During class quarantines, the classroom and all affected areas in the facility will be closed off and disinfected using EPA approved disinfectants.

- Children will be dropped off and picked up at the front door or side doors, instead of at classroom doors. Parents will not be allowed to enter the building at drop-off or pick-up. Siblings will be dropped off at their respective doors, not dropped off together.
- School will end at 12:15 instead of at 12:30 to allow for more time for sanitization
- Families will be asked to pay a \$25 fee for sanitizing.
- To prevent the spread of germs during snack time, we will no longer be providing snack. Parents are asked to pack their child's individual snack in a ziplock bag, labeled Snack and their child's name. Parents will continue sending in lunch in lunchboxes, just as last year.
- No visitors will be allowed in the building, including parents and non-school visitors. Parents will be asked to meet me or other church staff in the front door area. When necessary, parents will require a temperature check, gloves and mask. (available on site)
- Sanitizing stations have been placed in the center and will be made available frequently throughout the day. Frequent handwashing and other healthy habits such as covering coughs, washing hands, and disinfecting toys and frequently used surfaces will be practiced everyday and throughout the day..
- Children are not required to wear masks, but it is optional for children over the age of 2. We ask that 3's and 4's bring a mask to have for necessary activities. Teachers and staff will wear masks or face shields with the comfort and safety of the children in mind. Outdoor school activities may not require a mask.
- We are committed to keeping in touch with parents. We will use the Bloomz texting service and your child's teachers will use a private social media platform (Facebook or Instagram). The director will also send emails to communicate school information.
- Parents can help support our guidelines by practicing healthy habits, informing us of any illness, and keeping sick children at home. Most importantly, we do not want children to fear people who are wearing masks. Help us with that by wearing a mask in front of your child. We also hope that the use of face shields during class instruction will help children see our happy faces and know that they are loved.
- In the event that DHEC recommends to us that we shut down, we will begin a virtual learning experience for our children. We are committed to making it as meaningful as possible so that we can continue paying our teachers. Tuition will not be halted. We will monitor our situation and review our plans as the year goes on.

[DHEC Guidelines 8/3/20](#)

THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

OUR MISSION...Our mission is to provide and promote the mental, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development in children. Our program aims to accomplish these goals by providing a creative environment where children will have opportunities to grow within their reach. We have an open door policy and welcome families of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds.

OUR PURPOSE...The purpose of the Providence Church Preschool program is to offer early childhood education in a Christian setting that will provide a loving, caring and safe environment for young children in and around our community.

OUR GOALS...The goals of the Providence Church Preschool program are:

- to provide age-appropriate, teacher-directed activities
- to provide a safe environment where children feel secure without their parents
- to foster a positive self-concept, positive attitude towards learning and developmental goals, self-control, and a sense of belonging
- to offer stimulating opportunities for creative play
- to provide opportunities for fine and gross motor development
- to encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- to offer choices that encourage the children's decision-making process
- to teach the children about God's love for each of us
- to promote and respect cultural diversity

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY...The Providence Church Preschool program admits children to its program without regard to race, color, religious affiliation, ancestry, sex or national origin.

THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM...The Providence Church Preschool program is a ministry of Providence Church. The program reflects the Christian values of Providence Church while promoting an anti-bias and multicultural approach to early childhood education. This program is viewed by Providence Church as an essential part of its mission to the community. We welcome you to our family.

Parents who have questions about the church's programs or questions related to children and faith are encouraged to contact Brandy Mullins, Minister of Children and Families at Providence Church at 843-971-5275 or brandy@providencecharleston.org.

PROGRAM BASICS...Our early childhood education program is designed for children ages 2 through 5 years old. Our program is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 12:15-12:30 pm, depending on COVID 19 precautions. Each class follows a daily routine with a curriculum that is age appropriate, including activities that alternate between free play and structured play (both independent and group) that encourage learning through fun. Daily activities also include circle time, centers, stories, crafts, music, snack time, and playground time. Our teachers are highly-qualified: all are certified and/or have a background in early childhood education.

Our program offers six different classrooms. There are separate classrooms for each age group, including 2's, 3's and 4's. Based on your child's individual needs, he/she may be placed in a class based on ability level not age. We accommodate children of all academic and social abilities. Each class will have sufficient teachers to ensure the following child-to-teacher ratios

2 year old class	6:1
3 year old class	6:1
4 year old classes	6:1

ENROLLMENT...Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. All enrollment materials can be found on our website (www.pbcpreschool.com). An annual registration fee (equal to one month's tuition) ensures your child's

spot in the program. **Enrollment fees are non-refundable and are not applied to current or future tuition.** Priority enrollment is available for members of Providence Church, children of staff of PCP, and siblings of currently-attending children. Each child must have ALL current immunizations and the vaccination record must be on file with the director in order for the child to be enrolled.

WITHDRAWAL...Advance notice of two weeks is required for all student withdrawals, regardless of the date or reason for the withdrawal, unless the withdrawal is requested by PCP. You are responsible for the full tuition amount during the one month notice, regardless of if or when the vacated space is actually filled by another child. August tuition is non-refundable. Refunds for families that pay for the year will be prorated beginning with the next month. Refunds of tuition paid month to month are non-refundable.

TUITION PAYMENTS...Tuition is paid monthly from August to April. Paying one month forward allows us to make necessary purchases of supplies. Payments are the same amount each month, regardless of if there is a school holiday or closing. Tuition payments are determined by adding up the number of days of attendance for the entire year and divided by the number of months. Payments will be due by the 10th of each month beginning in August and running through April. **Families must set up automatic payments from their bank to avoid checks being collected at preschool.** A 20% late fee will be assessed if a monthly tuition payment is not received by the tenth day of each month.

Tuition fees are as follows:

- 2 days...\$185 per month
- 3 days...\$255 per month
- 5 days for 2's and 3's...\$390 per month
- 4 days for 4's...\$345 per month
- 5 days for 4's...\$405 per month

When automatic payments are made from your bank, checks should be made payable to Providence Church Preschool. Our address is 294 Seven Farms Drive, Charleston, SC 29492.

An automatic fee of \$35.00 will be charged to your account for a returned check. After an account has been charged with two returned checks, all payments must be made by cash or certified check.

CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

SCHOOL CALENDAR...The Providence Church Preschool program follows that of the Berkeley County School District for holidays and school closings. A calendar will be provided to you at the beginning of the school year. However, the calendar is subject to change due to church events, weather, or other scheduling conflicts. We will notify you in advance of any calendar changes.

DAILY SCHEDULE...We strive to teach outdoors when we can, amidst the pandemic. Activities that can be taught outdoors will be. A typical day will have the following academic and social times:

Free Play: All areas of the room are available to the children. These areas include books, blocks, manipulative materials, dramatic play, and art materials. Special activities are available.

Structured Time: Teachers will work with small groups and individually with children. This is a time to provide children the opportunity to think, reason, question, and experiment, in addition to providing opportunities for fine motor development.

Circle Time: This is a time for songs, a book, introducing concepts and ideas, and discussions about aspects of the calendar. Children are encouraged to answer and ask questions as well as practice following directions.

Clean Up: Children learn the importance of cleaning up after playing. During the year, younger children become more and more involved in the cleaning process, learning to care for their materials by helping to put them in their proper place. The older children cooperatively put their rooms in order.

Snack Time: Children sit at the tables, enjoy a healthy snack and conversation, and clean up their spaces. Often a story or music will be enjoyed during snack time.

Playground: The children enjoy exercise and outdoor time with their classmates. The playgrounds are located on either side of the parking lot (small children's playground is between the buildings and the parking lot; older children's playground across the parking lot). All areas of the playground are available and are supervised by teachers.

Lunch: Children are supervised as they eat lunch brought from home.

INCLEMENT WEATHER...Providence Church Preschool follows the Berkeley County School District Calendar in the event of inclement weather. Please tune into local media in the event of pending inclement weather. If the Berkeley County School District is closed, PCP will also be closed, even if it is not among the listed closings.

SNACK and LUNCH...Parents will send it their child's snack labeled in a ziplock bag as well as a labeled water bottle. Your child's lunch time will be at the end of the school day.

If your child has allergies or special dietary needs we must know about them. Please ensure any such allergies or special dietary needs/preferences are indicated on your child's enrollment form.

SAFETY POLICIES

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP TIMES...All classes begin at 9:00 am and end at 12:15 pm. Drop-off will begin at 8:50 am. It is important that children arrive at school on time and picked up on time. When children arrive late, they have to join activities that are in progress. This may be difficult for them and for the other children. If you are unable to pick up your child as scheduled, have a plan in place for someone to pick up your child on time. Please call the church office (843) 971-5275 or your child's teacher so that the teachers and your child can be told what to expect.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES...Upon arrival on campus, all children will be screened for fever and symptoms. Any child with a fever of 100.4 degrees will not be allowed to attend school. If a child has a fever, that child must be fever free without medication for 72 hours before returning to school. Children will be dropped off and picked up at the front door or side doors, instead of at classroom doors. Parents will not be allowed to enter the building at drop-off or pick-up. Parents should park in regular parking spots, not handicapped parking spots in our parking lot. Parents and staff will wear masks at drop off.

CHILD SAFETY DURING DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP...If at any time, a parent, guardian, or person picking up is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the child will not be released to that person and the proper authorities will be notified.

PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILDREN...During the enrollment process, each family is to provide the school a list of people (identifying by name and relationship) who are authorized to pick up their child from school. If a person's name is not on that list, we cannot release your child without a **prior authorization from you**. You may add or delete names whenever necessary. If you know ahead of time that someone other than you will be picking them up, please let the teachers know. That person may be required to show identification upon arrival and release of the child. If there are any custody arrangements, they must be given to the preschool to keep on file and must be kept current.

HEALTH POLICIES

IMMUNIZATIONS...All children must have ALL current immunizations and vaccination records must be on file with the director in order for the child to be enrolled. There are no exceptions.

STUDENT ILLNESSES (NON COVID-19-RELATED)...If your child has allergies or special needs, we must know about them. Space is provided for this on the enrollment application.

To assure the health of the children and teachers in the program, we ask that parents keep sick children at home. A good rule of thumb is if you wouldn't want another child in the class to look/act the way your child is (i.e., red eyes, discolored running nose, hacking cough, lethargic, unusually tired or cranky), keep your child at home.

If your child has any of the following, your child must remain home:

- Fever of 100.4F or higher in the past 12 hours (without ibuprofen or acetaminophen)
- Inflamed mouth or throat
- Unusual fatigue or irritability
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Discolored discharge from nose, eyes or ears
- Conjunctivitis
- Unexplained rash
- Active chicken pox or measles
- Scabies, head lice, or other infestation
- Pinworm infection or ringworm infection

A child cannot be brought back to the program until the contagious period of a disease is completely over (as listed below or as a note from a physician indicates).

- Chicken pox: until all sores are crusted
- Measles: until 5 days after development of rash
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after antibiotics have been administered
- Strep Throat: 24 hours after antibiotics have been administered

Your child must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

PCP is not equipped to isolate and supervise sick children. If a child should get sick while in class, the child's parents or another responsible adult, so designated by the parent, will be contacted to pick up the child as quickly as possible (within 30 minutes). This helps protect the health of the other children in our care.

If your child is exposed to a contagious disease while attending our program, the director will notify you as soon as possible. If your child is exposed outside of our program to a contagious disease, please notify the director as soon as possible so that other parents may be informed. Specific information about children, including their names, will be kept confidential between the parents and the director.

ALLERGIES AND FOOD SAFETY...Due to the high incidence of nut and peanut butter allergies, Providence Church Preschool strives to be a nut-free environment and does not allow any peanut butter, nuts, or nut products for snacks, parties, and any other shared food. If there is a child with allergies in your classroom, teachers will notify the families. Peanut butter is acceptable in individual lunches.

MEDICATIONS...NO oral medication is to be administered to children at school unless special arrangements have been made with the director.

MINOR INJURIES...Minor injuries are inevitable during active play. Therefore, if your child receives a minor scrape or cut that breaks the skin, the affected area will be washed with soap and warm water and a topical antibacterial ointment (such as Neosporin) may be applied. Ice packs may also be administered to bumps and bruises. Cortisone or similar creams may be applied to insect bites and stings. Desitin, Aquaphor or other diaper rash cream may be applied to diaper rashes as necessary.

When injuries occur, an incident report will be filled out by the teacher and a copy given to the parent. If the situation warrants, parents may be called prior to pick-up time to be informed of the injury.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES...Providence Church Preschool staff members certified in CPR and first aid are on site at all times. In the event of a medical emergency, the staff of PCP will attempt immediate contact with a parent. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff of PCP will then attempt to notify one or more of the alternate emergency contacts named on your child's enrollment form.

If the situation warrants, PCP will transport your child by ambulance to the nearest emergency medical facility. A representative of PCP will remain with your child at all times until a parent or alternative emergency contact arrives. Any expenses incurred in connection with the transport, care, and treatment given in any such situation are the responsibility of the parents.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN...Providence Church Preschool has adopted an emergency response plan, which outlines procedures that will be followed in the event of various emergency situations, such as fire, severe weather, earthquake, criminal activity near the church, etc. These procedures will be followed as closely as possible, but circumstances may warrant a deviation from the plan.

BITING...Biting occurs among preschoolers. If biting occurs, the bitten child will be calmed and medically-treated as necessary. The biter will be separated from the other children. We will emphatically but calmly let the biter know he/she hurt the other child and that it was not acceptable behavior.

After a 3rd biting offense, parents will be asked to keep their child home for up to 2 weeks. If biting occurs after the 2 week break from school, the child may be asked to leave our preschool.

STUDENT POLICIES AND DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE...One of our goals is to teach necessary social skills to the children. While respecting that each person is a valued individual, we teach children to function well within a group. This involves learning to meet one's needs without infringing on the rights of others and eventually accepting that one is not always able to do exactly what one wishes to do at any given moment.

The classrooms, daily schedules and curricula are designed to help children function well and to reduce frustration and conflict. The general classroom rules are:

- Listen carefully
- Follow directions
- Do your best
- Use inside voices
- Respect others
- Respect our school property
- Play safely, keeping hands and feet to yourself

However, if conflicts begin in any class, the teachers step in to unravel what happened and to help children resolve the issue peacefully. Usually, simple redirection is all that is needed. If a child persists in displaying negative behavior, a teacher works to calm the child and to make the limits clear.

Our discipline policy is as follows:

1st Offense – verbal warning; redirection

2nd Offense – time-out (time away from situation); redirection; explain consequence

3rd Offense – parent contacted to pick up child

If behavior issues are preventing proper operation of the classroom or causing harm to others, the teachers and/or the director will request a conference and the parents may be asked to keep their child home for up to 2 weeks. If the behavior issues continue after the 2 week break from school, the child may be asked to leave our preschool. We will work together with the family to determine the best solution for all involved parties.

ATTENDANCE POLICY...All required forms must be completed and on file in the office prior to each child attending classes. Children should be brought to school on those days for which they are registered. There are no make-up days due to illness, vacation, holidays, or other reasons, and tuition is not reimbursed for days off.

DRESS CODE...Please dress your child in comfortable, practical clothing. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes work best and are the safest. We recommend shorts under dresses.

The clothes should be washable play clothes, as they will be using paint, glue, markers and other “messy” materials on a regular basis.

We encourage self-help skills and want children to be able to manage their clothing. We want your children to feel free to play and engage in activities comfortably and safely. Please dress them so that this is possible.

It is best to assume there will be an outside recess every day, throughout all seasons. Please send sweaters, jackets, or raincoats for your children according to the weather.

SPARE CLOTHING...Please provide a complete change of clothing for your child suitable for the season (including shirt, pants, underwear or diapers, and socks). PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING. This clothing should be put in a clear plastic bag or box, which fits in a cubby. Please update these clothes after the winter and spring holidays to account for the change in season.

If your child has an accident or spill and does not have suitable clothing, we will attempt to find something appropriate in our spare clothing bin. If your child leaves school wearing any clothing you do not recognize, please launder the item(s) and return them as soon as possible so that it can be made available to the next child

who needs to borrow it.

POTTY TRAINING...We understand that potty training is a learning process and that children do have accidents. We do not expect two-year-olds to be toilet trained. However, we do ask that two and three-year-olds wear pull ups if they are in the training stages. If you would like us to aid in the training process, please let us know, and we will assist to the best of our abilities. Regular bathroom breaks will be held early in the morning and after snack.

TOYS FROM HOME...The program will not be responsible for any toys brought to school. Toys should not be brought to school unless discussed with your child's teacher.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION...Communication between school staff and parents/students is crucial for overall school success. Keep an eye out for monthly newsletters from the director and regular classroom information. The director will send emails and newsletters. Teachers will use email, newsletters, and/or social media for your child's class.

The director and the teachers are busy during the school day and may not have time to have an extended conversation with you during pick-up and drop-off. Please make appointments with your child's teacher for conferences to discuss progress or problems. You may communicate with the director via email or phone (preschool@providencecharleston.org or (843) 971-5275).

TEACHER CONFERENCES...Arrangements for teacher conferences may be made at any time with your child's teacher or the director. We urge you to exercise this right should any concerns or questions arise. Parents of 4 year olds will receive an evaluation mid-year to discuss Kindergarten Readiness.

VISITING THE SCHOOL...At this time, we are not allowing visitors to visit the school for birthdays or for reading.

BIRTHDAYS...Birthdays are acknowledged as special days for each child. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will celebrate in the classrooms, without treats being sent in from home. We promise to make your child feel extra special on their special day.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

CHILD ABUSE POLICY...Definitions of child abuse (as defined by the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse):

- *Physical abuse:* non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long-lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage, or death.
- *Neglect:* the failure to provide a child with basic needs, including food, clothing, education, shelter, and medical care; also abandonment and inadequate supervision.
- *Sexual abuse:* the sexual exploitation of a child by an older person, as in rape, incest, fondling of the genitals, exhibitionism, or pornography. It may be done for the sexual gratification of the older person, out of a need for power or for economic reasons.

If child abuse is suspected, the PCP staff will take appropriate measures to ensure the safety and well being of the child. Teachers and staff at PCP are mandatory reporters. Mandatory reporters must report signs of abuse to the appropriate authorities, including the Department of Social Services.

Please click on the following google form and indicate to us that you have read and understand our policies. By typing your name, you agree to our policies.

[Parent Handbook Agreement](#)