

EvFREE PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION	
• History & Purpose	1
SECTION 2 - PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM	2
SECTION 3 - AGE GROUPS & SCHEDULE	4
SECTION 4 - ADMISSION POLICY & PROCEDURES	5
SECTION 5 - OPERATING PROCEDURES	
• Arrival & Departure	6
• Vacation/Illness	6
• Withdrawal	6
SECTION 6 - FEES	
• Registration	7
• Tuition	7
• Late Pick-Up	7
SECTION 7 - HEALTH & SAFETY	
• Health Regulations	9
• Daily Health Check	10
• Communicable Diseases	10
• Medication	10
• Accidents & Minor Injuries	10
• Emergency Procedures/Natural Disaster Plan	10
SECTION 8 - STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE	11
SECTION 9 - NUTRITION	11
SECTION 10 - GENERAL GUIDELINES	
• Clothing	12
• Personal Items & Toys	12
SECTION 11 - PARENT RESPONSIBILITY & COMMUNICATION	12

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

History

EvFree Preschool was formed in 1980 as a ministry of the First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton to provide a loving atmosphere in which mothers of preschoolers could leave their children, knowing that their children's needs would be met. Over the years the program has developed to provide not only a place where parents feel comfortable leaving their children, but to provide increased activities for the children.

EvFree Preschool is a non-profit, state licensed, childcare center.

Purpose

EvFree Preschool is committed to preserving the experience of childhood at a time when more and more demands are being placed upon young children to meet the performance expectations of our increasingly high-pressure society.

We respect each child as a unique individual of God. We believe that a young child's contact with caring adults reinforces a personal sense of self-worth and makes learning an exciting adventure. We believe that the attitudes that are developed during a child's early years will remain for a lifetime, and therefore, we are committed to making EvFree Preschool a safe, loving and nurturing environment as well as a carefully planned Christian program which encourages spiritual, social, emotional, physical development, health, language and literacy, mathematics, science and visual arts and performing arts development for each child.

SECTION 2 - PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM

Activities and instruction will be commensurate with the child's age and level of development. A professional teacher, meeting state-required education guidelines, staffs each age category. Teachers plan activities for both individual and small group participation. The role of the teacher is to be available for guidance and assistance in nurturing and helping children understand themselves in the world in which they live. Opportunities are provided which encourage the children to develop new skills and reinforce current levels of achievement in the following areas:

SPIRITUAL

We believe in building a solid spiritual foundation through songs, stories, verses and prayers. Children will learn the basic Christian values and Biblical truths through formal and informal teaching.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

The basis of this foundation is self, social interaction, and relationships. Children will be in a small group with a teacher where they will develop interactions with peers, group participation, cooperation and responsibility. One of the first lessons a baby learns is trust. We provide a safe place for children to feel loved, accepted and to develop self-esteem, self-awareness and self-regulation.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The three developmental areas emphasized are listening/speaking, reading and writing. The main focuses are on language development, vocabulary, grammar, phonological awareness alphabetic and word/print recognition, comprehension and age-appropriate text.

MATHEMATICS

Children learn math concepts through the understanding of numbers, patterning, comparison, identifying shapes and measurement. Exposing the children to this cognitive development in the preschool years will set the stage for further development.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Children learn to improvise vocally or act out with others through music and movement, visual arts, and drama where they can create, invent and express themselves.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A variety of toys, manipulative and large muscle equipment and activities provide opportunities for children to develop.

HEALTH

Foundations in basic hygiene, oral health, safety and nutrition are communicated in developmentally appropriate concepts.

HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE

Students are introduced to history as it relates to events, people and places of time. They also learn understanding of responsibility, following rules and relationships with others.

SCIENCE

The practice of scientific inquiry draws on children's cognitive, language, social and physical skills. These are developed in abilities to group and sort items as well as identifying the cause and effect of events.

SECTION 3 - AGE GROUPS & SCHEDULE

- Infant** - 6 weeks - Walking
- Toddler** - Walking - 24 months
- Preschool** - 25 months - Pre-kindergarten

EvFree Preschool provides a two, three, four or five day a week program.

Two-day Program

Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Three-day Program

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m.-5:00p.m.

Four-day Program

Any four days
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Five-day Program

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

The dates of each school year, including vacation days, will be given to each parent at the time of his or her child's enrollment.

SECTION 4 - ADMISSION POLICY & PROCEDURES

Policy

EvFree Preschool is open to any child regardless of sex, race, religion, or national origin. All children need to meet the following criteria:

- Be physically, emotionally and socially developed to the extent that they are not a hazard to themselves and do not endanger the well-being of other children.
- Be ready for the type of group and program offered by EvFree Preschool and be able to benefit from the program.

Children with special needs will be accepted if it is determined that they will benefit from the program and the staff is able to meet their needs in addition to the needs of the other children. (Parents will need to arrange for an individual consultation.)

Procedures

Parents and children are invited to tour EvFree Preschool. The director is willing to meet individually with parents to discuss the philosophy, curriculum and policies of EvFree Preschool. Materials and an application packet will be available to parents.

The State Department of Social Services and EvFree Preschool require that the following forms be completed and on file before a child may attend. These must be kept current throughout each child's enrollment in the center:

- Child's Pre-admission History Record
- Application for Admission (Three pages)
- Identification & Emergency Information Form
- Physician's Report
- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Administration of Medications
- Parent's Rights Form
- Inclusion in Roster
- Personal Rights
- Immunization Record
- Acknowledgement of Receipt
- Birth Certificate

In addition to the above forms the following monies must be received before a child may be enrolled (see page 7 for details):

- Non-refundable enrollment fee

SECTION 5 - OPERATING PROCEDURES

Arrival and Departure

Parents are asked to park in general parking areas. Do not leave other children unattended in a vehicle while bringing EvFree Preschool children to their rooms. EvFree Preschool is not responsible for children left unattended in the parking lot.

The gates to the playground and classroom areas must be kept closed after entering or leaving. Please be sure they close behind you.

The Department of Social Services and EvFree Preschool require a responsible adult to sign each child in and out of the center daily, noting the arrival and departure time of the child. It is each adult's responsibility to be sure that a teacher acknowledges his/her child's arrival and departure. Please do not leave children unattended in the classroom or on the playground. Please allow enough time to insure smooth transitions for the child at arrival and departure times. Upon arrival parents should help the child place personal belongings in an assigned cubby and upon departure check for parent notices, artwork or other projects in the cubby.

Children are released only to parents or other authorized adults listed on the Emergency Form. All information on this form must be kept current. If an adult is unknown to the staff on duty, identification will be requested. Any changes are to be reported to the office immediately. Children will not be released to any adult suspected of intoxication from alcohol or drugs.

Vacation/Illness

Tuition is based on an annual rate broken into equal payments. Therefore, parents are required to pay tuition fees each month their child is enrolled in the center, regardless of the child's attendance. Parents are requested to notify the EvFree Preschool office when children are absent from the center and in advance of any planned vacation.

Withdrawal

We ask that parents notify the director in writing two weeks in advance of a child's withdrawal from EvFree Preschool. If a two-week notice is given, any unused portion of the last month's tuition will be refunded. Parents who do not give notice forfeit two weeks of the last month's tuition.

SECTION 6 - FEES

Registration

A non-refundable registration fee is paid upon the enrollment of each child.

Tuition

Monthly fees are due on the first day of each month of enrollment. A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed on all past due accounts if not paid by the 10th of that month. If the account remains unpaid twenty days after the due date, the child will be removed from EvFree Preschool until the account is paid in full or arrangements have been made with the director.

Tuition is pro-rated on an average annual basis to insure the continued quality operation of the program. Therefore, no tuition credit is given for any of the days when the center is closed, or any days a child is absent due to vacation or illness.

Late Pick-Up Fee

EvFree Preschool closes at 5:00 p.m. A late charge of \$1.00 per minute is assessed for any tardiness after 5:15 p.m. Repeated lateness will result in the removal of a child from the school.

Early Drop-Off Fee

EvFree Preschool opens at 8:00 a.m. for early care students. Any child dropped off before 8:50 a.m. will be charged the early drop-off fee. We will not accept any children between 8:50 a.m. and 8:59 a.m. due to transition to their regular class.

SECTION 7 - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Regulations

- Every child must have a pre-admission health evaluation completed by a licensed physician.
- Every child must be immunized for tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, polio, and measles.
- Tuberculin clearance is required.
- Parents must complete a Pre-admission History Record

For the well-being of all children, we must limit school attendance to well children only. It is the parents' responsibility to determine if a child can participate fully in the program activities. Some helpful guidelines to follow are:

<i>Symptom:</i>	<i>Child must remain home until:</i>
Fever of 100 or Above	The temperature has returned to normal for at least 24 hours.
Cold/Flu Symptoms	Discharge is no longer draining from nose and cough has subsided.
Diarrhea/Vomiting	Loose stools and vomiting have subsided and the child has returned to normal eating without stomach upset.
Ear Ache/Sore Throat	Until child has been seen and treated by a physician and/or symptoms subside.
Red, Watery Eyes	Eyes return to normal, are no longer red and burning or itching.
Rash	The rash disappears or has been diagnosed by a physician as non-communicable.
Diaper Rash	The rash is under control and there are no open sores.
Thrush	The white coating is being treated by a physician.
Conjunctivitis	Eyes have been clear of all symptoms for 24 hours.

Teachers will use their discretion when sending a child home.

SECTION 7 - HEALTH AND SAFETY

Daily Health Check

Should a child become ill while at school, the staff will notify the parents by phone to pick up the child. An isolation area is provided for temporary care of ill or injured children.

Communicable Diseases

With childhood comes illness. The most common infectious diseases are measles, mumps, whooping cough, chicken pox and German measles. Strep throat, head lice, pinworms and impetigo are also considered communicable diseases because they are extremely infectious and children have yet to build up immunities against them.

If your child contracts a communicable disease, for the health of all children it is imperative that the director be notified immediately in the event a quarantine period is necessary.

Medication

The EvFree Preschool staff are not authorized to administer medication. If your child needs medication while he/she is attending school, a parent may come and give the medication.

Accidents and Minor Injuries

Minor bumps and scrapes may happen. They will be reported on an incident report, given to the parent when the child is picked up. Parents are called immediately in the event of any serious or questionable injury. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached and an emergency exists, the director will seek medical care as needed and as designated by the Emergency Authorization Form.

Emergency Procedures/Natural Disaster Plan

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster all children will be kept at the center until they are picked up by an authorized person as indicated on the Emergency Authorization Form.

SECTION 8 - STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

EvFree Preschool staff will design activities intended to be suitable for all classroom children. In the event a child is unable or unwilling to participate in an activity, the teacher will attempt to find an appropriate alternative.

On occasion continued inappropriate behavior will require specific disciplinary action. In all cases the preferred method will be to redirect the child into other activities. On a rare occasion, and only if redirection does not work, a "time out" will be used and the child will be separated from the rest of the group and from the activity. At no time will a child be left unattended.

At no time will the EvFree Preschool staff use corporal punishment, humiliating or frightening disciplinary methods, or use punishment restricting food, rest or toilet use.

In the event that every effort has been made and a child's behavior becomes harmful or chronically disruptive to other children, the following steps will be enforced:

1. A letter of notification will be sent to the parent describing the child's behavior
2. Parent/Teacher/Director conference will be held
3. Expulsion from the EvFree Preschool program will occur

SECTION 9 - NUTRITION

Simple food preparation may be part of a morning preschool schedule. These lesson plans will be posted on the bulletin board in each child's classroom one week prior to the activity. A parent must advise the center of any prescribed diet or food allergies of a child.

The parent determines the diet of infants and toddlers and must provide a feeding schedule and us with written dietary instructions.

The parent is to supply the snack and lunch. When preparing your child's snack and lunch, consider the four good groups. Also, we provide water at snack time for the children who are two or over.

Parents are welcome to send a special treat for their child's class for birthdays or other special occasions. All special treats must be store bought and sealed in the original package. The package must include the ingredient list. Please notify the child's teacher or the director in advance so that the schedule may be adjusted to include the event.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Clothing

We ask that children arrive at school wearing comfortable, washable clothes suitable for active and messy play, including painting. Your child needs to feel free to become involved in any activity. For safety reasons, children must wear shoes. We recommend shoes that are sturdy and safe for climbing. Tennis shoes can be great for flexibility. We recommend that children wear socks for safety reasons.

Extra clothing should be marked with the child's full name. It is recommended that all clothing be marked, especially jackets and sweaters.

Personal Items and Toys

Toys and equipment have been carefully selected for all children so it is not necessary to bring toys from home. However, there are times when a child may wish to share a personal item from home. Please do not bring items that have small pieces that can become detached and thus be a hazard to children. Also, toy soldiers, guns, jewelry, money, candy and chewing gum are to be discouraged. All items need to be clearly marked.

SECTION 11 - PARENT RESPONSIBILITY & COMMUNICATION

It is important for parents to read the Parent's Handbook. Payment of the registration fee shall constitute an acceptance of the provisions of the Handbook.

The First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton carries liability coverage. The policy stipulates, however, that the parent's carrier make payment as primary coverage.

Situations at home can affect a child's behavior. Parents are requested to advise the school of any changes such as divorce, death in family, death of a pet, new sibling, change of residence, etc. so that the staff can be sensitive to the child's special needs during stressful times.

Conferences and special events may occur during the year. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of these times to be an important part of their child's preschool experience.

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