

# St. Clare's Christian Preschool

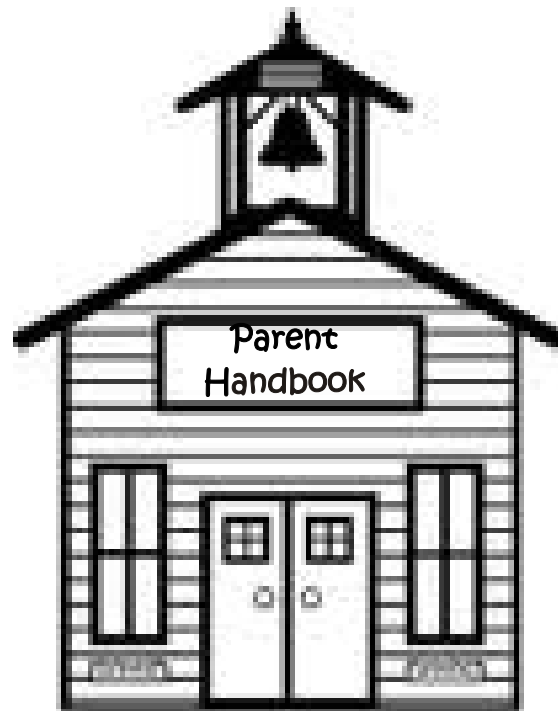
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Clare's Christian Preschool! We are looking forward to having your child at St. Clare's this year.

St. Clare's Preschool is licensed by California Department of Social Services Lic. # 010212344. They shall have the authority to interview children, or staff, and to inspect and audit a child or facility records without prior consent. The Licensee shall make provisions for private interview with any child or staff member and for the examination of all records relative to the operation of the child care facility. The Department has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behavior.

Licensing Agency Rights - Code 101200B&C

The purpose of this hand book is to answer most questions parents will have regarding our preschool. It is an important booklet that should be kept in a place for ready reference.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 925.462.0938, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. most days, or by email: [stclarepreschool@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stclarepreschool@sbcglobal.net).

Sincerely,

*Meg Bell*

Director

St. Clare's Tax Identification number: 94-3108531

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## **Mission Statement & Philosophy**

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission at St. Clare's Christian Preschool is to create a safe, warm, family oriented, loving environment that supports developmentally appropriate practices and encourages each child to grow spiritually, cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally.

### **Our Philosophy**

Children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Research shows that children are capable of great concentration when they are surrounded by interesting things. Children need the time and freedom to explore these areas of interest. With careful observation we help encourage and support the learning process in each child, according to their own timetable for growth.

## **General Information**

### **How to help your child prepare for school**

- Talk about school with your child. Discuss positive experiences that are waiting for him or her.
- Listen to your child. Discuss concerns that he or she is expressing. Encourage your child and be reassuring.
- Establish good routines for eating and sleeping.
- Establish a good communication link with your child's teacher so that you are informed about your child's progress.

### **What to bring on your first day of school**

#### **An Extra Change of Clothes (Please label everything)**

- Socks
- Pants
- Shirt
- Underwear

#### **Nap Time**

- Small Crib Sheet
- Small Crib Blanket
- Small Pillow

#### **Other Items**

- Sun Block (label)
- Lunch Box
- 2 Kleenex Boxes
- 2 Disposable Cameras
- Picture of your family

## **Non-discrimination Policy**

St. Clare's Preschool admits students of any race, religion, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies or admission policies.

## **Who we are**

We are committed to hiring educationally qualified teachers who are personally and professionally devoted to the exceptional care, welfare, and quality education of children.

Most of our teachers exceed the academic qualifications required by California licensing regulations and have an average of more than 10 years teaching experience at quality schools. In addition, our teachers are CPR and first-aid certified. More importantly, they are enthusiastic and enjoy their work with children. This is reflected in the positive environment they create for the children.

We strive to create and maintain an atmosphere that fosters the healthy spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, and physical growth in each child. We acknowledge that learning is enhanced in an environment that encourages sharing, caring, laughing, questioning, risk taking, growing, playing and praying.

# Enrollment & Fees

## Admission Criteria

Before your child is accepted for admission, the following criteria must be met: The parent(s) or guardian(s) must complete a tour of the facility and meet with the director. Your child's needs will be discussed to insure proper placement. The following required forms must be completed and returned:

- Registration form
- ID and emergency information
- Pre-admission health history
- Physician's report
- Copy of immunization record
- Consent for medical treatment
- Emergency cards (2)
- Copy of birth certificate
- Personal rights
- Parent's rights
- Photo release
- Sunscreen permission slip
- Field trip permission slip

## Enrollment Fees

Children ages 2 through Pre-K will be accepted for enrollment. The registration fee is \$100.00 and will reserve a place for your child. This is a non-refundable fee. A half-month deposit will be assessed to be used to cover your child's last two weeks of school. Each family will be assessed an annual supply fee of \$100.00, which is payable in September. This fee is prorated for families starting after September.

## Multiple Child Discount

A tuition discount of 10% will be assessed to the second and additional children enrolled from the same family.

## Returning Students

Students who leave in June, and plan to return in September will be given priority, but not guaranteed a spot for fall, unless the summer months have been paid for.

### **Key Tags**

Each family enrolled must leave a deposit for at least one key. Each key requires a \$40.00 deposit. This will allow you access to the school Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Only visitors are to use the intercom system at the front door to enter the school.

### **Tuition Payments**

You will be billed at the first of each month for the monthly tuition. Your bill will be e-mailed to you. Payment is due by the 10th of the month. All tuition payments must be made by check, cashier's check, or money order (cash will not be accepted).

If a tuition check is returned from the bank, the amount of the check plus a \$30 return check fee will be due immediately.

Should you fail to pay tuition by the end of the month in which it is due, the following steps will be taken:

- A meeting will be scheduled between yourself and the office manager to work out an agreed repayment schedule.
- The repayment agreement will be documented and kept in your child's file.
- If agreed repayment plan is not delivered, a second meeting will be scheduled between yourself, the office manager, and the preschool director. At this meeting you will be given the opportunity to review and amend your repayment plans. If they are agreed, you will be given one final opportunity to pay.
- If deadlines are not met, you will be given notice, in writing, to withdraw your child from the preschool.
- The two week deposit will be kept by the Preschool to offset the monies owed.
- Your account will then be passed to our debt collection agency to collect outstanding tuition. Parents are liable for all legal fees incurred to collect delinquent accounts.

### **Late and Additional Day Attendance Fees**

Please note that additional attendance of any type must be pre-approved by the Preschool Director so that we can be sure we have sufficient teachers to cover our headcount. Failure to be in the required headcount ratios exposes the school to the risk of a financial penalty and/or a citation by licensing authorities.

- A Part-Time student requesting extra hours of attendance will be charged at \$10 per extra hour or part thereof.
- A Monday, Wednesday, Friday student requesting attendance on Tuesday or Thursday, will be charged \$10 per hour.
- A Tuesday or Thursday student requesting attendance on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, will be charged \$10 per hour.
- Part-Timers whose parents need to pick up a child from another school thereby causing the St Clare's pick-up to be between 3:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. need to seek pre-approval from the Director for this privilege.
- Part-Timers who are picked up after 3:15 p.m. without prior permission will be charged up to \$20 per hour.
- Late pick up after 6:00 p.m., \$2.00 for every minute late. This fee is per child. Please have a check ready when picking children up after 6:00 p.m., to give to the closing teachers. Our teachers are paid until 6:00 p.m. Please be respectful of the teachers' scheduled working hours. We all enjoy getting home on time.

## **Policies & Procedures**

### **Reporting Absences**

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the preschool office. If your child is ill, please notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious, so that we can consider the health of all the children enrolled in the program.

### **Vacation Policy**

Each full-time student (five days a week, 7 a.m. - 6 p.m., year round) is eligible for one week of vacation credit per calendar year. To be eligible for vacation credit, your child must be enrolled for at least six months, and the vacation must be five consecutive days. No exceptions will be made.

### **Withdrawal or Change of Schedule**

Any family that is withdrawing from the school or requesting a change of schedule, must notify the director in writing, two weeks prior to the requested change in status. In the case of withdrawal, your two-week deposit will be put toward your last two weeks. Failure to notify the director two-weeks prior to your child's last day will result in the loss of your two week deposit. Any tuition unused, following your time at St. Clare's, is refundable.

### **Personal Belongings**

St. Clare's preschool supplies all classrooms with age appropriate educational materials and toys. Therefore we feel it is best if your child does not bring toys, money, candy, video games, or other personal items from home. The preschool is not responsible for lost or broken items brought from home.

### **Custody and Visitation**

From time to time, issues arise as to the release of a child to the appropriate parent or legal guardian. Please note any custody or visitation restrictions on your enrollment forms. Additionally, please provide the preschool director with any legal documents supporting those restrictions. We will strictly adhere to the instructions provided in such legal documents. Please provide updated legal documents as needed.

### **Closure Dates & Holidays**

A school calendar will be provided in the enrollment packet. Our scheduled closure dates are published annually and are located by the parent sign in and out area, should you need another one at any time. No discounts are given for holidays and closure dates that fall on your child's regularly scheduled day. The holidays are as follows:

Labor Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Veteran's Day	President's Day
Thanksgiving Day & the day following	Good Friday
Christmas Eve, & Christmas Day	Memorial Day
New Year's Eve & New Year's Day	July 4th
Up to three days for Staff Development Days	

### **Clothing**

We strongly encourage you to dress your child in “play clothes” for school. Some of our activities can get messy, and we want your children to be comfortable while they play and learn. For safety and comfort children should wear rubber soled shoes. We strongly discourage you from allowing your children to wear flip-flops or sandals with no backs. *Important:* label all clothing with your child's name in permanent marker. Please check the lost and found periodically for missing items. At the end of the month unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

### **Potty Training and Diapers**

We work closely with you on an individual basis on potty training. We do accept children who are not potty trained in our two-year-program. Parents need to provide diapers as needed. Keep a regular supply at the school.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays may be celebrated at school. We ask that if you want to have a party for your child at school, that you notify your child’s teacher and the director a week prior to the event.

### **What Not to Bring to School**

For the safety of our children and in consideration of our philosophy we ask that you leave the following at home:

- Weapons, or toys promoting violence
- Candy
- Chewing Gum
- “Jellies,” Flip Flops, or sandals without backs
- Anything unlabeled
- A Frown

## **The Program**

### **Education**

The preschool is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Teachers plan activities for a 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon class. This is what we call the “preschool portion of the day.” Your child will benefit from our program when they are present for the entire program.

### **Prayer**

Prayer is a part of the daily activities at St. Clare’s. The children say grace together before they eat, and pray together at other times during the day.

### **Bible Time**

Bible time is part of our daily schedule and includes Bible stories, lessons, songs and prayer.

### **Chapel**

Once a week, on Wednesdays, the children will have Chapel Time with the Chaplain of St. Clare’s Church. This is a 15 - 20 minute session with two or three classes at a time, usually held in the Church. Topics may vary. Parents are welcome to come and observe.

### **Share Day (Not for Two’s)**

Each class has “Share Day” once or twice a week. (Please check with you child’s teacher for days and times.) Children may bring a toy, book, CD, or any other item of their choice (please no weapons or toys that promote violence.) This provides a valuable time for the child to develop speech and language skills as well as self-confidence. The toy must be put in the designated “Share Day” box or bag, and will only be brought out for “Share Day” time.

### **Field Trips**

Occasional field trips are taken throughout the year. For identification purposes, we ask that each child wear a St. Clare's t-shirt. Parents will be notified in advance of all trips or outings. Parents are welcome to join the class for our field trips. To ensure the safety of all the children and to enhance their enjoyment of the experience we ask that parents follow these guidelines:

- No siblings may accompany a parent
- Teachers consider you a part of a team and ask that you follow their directions in assisting the children.
- We ask that parents keep their attention focused on the children and not on adult conversation.
- Parents may take pictures as the time and conditions permit.
- If drivers are needed, and you can drive, you need to provide us with a copy of your driver's license and proof of insurance.
- Age appropriate car safety seats are needed for your child to participate.
- Thank you for your understanding in helping to make all field trips successful and pleasurable for your child and their classmates.

### **Special Events**

There will be numerous special events planned on campus. We strongly encourage parental involvement on these occasions. If an activity is planned for a day that your child is not scheduled to attend, your child is very much welcome as long as a parent is present.

### **Vision Screening**

Vision screening is offered in December by "Prevent Blindness Northern California. All children, except the two year olds, are screened. Referrals are made for any children having unusual screening results

## Sample Schedule

7-8 a.m.	School opens, mixed age group activities
8-9 a.m.	Children are outside
9-9:30 a.m.	Bathroom break, a.m. snack
9:30-10 a.m.	Circle time (greetings, songs, calendar, motor skills, etc.)
10-10:30 a.m.	Centers
10:30-11 a.m.	Art and/or table time activities
11-12 noon	Children are outside
12-12:30 p.m.	Bathroom break, lunch
12:30-1 p.m.	Transition to naptime
1-2 p.m.	Nap and rest time
2-2:30 p.m.	Wake up time, p.m. snack
2:30-3 p.m.	Closing circle
3-3:30 p.m.	Arts and Crafts, Center choices
3:30-5 p.m.	Children are outside
5-6 p.m.	Bathroom break, mixed age group activities

Schedules vary according to age group. Please check with your child's teacher for an accurate classroom schedule.

## **Safety and Security**

### **Parking**

Please *do not* park in the red zone. For the safety of our children, this is reserved for emergency vehicle use *only*. Please drive slowly in the parking lot, entering and exiting carefully.

### **Arriving At and Leaving the Center**

When the center opens and attendance is low, children may be gathered together in one room, or on the playground before they move to their respective classrooms. At 9:00 a.m. the children are taken to their classrooms. We ask that you accompany your child to the classroom or playground for a smooth transition. Likewise, after 3:00 p.m., as children are picked up, remaining children may be joined again on the playground or in one classroom. When you come to pick up your child(ren), for the safety of all children, please keep your child(ren) with you from the time you pick them up until you get them into the car.

### **Signing In & Out**

State law requires that children must be signed in when brought to school and signed out when picked up. Signatures must be your full legal name, no initials our licensing regulations require you to do so. The school can be fined if you are only initialing or not signing. These fines will be passed on to you.

### **Back Gate**

Please note that the back gate and green door next to S. Valley Trails are fire exits only. Parents are requested to use the main entrance when dropping off and picking up children. This is for the safety of our children.

### **Emergency Procedures**

We periodically schedule, carry out, and document emergency drills. We have developed an emergency evacuation system designed to meet the needs of our center.

Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. In the unlikely event that our center is severely damaged or declared unsafe, all children will be evacuated to a safe distance from the building, where we will await your arrival. Should such an emergency occur, the Preschool director will attempt to notify you as soon as possible.

### **Emergency Contacts**

For your child's security please be sure to provide us with at least two emergency contacts and keep their numbers up to date.

### **Bathroom/Clothing Accidents**

All children must bring a complete change of clothes in a labeled Ziploc® bag. Parents should label all clothes and the bag with the child's name. If your children use these clothes, please send a new change of clothes the next day that they are at school. Children are more comfortable in their own clothes.

### **Authorization**

You must inform the school if someone other than a parent is going to be taking your child home. On the emergency card, please be sure to list all persons you authorize to take your child home from St. Clare's . They must present a photo I.D. if we do not know them. No child will be released to any person not authorized by a parent. State law prohibits us from accepting authorization over the telephone. This is for your child's safety.

### **Student Record Updates**

Whenever there are changes or additions to the information originally provided on your registration form, please stop by the office to make changes. This is important regarding telephone numbers where you can be reached while your child is at school. In an emergency we want to be able to reach parents quickly.

## Health and Nutrition

### Illnesses

All children must check in with the teacher prior to being left for class. At this time the teacher will ensure that the child is free from obvious signs of illness. State regulations prohibit us from admitting any child too ill to participate in regular daily activities. In order to keep the children healthy, we ask that you adhere to the following guidelines and keep your children home if any of the following apply:

- If a child is sent home with a fever, they cannot return to school until they have been fever free for 24 hours.
- If a child is too tired and exhausted to participate in the normal daily routine we will ask that you come and pick up your child.
- If the child has an uncontrollable cough, or is having difficulty breathing, they will not be allowed at school.
- Your child will not be allowed at school if they have an excessive runny nose. If the child cannot keep the mucus from constantly dripping, and the teacher has to wipe their nose more than three times within one hour, we will ask you to come and pick up your child.
- If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea, they will be sent home, and may not return until they have gone 24 hours without vomiting or diarrhea.

Should your child get sick at school they will be isolated and you will be notified. An authorized person must pick the child up within one hour. If you will be keeping your child home from school due to an illness, please notify the office, so that we may advise other parents accordingly. Should your child be exposed to a contagious illness at school, a notice will be posted so that parents are made aware of symptoms to be alert for.

### **Medication \***

Medication will be given if prescribed by a physician. The medication must come to school in the original bottle or container, with the prescription label attached. A written request from the parent or guardian is required. Non-prescribed medicine will not be administered unless a physician request form is complete.

### **Sun Screen \***

St. Clare's will apply sun screen to children as needed. We ask that you provide the sun screen you would like applied to your child, with your child's name on the bottle. St. Clare's will not apply sun screen to your child if you have not provided sun screen for your child, and filled out the sun screen approval form.

### **Biting**

St. Clare's Preschool understands that biting in young children is normal in early childhood development. However, since biting and other such behaviors have the potential to harm others. St. Clare's Preschool has established the following policy to help manage this behavior.

- If a child is bitten, the teacher will tend to the bitten child with first aid procedures, then speak with the child that bit about the inappropriate behavior. An injury report will be filled out, and parents of both children will be telephoned regarding the incident. The parents of the child who bites will need to sign the injury report, and we will keep a copy on file.
- If there is another incident with the same child biting again, the child will be sent home, and the incident will be documented in an injury report. The injury report must be signed by the parents of the child who bit, and will be kept in the child's file.
- If the biting continues, the biting will be documented and signed by the parents of the child that bites, and kept in the child's file. The director and the teacher will decide if it is in the best interest and safety of the other children to keep the child that bites in the program.

*\* St. Clare's Christian Preschool shall have no responsibility for any kind of reaction caused by the ingestion of medication or application of sun screen.*

### **Accident/Illness Procedures**

If your child is involved in an accident or suffers a major illness during school hours, we will make every effort to notify you immediately about the condition and any medical treatment. Concurrently, we will contact the appropriate emergency agency (consistent with your requests set forth in the *Identification and Emergency* form that you completed at registration) to provide the necessary special care that your child needs.

In the case of an emergency, and if we cannot make contact with your or your designated emergency contact, St. Clare's Christian Preschool, in its sole and unlimited discretion, shall seek any necessary treatment, including, but not limited to, calling 911. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be responsible for any and all expenses incurred, in the event that this course of action becomes necessary.

### **Rest Time**

All Children will be required to rest. Depending upon age, children are expected to rest quietly or engage in quiet activities, allowing those who would like to sleep the opportunity to do so. We ask that you provide a bedding bag with a small crib sheet, a small blanket, a small pillow and a nap animal if your child would like. Bedding bags are to be taken home and laundered on a weekly basis, or more frequently if necessary.

### **Food and Nutrition**

We promote good nutrition at St. Clare's Preschool. Snack time is a learning time when we talk about the growing bodies and what children need to eat for strong bones and healthy bodies. We provide a morning and afternoon snack, and ask that you provide a lunch. A snack schedule is issued monthly.

- *As some students have allergies to peanuts or nuts which can be life threatening, St. Clare's Christian Preschool has a policy of being a "nut-free" facility. This includes items that have peanuts, peanut products and sesame seeds.*

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

St. Clare's Preschool is concerned about the well being of all the children and families. The preschool has a moral and legal responsibility to report any case of suspected child abuse. In suspected abuse and neglect cases no evidence will be excluded on grounds of confidentiality including preschool records. Although St. Clare's Preschool staff is not obliged to do so, we may speak with parents prior to notifying the Department of Social Services.

### **Discipline**

Children at St. Clare's preschool will not receive physical punishment. Children who have conflicts or problems with others while at our center will be encouraged to verbalize their angers or concerns. The role of the teacher at school is to be an assistant in positive problem solving Children whose behavior endangers others will be supervised away from other children. The child will be encouraged to discuss the problem with a staff member, and other concerned parties. The staff rarely uses "Time Out", unless a child is emotionally out of control, and needs a private time to regain composure. No child will be subjected to humiliation, shame, fright, or verbal or physical abuse by staff members or by parents on the premises or on a field trip.

## Conflict Resolution

Learning to manage conflict is an important part of preschool. All children need to understand how to resolve conflicts appropriately on their own, and ask for help when they need it. As we guide children toward their independence, we keep in mind that children need to learn to repair their broken relationships on their own without forcing them to be insincere.

- We help children verbalize their feelings and desires, and to listen to one another.
- We give children the opportunity to suggest their own solutions to the conflict.
- We assist children in finding an appropriate solution if needed.
- We help children to recognize and take responsibility for their own behavior.

Should an extreme behavior occur (*e.g.* biting, kicking, throwing toys, etc)

- First occurrence: The child will be warned the parent notified in writing, and a note kept in the child's file.
- Second occurrence: The child will be removed from the classroom and sent to the director's office. The parent will be notified in writing, and a note kept in the child's file.
- Third occurrence: The parent will be called to pick the child up for the remainder of the day. A parent- teacher conference will be scheduled in which a specific plan of action will be developed to address the behavior. The action will outline all the steps the staff and parents will take to try to improve the child's behavior, and the steps toward dropping the student should the behavior persist.

If we cannot meet the special needs of your child, or if there is concern for the physical safety and well being of other children and/or teachers, we will request that you withdraw your child. St. Clare's Preschool may drop immediately any child whose behavior credits a significant risk of harm to the health and safety of themselves, other children, or staff, without following the guidance steps outlined above.

## **Family Involvement and Communication**

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents are always welcome. We encourage you to visit at any time. Open communication between the parents and staff is important, and so is your input. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have, regarding the preschool, with the director at anytime.

### **Parent Communication**

The teachers in each classroom will distribute a “What We Did Today” form in your child’s cubby or communication folder. A brief explanation of what their day was like will be included. This provides a quick means for you to be informed of your child’s daily activities and can promote a conversation between you and your child. You will receive a monthly newsletter containing information on activities, field trips and special events. Additional memos will be distributed as needed. Please note that it is your responsibility to read them carefully. The information they contain will be of great importance to you and your child.

### **Lesson Plans**

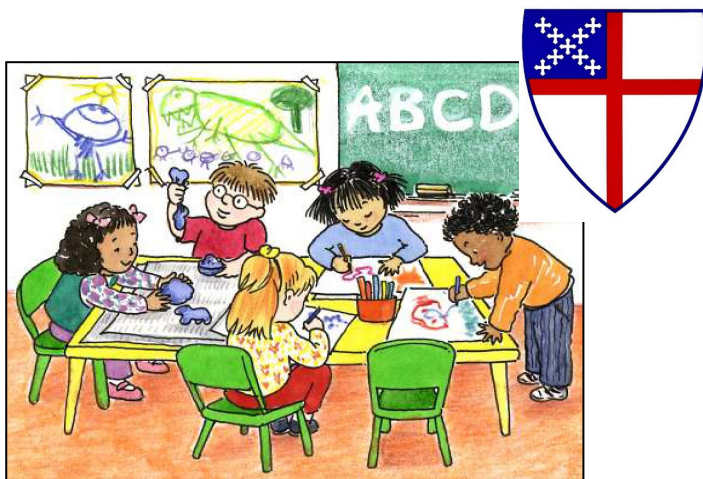
The teacher of each classroom will post either weekly or monthly lesson plans. Lesson plans will provide information on activities children will be doing that week or month.

### **Back To School Night**

Curriculum, teaching methods, assessment format, schedules and discipline techniques will be discussed at back to school night at the beginning of the year. This is an evening for the you to get to know you child’s teacher.

### **Student Evaluations**

Student evaluations are for three and four year olds. We schedule student evaluations twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The purpose of the evaluations in preschool is to monitor each child’s progress in all areas of the child’s development. The evaluations help us to meet both the current and future needs of the child. Parent-teacher conferences are available upon parent request.



Revised 18 January A.D. 2012