

Family Handbook

Effective 8/14/2017

St. Clare's Christian Preschool

3350 Hopyard Rd.

Pleasanton, CA 94588

Phone: (925) 462-0938

Fax: (925) 462-3838

E-mail: director@stclarespreschool.org

Web Site: www.stclarespleasanton.org

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

California Department of Social Services License number: 010212344.

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

St. Clare's Preschool is licensed by California Department of Social Services License Number 010212344. The Department has the following authorities:

"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 handbook is to answer many questions families will have regarding our preschool.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at (925) 462-0938, or by email: director@stclarespreschool.org

Sincerely,

Sue Orbell

Director

Table of Contents

Our Mission Statement & Philosophy	4
General Information	4
Non-discrimination Policy	
Who We Are	
How to Help Your Child to Prepare for School	
What to Bring the First Day of School	
Saying Goodbye	
Enrollment & Fees	5
Admission criteria	
Enrollment fees	
Multiple Child Discounts	
Returning Students	
Key Tags	
Tuition Payments	
Returned Checks	
Failure to Pay Tuition	
Family Service Hours	
Additional Hours and Days Attendance Fees for Part-Time Students	
Late Pick-up	
A Year-Round Program	
Policies & Procedures	8
Reporting of Absences	
Vacation Credit Policy	
Change of Schedule	
Leaving the Preschool	
Class Assignments	
Custody and Visitation	
Closure Dates and Holidays	
Emergency Closures	
Clothing	
Toilet Training and Diapers	
Birthdays	
What Not to Bring to School	
The Program.....	11
Education	
Prayer	

Chapel	
Soccer and Gymnastics	
Share Day	
Field Trips	
Special Events	
Vision Screening	
Sample Schedule	
Safety and Security	12
Parking	
Arriving and Leaving the Center	
Signing in and out	
Security Doors and Gates	
Emergency Procedures	
Emergency Contacts	
Bathroom/Clothing Accidents	
Child Pick-up Authorization	
Student Record Updates	
Health and Nutrition	14
Illness	
Medication Policy	
Sun Screen	
Accident/Illness Procedures	
Nap/Rest Time	
Food and Nutrition	
Reporting Child Abuse	
Guidance and Handling Challenging Behavior	18
Guidance	
Challenging Behaviors	
Family Involvement and Communication	20
Open Door Policy	
Family Communication	
Lesson Plans	
Back to School Night	
Preschool Progress Reports	
Director's Open-Door Commitment	
Preschool Board of Directors	
The Vestry of St. Clare's Episcopal Church	

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 cognitively, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

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

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 based on race, religion, color, national or 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 young 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, and playing.

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, and discuss concerns that they are expressing. Encourage your child and be reassuring. Establish good routines for eating and sleeping. Establish an effective 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

For Nap Time

Small crib blanket
A small stuffed toy (if desired)

Other Items

Sun block (label with name)
Lunch box & reusable ice block to keep it cool
Picture of your family

Saying Goodbye

Separations are sometimes difficult, especially at the start of preschool. Starting the day in a positive manner will help assure a good day for your child. Here are some suggestions. Develop a reassuring goodbye routine for each day. For example, find a favorite teacher for your child to say “good morning” to or a favorite activity your child likes to begin the day with, then give a warm hug good-bye and leave with confidence. Having a consistent routine is very important. Talk with your child before you arrive about what he is going to do and the teachers and children who will be at school. When changes in routine occur, please keep teachers informed so they can help your child. It may help to have a teacher take your child in their lap; they can then help your child find an activity of interest so you can say goodbye and leave.

Our single most important piece of advice is to say goodbye confidently and briefly, then leave. Don't hesitate to call the preschool later to check how your child is doing.

Enrollment & Fees

Admission Criteria

St Clare's Christian Preschool has the following admission criteria:

1. Parent(s) or guardian(s) must complete a tour of the facility and meet with the director (or another staff member). During this meeting, the director will need to understand the state of your child's health, physical, and emotional development to assess whether the preschool can meet your child's needs. The State Licensing Department also requires that the director meet your child to complete this assessment.
2. Children admitted to the school will be between 2 – 5 years of age (we cannot admit children until their actual second birthday).
3. Children must have all the immunizations required by the State of California to attend St. Clare's Preschool.

Wherever possible, St Clare's Christian Preschool will strive to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities and special needs. Each child's special needs will be assessed on an individual basis, and there is discussion with family before a final decision is made.

Before your child starts preschool, the following documentation must be completed and returned to the director:

Registration Form	Consent for Medical Treatment
Admissions Agreement	Personal Rights Statement
ID & Emergency Information Form	Parent's Right Statement
Pre-admission Health History	Photo Release Slip
Physician's Report	Sunscreen Permission Slip
Copy of Immunization Record	Field Trip Permission Slip

Enrollment Fees

Children ages 2 years through Pre-K will be accepted for enrollment. The registration fee is \$150.00. This is a non-refundable fee. A half-month tuition deposit will be collected at registration; this will be refunded when you withdraw from the Preschool with two weeks' notice. The Registration Fee and the half month tuition deposit, and a completed registration form with the director's signature will secure a place for your child.

Annual Supply Fee

Each family will be assessed an annual supply fee of \$150.00, which is payable in September. This fee is prorated for families starting after September.

Multiple Child Discount

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

A Year-Round Program

St. Clare's Christian Preschool runs a year-round program. Families can withdraw their children with two weeks' notice any time of the year. They can also request a Schedule Change by filling out the required form; the schedule request must be accepted by the Director to become effective (acceptance will be shown by the Director's signature on the form). If you choose not to attend St. Clare's over the summer period, we cannot guarantee a spot for your child in the fall. You may, of course, guarantee a fall spot by paying through the summer for our shortest schedule which is Tuesday/Thursday Part Day, even if you are unable, or choose not, to attend over the summer.

Security Keys

Each family enrolled must leave a deposit for at least one key. Each key requires a \$40.00 deposit, which will be refunded upon return of the key. This will allow you access to the school Monday through Friday from 7:00am- 6:00pm. 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.

Returned Check Fee

If a tuition check is returned from the bank, the amount of the check plus a \$35 return check fee will be applied to your account.

Failure to Pay Tuition

If you do not pay tuition by the 10th of the month you will receive an email reminder. Failure to make payment in a timely way will lead to a meeting with the Preschool Director to discuss a repayment plan. Failure to comply with the agreed repayment plan will result in a request for you to withdraw your child from the preschool.

Family Service Hours

A \$100 family service deposit per child, is payable in October. Families can give 5 hours of service per child, per school year to qualify for a refund of the deposit. Parents, or other family members, may select from a wide variety of activities such as school work days, washing/shopping, fundraisers, assembling toys etc. Once the hours are completed, the deposit will be refunded. Partial refunds will be given to families unable to work all the hours. The Family Service Fee is prorated for families starting after October. If you choose not to work family service hours or cannot work them then the payment will be retained to fund maintenance and upkeep projects around the school.

Additional Hours and Days Attendance Fees for Part-Time Students

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 citation by State licensing authorities. Provided the extra hours have been approved by the Director, you will be charged \$10 per hour. Time taken without pre-approval by the Director will be charged at double this rate.

Extra days that have been approved by the Director; will be charged at \$10 per hour attended (or part of an hour).

Late Pick Up

For Full Day families pick up after 6:00pm is charged \$2.00 for every minute after 6:00pm. These fees are per child. Teacher's work day ends at 6:00pm. Please be respectful of their time. For Part Day families, pick up is 3:00pm latest. Pick up after 3:00pm will be charged at \$2.00 for every minute after 3:00pm. Our teachers need to be in the yard supervising Full Day children as quickly as possible after 3:00pm. Your help picking up on time will enable the teachers to get outside in a timely way.

If you have time difficulties with a 3:00pm pick up because you have children in local elementary school whose pick-up time is like ours, you can request a 3:15 pick up time (at no extra cost) by writing to the Director, giving details of your pick-up time conflicts and requesting this allowance.

Policies & Procedures

Preschool Program Times

The Preschool offers two program times. Families paying for the Full Day program are free to have their child at school from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Families paying for the Part Day program can have their children at school from 9:00 to 3:00pm. We highly recommend that all children are at school by 9:00am so they are ready for the morning learning activities, and can settle in with their friends and be ready to learn. If a child is dropped off after 9:30am, their entry into the classroom needs to be very unobtrusive, so that the attention of the children already involved in learning activities is not distracted.

Families can switch from Full Day to Part, and back again by filling out a Schedule Change Request Form (kept above the sign in book in the Preschool lobby), provided there is space available, and the Director has signed the form.

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.

Change of Scheduled Days

Any change of scheduled days must be made by written request on a Schedule Change Request form and given to the Director for approval. A change is, of course, subject to availability.

Leaving the Preschool

Any family that is withdrawing from the school must notify the Director using the Withdrawal Request form, at least two weeks prior to the leaving date. Your half-month deposit will be credited to your tuition account. Tuition unused, following your time at St. Clare's, is refundable.

Class Assignments

The Preschool staff places students into classroom groups based on the principle of "balance classes". This means we will aim to balance:

- Gender (boys and girls in the class)
- Age (younger and older children in the class)
- Schedule, a balance of full day and part day students in each class
- Temperament (a balance of temperaments in each class)
- Finally, how the whole class will learn together

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 calendar of school closure dates will be provided in the enrollment packet. 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	Easter Monday
Christmas Day & the day following	Memorial Day
New Year's Eve & New Year's Day	July 4th

Plus, three days for Teacher Work Days

Please also note that at the discretion of the Board the Preschool may close between Christmas and New Year.

Emergency Closures

In the event of a closure for an emergency event (earthquake, burst water main, all day power failure) the preschool reserves the right to close the school for 2 days without considering a tuition refund. Any closures longer than 2 days will be assessed for refund on an incident by incident basis by the Preschool Board and Church Vestry. Please note, in more than 28 years the preschool has had one emergency closure that lasted 2 days, due to a water main failure.

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. Please do not allow your child to wear flip-flops or sandals with no backs to school; these can cause injuries and accidents. Children wearing skirts or dresses need to wear bike shorts or leggings underneath.

Please dress your children in clothes they can get on and off by themselves. This enables them to be much more independent when using the bathroom. Tight jeans with zips, and laced shoes, for example, are not easy items for the children to deal with themselves. Elastic waist, and Velcro shoe closures are the absolute best for helping the children feel competent and independent.

Important: label all clothing with your child's name in permanent marker. Please check the lost

and found area in the lobby periodically for missing items.

Toilet Training and Diapers

We accept children who are not toilet trained in our two-year-program (Playful Panda class). Parents provide diapers. We will leave you a note when we need more. We need to be able to change your child without taking off their shoes, socks, and pants. For this reason, we prefer diapers. If you choose to provide pull-ups they need to be the type with Velcro fastenings.

When your child is showing signs of readiness to be toilet trained we will talk with you. Signs of readiness includes, but are not limited to, verbally making it known s/he needs to go, able to pull own pants up and down, goes for periods of time without wet diapers, and cooperatively will try the training process.

When we agree that the toilet training process is appropriate we will ask that you begin the training over the weekend. We recommend that the child goes straight into underwear. Plan to stay home lots that first weekend. Keep prompting the child to use the toilet. Be prepared for accidents, and have plenty of changes of clothes around. Be positive whatever happens!

We will continue the training process on Monday. Remember to bring us lots of changes of clothes (elastic waisted). If we correctly determined that your child was ready the accidents should become less frequent during this week.

If they do not, we will discuss with you if a second weekend of toilet training at home should be undertaken, or if it is more appropriate to go back to diapers and try again in a few weeks.

We need to have all children toilet trained by the time they move into the 3-4-year-old program. The reason is that our 1:12 ratio, with the reduced tuition rate, is based on the children being toilet trained. If they are not, they may continue to wear diapers until they are ready however, they will be directed to our Panda classroom for diapering. For this reason, we will continue to charge the Panda Class tuition rate until they are toilet trained.

Birthdays

Birthdays may be celebrated at school. We ask that if you want to have a party for your child at school, that you discuss the arrangements with your child's teacher. Please make sure that any food treats are nut free. Feel free to seek the advice of your teacher on treats that the children really enjoy, some classes prefer popsicles, or fruit, or ice cream to cake.

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:

Toys promoting violence
Candy or Vitamins
Chewing Gum

Flip Flops, or sandals without backs
Anything unlabeled
Personal toys/items, except on Share Day

The Program

Education

The preschool doors are open from 7:00am to 6:00pm. Between 9:00 and 3:00pm the children are in the preschool “part of their day”. To get the most from our program we recommend that families arrive at school at the 9:00am start time, it really helps your child to settle into the day with their teacher and friends.

Prayer

The children say or sing grace together before they eat.

Chapel

Once a week, on Wednesdays, the children will have Chapel Time with the Chaplain of St. Clare’s Preschool. This is a 20-minute session, usually held in the Church. Parents are welcome to come and observe. If you do not want your child to attend Chapel please notify the director.

Additional Activity Options

Each school year we offer some additional activity options, for example, soccer, or Lego class. These are arranged at the discretion of the director. These are parent pay classes, over and above regular monthly tuition, with payment made to St. Clare’s.

Share Day (not for the Playful Panda Class)

Each class has “Share Day” (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 walking field trips are taken. For identification purposes, we ask that each child wear a St. Clare’s t-shirt. Families will be notified in advance of all trips or outings. Family members 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 families follow these guidelines:

- Teachers consider you as part of a team and ask that you follow their directions in assisting the children.
- We ask that chaperones keep their attention focused on the children and not on adult conversation.

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 several fun events during the school year, Family Fun Night and the Christmas

Program to name two. We strongly encourage family 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 if a responsible adult is present.

Sample Schedule

7-8am	School opens, mixed age group activities
8-9am	Children are outside (weather permitting)
9-9:30am	Bathroom break, a.m. snack
9:30-10am	Circle time (greetings, songs, calendar, story etc.)
10-10:30am	Centers
10:30-11am	Art and/or table time activities
11-12 noon	Children are outside
12-12:30pm	Bathroom break, lunch
12:30-1pm	Transition to naptime
1-2pm	Nap and rest time
2-2:30pm	Wake up time, p.m. snack
2:30-3pm	Closing circle
3:00-5pm	Children are outside (weather permitting)
5-6pm	Transition inside, bathroom, wash hands, story time, indoor toy time

Schedules vary according to class. Please check with your child's teacher for an actual classroom schedule. Please note that schedules do change based on weather, and the class energy needs.

Safety and Security

Parking

Please drive very slowly in the parking lot, following the directional arrows. Exit your parking space very carefully as it is almost impossible to see preschoolers walking behind your car.

Arriving at and Leaving the Center

When the center opens and attendance is low, children will be gathered together in one room or on the playground before they move to their respective classrooms. At 9:00am the children are taken to their classrooms. You must accompany your child to the classroom or playground and ensure a teacher knows they have arrived, by making acknowledged eye contact. Please never leave a child unattended in the corridor or preschool classroom, even if you think the class will be coming inside in a minute or two.

Likewise, after 3:00pm, as children are picked up, remaining children will be joined again on the playground or in one classroom. When you pick up you must make sure a teacher knows you have picked up your child; eye contact with a teacher or a quick word will suffice. When you come to pick up your child, for the safety of all children, please keep your child with you from the time you pick them up until you get them into the car.

The Preschool closes at 6:00pm, please make sure you arrive in time to transition your child out

of the preschool by this time. We advise that families arrive at the school no later than 5:55pm to achieve this.

Signing In & Out

State Licensing Department require that children must be signed in when brought to school and signed out when picked up. Your signature signifies the legal transfer of the child to the care of the preschool, and back again at the end of the day. Signatures must be your full legal name, no initials please, and the time must be noted. The school can be cited by State Licensing if you do not sign in/out. The Sign In/Out book is kept in the preschool lobby.

We check the number of children and signatures daily. If we find you have forgotten to sign in/out we will send you a reminder email. We will send a second reminder email. Thereafter, as well as an email reminder we will add a \$30 fee to your account for every time your signature is missing.

Security Doors and Gates

Our exterior doors and gates are locked with security keys. Every family is given a security key(s) to enter the school. Please don't admit anyone you don't know. Any visitor should ring the door buzzer and wait for admittance by the office staff. Remember to latch each door and gate as you enter and exit the building and playground.

Emergency Procedures

We schedule emergency drills a minimum 4 times per year. 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 Director will notify you as soon as possible.

Emergency Contacts

For your child's security, please provide us with at least two emergency contacts, other than you the parents, and keep their numbers up to date.

Bathroom/Clothing Accidents

All children must bring a complete change of clothes in a labeled Ziploc® bag. Families should label all clothes and the bag with the child's name. If your child uses 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.

Child Pick-up Authorization

You must inform the school if someone other than an authorized pick up person is going to be

taking your child home. On the emergency form, 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. We will accept an email from you, however. This is for your child's safety. Additionally, whoever picks up must be at least 18 years of age.

Student Record Updates

Whenever there are changes or additions to the information originally provided on your enrollment forms, 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 families quickly.

Health and Nutrition

Daily Inspection for Illness

State Licensing requires that all children check in with a teacher before being left at Preschool by the drop off adult (who must remain for the check), so that the teacher can ensure they are free of obvious signs of illness. We are required to pay additional attention to children who have already been absent due to illness or been exposed to a contagious disease. This inspection and determination of "obvious signs of illness" is at preschool staff discretion. The drop off adult may be asked to take the child home if they appear still to be ill.

Every family with a child at St. Clare's Preschool must have a documented backup plan in their child's preschool file for care if their child is ill and needs to stay home, or becomes ill at school and must be collected during the day.

State regulations prohibit us from admitting any child too ill to participate in regular daily activities and/or needs more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

We ask families to keep their child at home if any of the following apply:

1. They have an illness that prevents them from participating comfortably in preschool activities.
2. They have an illness that will result in them needing more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
3. They have an illness that poses a risk of spreading to other children and adults.

Do not medicate your child with fever reducers, cough syrup, etc. before sending them to school. We find that when medications wear off in 2-3 hours, we have an ill and unhappy child on our hands. A child who is ill enough to need these medications should be at home.

If you will be keeping your child home from school due to an illness, notify the office, so that we may advise their teacher (and other families, if the illness is contagious).

Should your child be exposed to a contagious illness at school, a notice (not identifying

classroom or child) will be posted so that families are made aware of symptoms to be alert for.

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:

Pink Eye: If the child has a bacterial infection, the child must stay home, on antibiotic eye drops or ointment for at least 24 hours. If the child has a viral infection, consult a doctor, and the child may return to school with a note from their doctor confirming that they are well enough, and not contagious and can therefore be at preschool. If your child has eyes that are red, swollen, crusting or draining when they arrive at school you will be asked to get a clearance note from the doctor before they can stay at school.

Strep Throat: Keep your child at home and away from other people for at least 24 hours after starting the antibiotics. In addition, your child must stay home until well enough to participate in preschool activities, without the aid of fever reducers.

Ear Infection: The child must stay home until they are well enough to participate in preschool activities without the aid of fever reducers.

Lice: The child may return 24 hours after they have had an over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medication treatment for lice, followed by the use of a fine-toothed nit comb to remove the nits. A member of staff will check your child's hair (privately) to make sure they are nit free before they go back into a classroom. If they are not nit/lice free then you will need to take them home for another combing.

Fever: A child with a fever of 100 degrees or higher must go home immediately. The child must stay home until they have been fever free for 24 hours with no fever reducer.

Runny Nose: A child with an excessively runny nose may be sent home, particularly if they are not well enough to participate fully in preschool activities.

Vomiting: The child must stay home for 24 hours without vomiting. If your child has vomited the night before, or in the morning, please do not send them to preschool.

Diarrhea: The child must stay home for 24 hours without diarrhea.

Coughing: If a child is coughing uncontrollably, we will ask the parent to take the child home.

Rashes: If a child has a rash, the parent will be asked to take the child to a doctor to diagnose it. If it is not contagious, the child may return to school with a doctor's note stating that the rash is not contagious.

Scabies: Scabies is a very itchy skin problem caused by tiny bugs called mites. It is treated with a medicine or ointment prescribed by a doctor. Your child can return to preschool on the day after treatment ends.

Impetigo: Is a skin infection caused by bacteria. It causes blisters that break and become oozing, yellow, crusty sores. A child can usually return to preschool after 24 hours of treatment with antibiotics.

Hand-Foot-Mouth: The child must stay home until all the lesions are crusted and dry, and they are well enough to participate at school.

Fifth Disease "Slap Cheek": The child must stay home until fever free for 24 hours (without the use of a fever reducer).

We will ask you to come and collect your child from preschool:

1. If they cannot participate comfortably in daily activities
2. If they require more care than we can provide without compromising the health and safety of others
3. If they have an acute change of behavior – lethargy, difficulty breathing, spreading rash, persistent crying etc.

Should your child exhibit any of the above, you will be notified, and they will be attended to in the office. An authorized person must pick up your child up within one hour. We ask that you plan to ensure pick up within an hour as a member of staff has to remain with your child continuously until you arrive.

When a sick child, who has been sent home, returns to school after the symptoms noted above, they must be checked and cleared by a staff member before they can rejoin their class.

Medication Policy *

Prescription medication will be administered if prescribed by a physician. Medication must come to school in the original bottle or container, with a current prescription label attached. It must always be given to a staff member and should not be placed in a child's lunch bag, pants pocket or cubby. The parent or guardian is also required to complete a Medication Administration form, available from the Director. Non-prescription medicine will be administered according to the label directions if a parent/guardian has completed the Medication Administration Forms. We also reserve the right to ask you to obtain a physician's note for non-prescription medication.

**St. Clare's Christian Preschool shall have no responsibility for any kind of reaction caused by the ingestion of prescribed medication.*

Sun Screen *

St. Clare's will apply sun screen to children as needed in the afternoon. We ask that you provide the sun screen you want us to use, with the child's name on the bottle. St. Clare's will not apply sun screen if you have not provided it, and filled out the sun screen approval form. Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to school. We will apply again later in the day for children in the Full Day program.

** St. Clare's Preschool shall have no responsibility for any kind of reaction caused by the 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 medical care that your child needs.

In the case of an emergency, and if we cannot contact you 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 all expenses incurred, if this course of action becomes necessary.

Nap/Rest Time

State Licensing requires that all children are offered nap/rest time, and many drop into sleep. We encourage sleep by rubbing backs, dimming the lights, playing soothing music, and keeping the room quiet. We believe that young children need a nap in their busy preschool day. Some children do not fall into sleep; however, please note they are expected to rest quietly for a developmentally appropriate. Once friends are asleep, the resting children may be allowed to do a quiet activity at the cot, or at the table. Please get your child up early enough in the mornings for them to need a nap by lunch time, this makes nap/rest time more pleasurable for all concerned.

We ask that you provide a small blanket, and a small soft toy, if your child will rest better with the soft toy, we will provide a cot sheet (charged at \$5). Bedding bags are to be taken home by families 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 body 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 which can be life threatening, St. Clare's Christian Preschool has a policy of being a "nut-free" facility. Please check all processed food items packed in lunches to make sure they are nut-free.

Reporting Child Abuse

St. Clare's Preschool is concerned about the wellbeing 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 parent/guardians prior to notifying the Department of Social Services.

Guidance and Handling Challenging Behaviors

Guidance

Children at St. Clare's preschool will not receive physical punishment. Children who have 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 redirected away from other children, and will be encouraged to discuss the problem with a staff member, and other concerned parties. If a child is unable or unwilling to control their behavior a teacher may ask them to "take a break" to regain their composure. No child will be subjected to humiliation, shame, fright, or verbal or physical abuse by staff members or by parent/guardians on the premises or on a field trip.

Challenging Behaviors

Discipline is based on an understanding of each child's individual needs and level of development. When correcting a child's behavior, the caregiver's response is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

The goal of managing challenging behaviors is prevention. We will always do our best to be reflective about the environment we create for children, the curriculum and our awareness of personal temperaments, biases, and feelings about challenging behaviors. Being reflective helps our staff improve things such as the classroom environment and/or routines to foster success for all children and to avoid certain kinds of stimuli associated with challenging behavior.

There are times that children's behaviors warrant a response other than helping them talk it through, either because of severity or repetition of action. We use consequences that follow closely in time to the behavior. When a child repeats a challenging behavior, a variety of methods for encouraging cooperation are used. These include the positive methods described above, conferencing with other staff, parents and Preschool Director. Every effort is made to understand the child's needs and modify classroom practices so that he or she will be successful. Teachers work closely with parent/guardians to understand each child and to determine which methods work best for him/her.

In most instances, when repeated challenging behaviors are exhibited, and the above strategies have not worked well enough, a family/teacher/Director conference will be arranged to discuss possible methods of dealing with challenging behaviors. A written plan of action will be developed, laying out behaviors that need improvement, proposals to improve them, and actions the Preschool will take if no improvement occurs within a specified timeframe.

Biting

Our program also recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when preschoolers are in group care. Biting is a normal developmental process for young children. Biting can also be an emotionally charged issue.

We do not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for biting. When biting does occur, we have four main initial responses:

- Care and help for the child who was bitten.
- Encourage the child who bit to participate in the care of the bitten child, if appropriate

- Inform the parent/guardian of the child who was bitten and the parent /guardian of the child who bit, by phone or via an Incident/Injury Report (which must be signed by the parent of the child who bit).
- Help the child who bit learn other behaviors to deal with anger, frustration, or lack of verbal or communication skills.
- Examine our program/environment and make changes that may stop further occurrences.

If biting is a repeated behavior that requires further action by the preschool the Director/teachers will decide on this, considering the age of the child, the situation that precedes the bites, severity of the bites and frequency. A family, teacher, and Director conference will be arranged to discuss ways to prevent the behavior. After this meeting, a written plan of action will be developed by the Director, laying out behaviors that need improvement, proposals to improve them, and actions the Preschool will take if no improvement occurs within a specified timeframe.

Please note: If the bite is severe enough to break the skin of the child that is bitten, and the wound is bleeding we will call the injured child's parents child and ask that the child be taken to the Doctor's for a check-up. In this instance, the parents of the child who bit will also be called and asked to take their child home for the remainder of that school day. Before returning to school a discussion must take place between the Director and this child's family.

Very Severe Challenging Behaviors

If we cannot meet the special needs of your child, or if there is concern for the physical safety and wellbeing of other children and/or teachers, we will request that you withdraw your child. St. Clare's Preschool may issue notice immediately to any family whose child's behavior creates 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/guardians are always welcome. We encourage you to visit at any time. Open communication between families 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 any time.

Family Communication

The teachers in younger classrooms (2's/3's and 3's/4's) will inform, in writing, what the children's day was like. 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 curriculum, activities, field trips and school events. Additional emails will be distributed as needed. Please note that it is your responsibility to read

them carefully. The information they contain is important to your child and you.

Lesson Plans

The teacher of each classroom will post monthly lesson plans (curriculum). Lesson plans will provide information on activities children will be doing that month.

Back to School Night

Curriculum, teaching methods, progress report format, schedules and guidance techniques will be discussed at back to school night at the beginning of the year. This is also an evening for you to get to know your child's teacher, and the other families with children in the class.

Preschool Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be completed twice a year (once a year in the Panda class). We schedule student assessments in the fall and spring. The purpose of the progress review in preschool is to monitor each child's progress in all areas of the child's development. The reviews help us to meet both the current and future needs of the child. Parent-teacher conferences are available upon parent request after receipt of your child's Progress Report.

A shorter assessment of progress against key milestones will be made for our 2-year-olds in April each year. The main purpose of this report is to ensure that both teachers and families are aware of each child's goals so they can transition to the next age group in August.

St. Clare's also offers a parent-completed developmental screening tool called *Ages and Stages Questionnaires-3* and *Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional*. If you are interested in using the questionnaire at any time, please contact the Director.

Director's Open-Door Commitment

Please feel free to meet with the Director at any time. If there are elements of the program you don't understand, feedback you have for us, suggestions you have for us, concerns you want to share, information about child development and how your child is doing, just see the Director.

Preschool Board of Directors

The Preschool Board assists the Director in setting policies for the Preschool, overseeing financial matters, fundraising and arranging appreciation events for the staff, to name just a few. There is a maximum of 9 voting members on the Board. Members are usually preschool parents, church members, or child development experts from the community. Membership terms are for 2 years, and new potential members are interviewed by the Board. If you would like to serve on the Preschool Board, please let the Director know.

The Vestry of St. Clare's Episcopal Church

The Preschool is wholly owned by St. Clare's Episcopal Church. Consequently, all that is done at the school is with the consent of the Church's governing body known as the Vestry.