

**CHILD DEVELOPMENT
CENTER AT FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

**PARENT HANDBOOK
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
AND
POLICIES \ INFORMATION**

*208 Grant Ave.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
(505)982-8919
preschool@fpcsantafe.org*

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PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT

The Child Development Center is a community outreach program that embraces....

- A child-centered philosophy of education while striving to accommodate the needs of the surrounding community.
- A natural, joyful learning experience that enhances development of the child; therefore, we are sensitive to each individual child's social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs.
- Programs open to those of all faiths, as we embrace and teach global principles of kindness, compassion, tolerance and inclusivity.
- A learning environment that fosters each child's chance for gaining self-confidence and interpersonal skills in all settings.
- Physical safety as of the utmost importance and security measures that are strictly enforced.

Curriculum and Instruction Statement

We provide developmentally age-appropriate, child-centered programs that focus on the process of learning through play and discovery. All Curricula is individualized to meet the unique needs of each child. The CDC Curriculum is built off of individualized short term and long term goals, assessment information and is aligned with the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines.

The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines serve as a framework for the process of children's growth. They are used to show reasonable expectations for children at different stages of development. The tool allows educators to ensure children are meeting goals in the areas of language, physical, social-emotional and cognitive development.

The CDC also uses a tool called Teaching Strategies Gold which is aligned with The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines as a guide to planning curricula that is scaffolded and individualized to help each unique child make progress over time. This tool is utilized for ongoing assessment of children's growth. Utilizing these two tools teachers are able to build curricula that is based off of the children's interests and is developmentally appropriate.

A typical day includes: art, music, creative movement, stories, learning centers, playground activities and social interactions. The instructional setting provides opportunities for free play, guided play and skill mastery. Activities are designed to inspire and build confidence in each child.

Our teachers are educated, licensed, experienced early childhood professionals. Teachers maintain a calm, nurturing, safe environment. They provide positive communication and reinforcement. Teachers are constantly aware of the child's innate joy of learning and the child's developing sense of discovery. The children are empowered through positive role modeling, gentle guidance and redirection.

Assessment Statement

The CDC utilizes a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques. We utilize a tool called Teaching Strategies Gold to conduct two formal assessments a school year for each child. These are done in the Fall and Spring and the results are shared with families at the Parent/Teacher Conferences (please refer to the annual calendar for those dates). During these Parent/Teacher Conferences we are able to work together with families to review assessment data and make unified goals for each child together with the families. These formal assessments are done and informed by the child's age, home language, abilities, experiences, interests, and what we know about how and in what sequence children learn. Results from these assessments are confidential and are only used to identify progress, areas of improvement, any further diagnostic testing that may be necessary and to inform teaching practices for program improvement and individualization of curricula.

We also use a variety of informal assessment practices such as on-going anecdotal observations, work sampling and individual child portfolios. All of our assessment tools are completed by observing children during their typical day and are completed in a fashion that resembles their typical play as to keep children comfortable and to elicit the most natural observations. These informal practices allow us to check for understanding and progress over time for each child.

Both our formal and informal methods of assessment check for children's understanding in the areas of cognitive, language, social-emotional, approaches to learning, health and physical development.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Child Development Center (CDC) is currently located at:
First Presbyterian Church
208 Grant Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Preschool phone number is: (505)982-8919

We are open Monday through Friday.
Our hours are from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

**We are currently licensed through the State of New Mexico's
Children, Youth & Families Department Prevention
& Intervention Division Child Care Services Bureau
License #106952**

We comply with applicable state licensing regulations and requirements. Our center is subject to inspection by state and city health, fire, licensing and building agencies. Regulations and inspections pertain to staff qualifications, the facility and playground, nutrition, health and safety matters, record keeping and child-to-adult ratios.

A copy of the State Rules and Regulations is located in the director's office and a copy of our license is located on our central bulletin board in the main hall.

**Child Development Center Director: Anne Liley
(505)982-8919
preschool@fpcsantafe.org**

The Child Development Center is a community outreach program. We serve both church and community members. Policies are approved by the church's Preschool Advisory Committee (PAC).

Meal Times

The Child Development Center serves one meal (Lunch) and up to three snacks a day depending on what daily schedule you choose. All food brought to the center for shared snacks must have the date that it was received written on that item. Teachers will ensure food is discarded appropriately to maintain food safety at all times. Food safety practices as well as snack menus will be monitored by our program sanitarian monthly. Snack menus will be posted in every classroom. All meals will be served no more than three hours apart and in line with the classrooms daily schedule.

*Toddlers will be held or be sitting for bottle feeding. Children will never be offered a propped bottle or sippy cup.

*Toddlers will not have bottles while on their cot and all students will be asked to sit while drinking from a bottle, sippy cup or water bottle.

*Teaching staff will offer fluid to a student from a cup as soon as they deem it developmentally appropriate.

LUNCHESES

At First Presbyterian CDC lunch begins around 11:00 for the one and two- year- old rooms and 12:00 for the three, four and five- year -old rooms. We ask that children bring a lunch from home. All rooms have access to microwaves and refrigerators. Please bring lunch in labeled containers with:

- * Food your child can eat independently and stored in resealable containers;
- * For children 12-24 months milk brought from home needs to be whole or reduced fat cows milk.
- * A beverage in a labeled thermos with cup, sippy cup, or bottle;
- * For children under four years old please make sure that all of your child's food is cut into small pieces to prevent the risk of choking. We will not serve children whole or round sliced hotdogs, whole grapes, nuts, large chunks of meat, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels or chunks of raw carrots that cannot be swallowed easily either at lunch or in snacks.
- * Staff will ensure that all food is cut into ½ inch square for toddlers/twos for both lunch and snacks.

SNACKS

Healthy foods are vital to provide children with the nutrition their bodies and minds need to grow strong, be active and alert, and to support a healthy immune system. Snacks will be

provided at least every three hours.

Parents of children in the three four and five-year- old classrooms take turns, bringing in snacks for all children in the room. Suggested snacks include low sugar, low salt, whole milk, whole grains, fruits/vegetables and dairy products. Children in the one and two-year-old room will bring snacks from home. For children 12-24 months milk brought from home needs to be whole cows milk.

CDC is a nut-free facility.

****Please see the suggested snack menu for details as to what to bring on your snack day.***

***IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY ALLERGIES OR SPECIAL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THEM ON YOUR ENROLLMENT FORM AND DISCUSS THEM WITH YOUR CENTER DIRECTOR.**

DAILY SCHEDULE

We want to make sure your child begins the day on a happy, positive note. When you arrive at the center, please let a staff member know that your child is here.

The Center opens at 7:30 am. And closes promptly at 5:30 p.m..

If you arrive before 7:30 a.m., you will be expected to remain with your child until 7:30, when the staff has finished morning preparations. If you arrive after 5:30 p.m. late fees will apply.

Keeping your child safe and secure is our first priority. In addition to the security features in our center, we ensure security by strictly following established procedures for your child's arrival and departure.

Although your child's schedule will vary somewhat every day, a general description of activities he or she will be engaged in during a typical day include:

- Learning Centers: Child oriented activities such as puzzles, table top games, dramatic play and blocks are part of this environment.
- Group Time: Group sessions are child-centered and participative. They include activities such as read-aloud stories, music and movement, finger plays, discussion, dramatization, games and experience stories.
- Outdoor Play: The playground is an extension of the classroom. Children may choose from a variety of activities while outdoors. We will have outdoor play daily unless there is a safety risk in which case we will have gross motor activities inside.
- Snack and Meal Times: Our group snack and meal times give our teachers the opportunity to sit with the children while they eat to model good table practices and encourage

social skills.

- Rest time: During the rest period, children nap or engage in quiet activities such as reading a book or playing with a puzzle.

Supervision/Staffing

All of the CDC Classrooms are staffed by two full time educators for the duration of the program day. Children will stay with their primary caregivers always unless there is a need for a substitute educator. Toddlers and twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times of the day. Teachers of our preschool classrooms supervise children primarily by sight, short intervals by sound is permissible if they are checking on the children frequently. (Ex: those children who can use the toilet independently or who are napping). Staff will maintain ratios outlined by the New Mexico Children Youth and Familied Department at all times of the day.

Children must be signed in and out daily on a clipboard located in each of the classrooms.

Record the time of arrival and departure for the day and make sure to initial or sign your name. At pick up time we will NOT release your child to anyone whose name is not listed on your AAuthorization for Alternative Pick-up@ form. You are responsible for maintaining accurate, complete and current information. Written authorization must be on file at the center prior to your child's release to anyone for the safety and security of your child. Children may not be released to staff members without specific authorization nor can unauthorized staff members walk or transport children home. This is to prevent any kind of confusion but most of all to help keep your child safe. In special circumstances, you may notify us in writing or by phone. Please inform individuals that they will be asked to verify their identity.

Staff members will ask for photo identification for anyone who is not positively known to them.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents, guardians and other family members are always welcome at the center. We encourage you to visit and join us in our activities. Your participation and involvement are important to us as we work as partners to provide the best care and education possible.

We encourage parents to be involved with their child's experience here by:

- *Scheduling a visit for a morning or afternoon to participate in your child's class (once he/she has become well adjusted to school and does well with transitions and change in routine).
- *Communicating with us frequently about your child's life away from school. The better we know your child, the better relationship we can have with him or her.
- *Volunteering to come in and do an art activity, read a story, share a skill or hobby etc.
- *Participating in CDC Fundraisers to-be announced, parenting speakers/seminars, group photo days, etc.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

We always try to keep you posted on how your child is doing through verbal and written communications. We hope you will always come to the teacher or director whenever you need clarification or have a suggestion to offer.

We keep you posted about school activities through notes and handouts located in your child's classroom cubby space, on the classroom bulletin board, on the parent's bulletin board in the central hall, on our school calendar and through our newsletter. You may also check the First Presbyterian Church website :(fpcsantafe.org) and click on the preschool tab for general information. Always check these places for notices and feel free to leave your ideas and suggestions with us as well.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

We ask that all children are dressed appropriately for different weather conditions. Children need to bring a coat or light jacket/sweater depending on the temperature. Always keep an extra set of clothes at the school in case of any type of accident. Children who are potty training sometimes have a difficult time with the type of clothes they are wearing. For this reason we want to avoid any type of clothing with snaps, zippers, belts, overalls, layers, long skirts and anything that may fit tightly. Party shoes and dressy clothing are not appropriate.

ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

Because children often find comfort in special objects, your child may bring a blanket or cuddly, a special soft toy or a stuffed animal for nap time. However, please do not let your child bring other toys from home. It can create tension for other children when a child brings a treasured object to the center. We cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any belongings.

CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS

Celebration is an integral part of all cultures. We incorporate celebrations from all cultures and religious backgrounds into our program curricula. This is a way of introducing diversity within our community and learning about the world around us. We want to be respectful and sensitive to the multi-cultural nature of our society. We encourage parents to participate and be involved in our celebrations by sharing cultural and religious backgrounds.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

We participate in the celebration of birthdays. Parents are welcome to bring healthy snacks and drinks to share with the whole class and/or provide the class with games or activities that are age appropriate. We ask that you talk to the teachers or the director so that we may plan our day around this special event.

ENROLLMENT \ WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Any child within the community may be enrolled. Priority is given to currently enrolled families, active members of the First Presbyterian Church and to families on the waiting list. The First Presbyterian CDC reserves the right to disenroll a child whose needs cannot be met or whose parents repeatedly choose to not follow program policies. The decision to disenroll a child is thoroughly discussed between the director, staff, parents, and if necessary the Preschool Advisory Committee.

In compliance with our policies and with state regulations governing child care, the following forms are due on or before the actual day of enrollment:

- *Enrollment Record signed and dated.
- *Registration form\ fee (Non Refundable).
- *Current Health Information and Medical Authorization form.
- *Current Immunization Record.

- *Completed Authorization & Permission form.
- *Completed personal record.
- *Sick Policy signed and dated.
- *Medication Policy signed and dated.
- *Signed Acknowledgment of Parent Handbook.

We require a minimum of one month's advance written notice of your child's withdrawal. You may be charged for early withdrawal without notice.

LETTING GO AND VISITING

Letting go can be difficult for parents and children. We have experienced that prolonged goodbyes are often much harder on children than a brief hug and reassuring words that Mommy or Daddy always comes back. If your child has unusual problems getting used to being away from you, we can offer some steps to ease the adjustment, such as beginning with shortened mornings and gradually increasing the time. We will do our very best to work with each family individually.

TUITION AND PAYMENT POLICY

Tuition is due before the 15th of each month. We accept payment in the form of check or money order only made payable to AFirst Presbyterian CDC@. Cash is not accepted. Payments received after the 15th of each month will be assessed a late fee of \$25.00. Repeated failure to pay tuition by the due date could result in termination of services.

There is a 10% discount for public school teachers, families with more than one child enrolled, active members of FPC and Ghost Ranch and employees of FPC and CDC.

Since the CDC operates under a semester system, the monthly tuition amount has been prorated so that the amount is the same per month, regardless of holidays, school breaks, vacations, snow days or cancellations.

If a parent or an alternate arrive late to pick up, the parent will be assessed a late fee.

Fees for late pickups are as follows:

0-15 minutes \$0	16-20 minutes \$15	21-25 minutes \$25
26-30 minutes \$35	31+ minutes \$60	

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

Please have other arrangements for care when your child is not feeling well. If your child will not be attending on a scheduled day or days please call and notify the center as soon as possible. You may leave a message on the voice mail if you call after hours. Drop in space may be available for enrolled children only. Space may be available if our classrooms are not full. Check with us ahead of time or call us the morning of the specific day you need care. Daily drop in fee is \$45.00 and is payable by check the same day.

ILLNESS

We value your child's health and recognize that preventing the spread of infectious illnesses is an important component of quality child care. Children need to be in good health to get the most out of their early education experience. We understand that children may occasionally become sick during the day or show signs or symptoms of illness prior to arrival. In order to reduce the spread of illness and maintain the health of all of the children at our center, your child may not be allowed to attend the center or participate in certain activities for the following reasons:

- *A reportable condition that the local health department or physician determines to be contagious and that the child has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the risk to others.
- *An illness or symptom as described below that prevents participation in routine daily program activities including outdoor activities.
- *An illness that requires more individual care than our center staff members can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

The following symptoms or signs of illness may prohibit your child from participating in our program:

- *Blood in stools
- *Diarrhea
- *Eye drainage
- *Fever, or has had one within 24 hrs. (over 99 degrees)
- *Frequent coughing or sneezing
- *Infestation
- *Mouth sores
- *Persistent abdominal pain
- *Undiagnosed rash
- *Respiratory distress
- *Runny nose
- *Unusual color of skin, eyes, stool, or urine
- *Unexplained irritability, lethargy and/or persistent crying
- *Vomiting

If your child becomes ill while in our care, we will notify you immediately. Children may not return to our center until the symptoms or signs are treated and the child is symptom-free for 24 hours.

We will accept a doctor=s written assurance that your child has been examined and is well enough to attend school and poses no risk of contagion.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

First Presbyterian CDC is only authorized to give prescription or over the counter meds according to the following guidelines:

1. All meds must be in their original, labeled containers.
2. Doctor’s prescriptions must include:
 - Child’s name
 - Name of medication
 - Current date
 - How to administer (route: orally, inhaled, etc.)
 - Dosage
 - Time medication needs to be given while in childcare
 - Start date and end date
 - Reason for medicine
 - Side effects
 - Special instructions or storage information
3. Give all medications to your child’s teachers to be stored in a locked box.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

We do not provide transportation for the children in our care nor do we provide field trips in which to participate. However, we will invite guests such as storytellers, magicians, creative movement instructors etc. with the permission of parents.

EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

CHILD ACCIDENTS:

The staff at First Presbyterian CDC are trained in First Aid\CPR, and we maintain a first aid kit in each of the classrooms to attend to typical scrapes and cuts. An incident report is completed and signed by a witnessing teacher and the director. If your child is injured at the center and needs treatment by a health care professional, we will make every effort to contact you and/or the health care professional you have identified on your emergency contact form. In the event of an emergency, we will make sure that your child receives any emergency treatment necessary until we are able to reach you.

The CDC program does not assume any responsibility for payment of medical transportation or treatment. Injuries requiring attention beyond first aid are also reported to the licensing agency.

MISSING CHILDREN:

If it is discovered that a child is missing from the facility while he/she is in our care, we will immediately contact the parents and the proper local authorities including the licensing agency.

CLEANLINESS:

We strive to keep the school clean and sanitary. We observe strict standards for cleaning the diapering and restroom facilities, eating areas, our own and the children's hands. We disinfect the toys and furnishings frequently.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS AND EVACUATION PLANS:

In order to maintain a safe environment for your child, we make every attempt to be prepared for potential emergency situations. We regularly schedule and practice emergency evacuations as required by state licensing regulations. In addition, an emergency plan with telephone numbers and procedures is posted in each classroom. Please be aware of the procedures and the evacuation locations in the event of an emergency evacuation.

WEAPONS:

Parents\guardians and guests are prohibited from possessing any form of firearms on our property and at events sponsored by us. An exception may be made for sworn law enforcement officers if required by law.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

THERE ARE THREE EXITS FOR EMERGENCY EVACUATION

At each evacuation the teachers are responsible for making sure that all children are accounted for by using their daily attendance sheets. Furthermore, they must have all emergency contact numbers with them at all times and carry their emergency supply bag or kit through the evacuation.

§ **PRIMARY EXIT**- In the event of a fire or a verbal evacuation, the primary exit is located on the north side of the building, just outside the three and four year old deck playground. The teachers must lead their children out through this exit and walk 1 and 1\2 blocks to the Carlos Gilbert Elementary School located on Griffin St. The teachers and children are to wait at that location until they get an okay clearance from the director or emergency personnel.

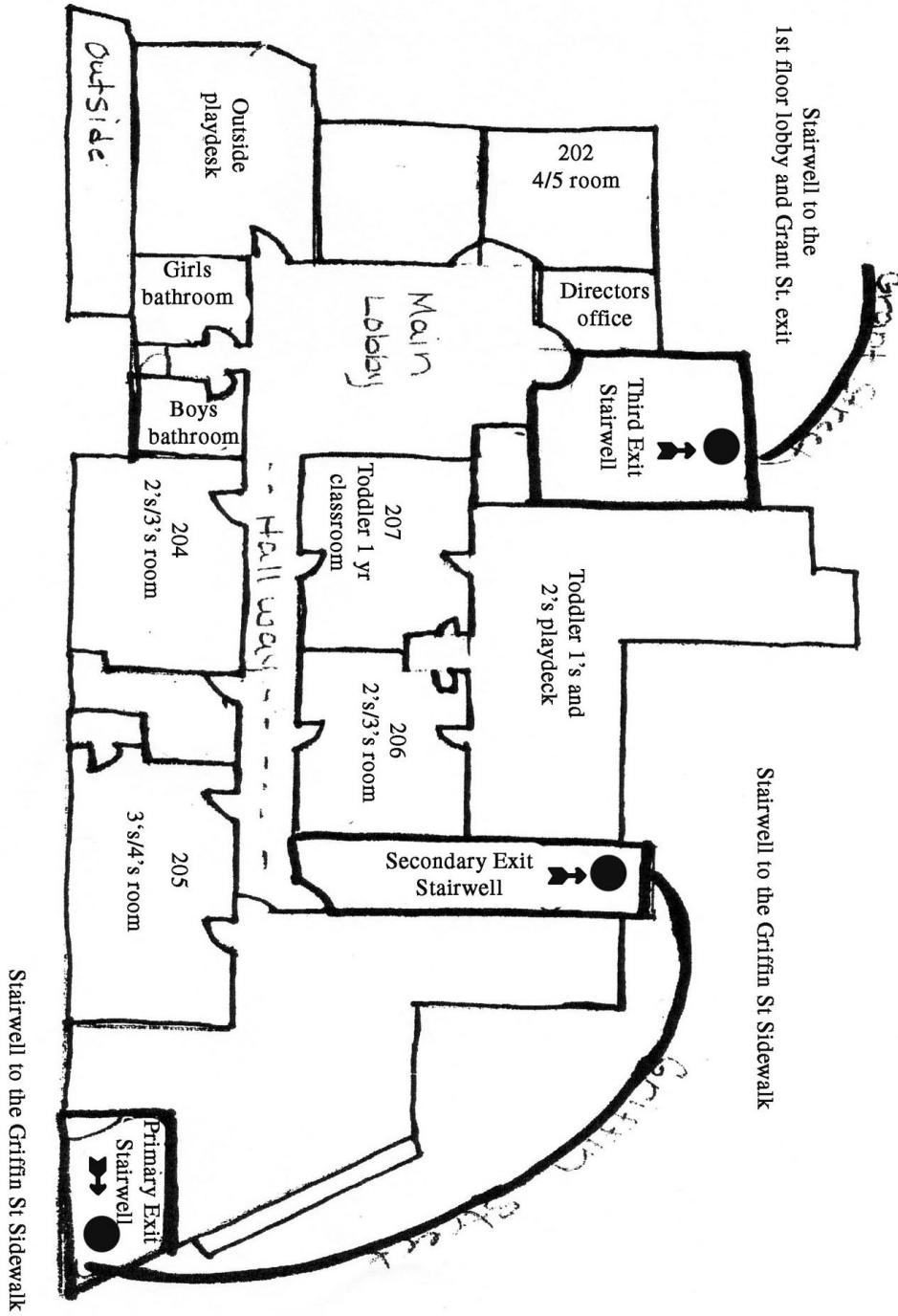
§ **SECONDARY EXIT** - In the event that the primary exit is in an unstable or unsafe condition, the secondary exit is available on the west side of the building, located down the preschool hall just outside the three and four year old classroom. The teachers must lead their children out through this exit and walk 1 and 1\2 blocks to the post office, located on Federal Place. The teachers and children are to wait at that location until they get okay clearance from the director or the emergency personnel.

§ **THE THIRD EXIT**- In the event that the primary or secondary exits are in an unstable or unsafe condition, the third exit is available and located on the west side of the building, located in the lobby area of the CDC. The teachers must lead their children out through this exit and walk 1 and 1\2 blocks to the post office located on Federal Place. The teachers and children are to wait at that location until they get an okay clearance from the director or the emergency personnel.

In the event of an exterior natural gas leak, we are to remain in closed quarters within the preschool, and we call parents to pick up their children immediately. If there is an interior gas leak, the fire evacuation procedures are followed.

In the event of an extreme/unsafe situation that requires everyone to stay in the building lock down procedures are followed. This means no one will be allowed to leave or enter the facility until clearance is given from the authorities.

FIRE EVACUATION MAP



SNOW DAYS AND SCHOOL CLOSURES

CALENDAR:

We generally follow the Santa Fe Public School calendar for holidays and vacations with a few exceptions. A copy of our school calendar is posted throughout the school.

There is no tuition credit for any time our center is closed-scheduled or unscheduled.

SNOW DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

Our program is delayed or canceled the same day as the public schools. On delay days we will open at 9:30 am. Teachers are required to be in the building 15 minutes before start time. Tune to a local radio station for announcements as early as 6:00am. Should it become necessary to close early, it is your responsibility to make arrangements for your child=s early pickup.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information contained in your child's record, including your personal information, is privileged and confidential. No one who is not directly related to the care of your child or affiliated with state licensing agencies will have access to the records without your written authorization. Parents\guardians may have access to their child's records at reasonable times upon request.

Upon withdrawal of your child from the center, records will be retained for the minimum period of time specified in the applicable licensing regulations. If you require a copy of your child's records, an administrative fee may be charged to cover copying and delivery charges. As a parent\guardian you have the right to add and update information, comments, data or other relevant material to your child's records. Please contact the center director if you need assistance.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The First Presbyterian CDC does not discriminate on the basis of a person=s religion, color, race, gender, age, national origin, disability or any other factor protected by law regarding enrollment. All requested personal information is kept confidential.

BABYSITTING

Some families may ask staff members to babysit outside of our center. We assume no responsibility for any individual who cares for a child outside of our program.

CHILD ABUSE\NEGLECT REPORTING

Everyone working directly with children is required by law to report evidence of child neglect or abuse to certain state licensing agencies or law enforcement agencies. Those who fail to report can be held accountable under the law. It is also prohibited by law for anyone to interfere with an individual's attempt to report child abuse or neglect. Daily observations of suspicious or unexplainable bruises or injuries or other signs of possible abuse or neglect will be documented and placed in your child's file.

We ask that, while on our grounds, you refrain from using any form of guidance that is not consistent with our policy or licensing requirements. Our staff members who witness any form of physical or corporal punishment, even administered by a parent, are required to report their observations to the director, who will then report to the local authorities. This mandated reporting responsibility is expected of all staff members.

If you, the parent, witness or observe any negative behavior or have suspicion of child abuse or neglect on a staff member's part you may bring it to the attention of the director and call licensing officials through the Children, Youth and Families Department of the State of New Mexico (You may call: 1-800-797-3260).

We at First Presbyterian CDC have a zero tolerance for any form of child abuse\neglect on the part of any staff member.

I have read and understand all the Child Abuse\neglect Reporting.

Parent\Guardian Signature

Date

GUIDANCE POLICY

Part of what children are learning in their early years is how to get along with others and what behaviors are appropriate for different situations. We help children learn those skills by being positive role models and by gently redirecting them when their behavior needs to change. We take a preventative approach to discipline that teaches children positive behaviors rather than punishing them for misbehaving. Most importantly, we keep children actively engaged in fun and challenging activities.

Preventative discipline improves a child's self-esteem and problem-solving skills and encourages positive social behavior. This helps our center maintain an atmosphere of warmth and understanding and helps children develop as individuals and as part of a group.

In this positive atmosphere, most behavior problems are avoided. However in extreme situations, we will follow the following procedures:

8. Observe and record child's inappropriate behavior documenting what staff has tried to do to change the behavior.
9. If inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to participate in an immediate parent\teacher conference with the CDC director and/or teachers.
10. The CDC director will suggest outside resources for further guidance in responding to the child's behavior.
11. If the inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to keep the child home for a day.
12. If the child's inappropriate behavior persists after the child is kept home on several occasions, First Presbyterian CDC could request that the parents disenroll.

I have read and understand the Guidance Policy.

Parent\Guardian Signature

Date

Photo Policies

"Parents or guardians may sign a "Do Not Print" instruction if they do not wish to have photos of their child(ren) to be published in any written church publication including the website. No identifiable pictures of children will be used on the website."

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

I have read and understand all of the contents as shown in the parent handbook. I understand that at any time I have questions I can contact the director for further information and details.

Parent\Guardian Signature

Date