



2026-2027
PARENT HANDBOOK

3790 Ashley Phosphate Road • Charleston • South Carolina
www.CathedralPreschool.net • 843.760.1454

PARENT HANDBOOK

Mission

We believe in providing a warm and nurturing environment with caring, experienced individuals that focus on the needs of the child, providing developmentally appropriate activities and positive interaction and supervision. We believe in the development of the whole child: physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. We believe that embracing the whole family will assure a child's success and enhance growth.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." ~ Proverbs 22:6

Hours of Operation

Early Birds: Monday – Friday, 6:30 am – 7:00 am

Normal Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:00 am – 6:00 pm

**Please note: Your child must be dropped off by 9:30am.*

Child / Staff Ratio

Programs	DSS Child/Staff Ratio
Infants (6 weeks – 1 year)	1 adult to 5 infants
1 – 2 years	1 adult to 6 children
2 – 3 years	1 adult to 8 children
3 – 4 years	1 adult to 12 children

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Cathedral Preschool admits students of any race, 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, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies & admissions policies.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff will comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act by bringing suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the attention of the Director. If necessary, the Director will report the suspected case to the Dorchester County Department of Social Services. Periodic observations and written documentation will be made by the Director and teachers when necessary.

Children's Clothing

- Shoes must have at least a strap on the back if child is not wearing athletic shoes. NO Crocs.
- Please dress accordingly for the weather in washable and comfortable clothing. Children will go outside for playtime except for when it is snowing or raining, or in extreme temperatures.
- Please put shorts or bloomers on under dresses and skirts.

Communication

Class Dojo is an app that is used for all communications about Preschool.

- Only parents and/or legal guardians may have access to Class Dojo.
- A parental consent must be given to allow photos to be posted.

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Extra Clothing

- Two full outfits with socks and underwear (if applicable) must be kept in child's classroom.
- When an outfit goes home please replace it the next morning.
- Parents will be called to bring an outfit if child has soiled all their clothes and no longer has a change of clothes.

Diapers, Pull-Ups & Wipes

- Diapers and pull-ups are supplied by the parents. **All pull-ups must have velcro sides.**
- Parents must keep a supply at school.
- Teachers will notify parents that their child needs a new supply at least two days in advance with a handwritten notice.
- We will supply wipes unless you need a specific type.
- Children must be fully potty trained before enrolling in K3. Diapers and pull-ups may not be worn in 3K. Fully potty trained means that they are able to pull their clothing on and off, able to tell the teacher that they have to go potty, can fully wipe themselves, and do not require pull-ups for nap.
- No cloth diapers, please.

Potty Training

A child must be potty trained before they can move to the three-year-old classroom. The prime responsibility to start this process belongs to the parents. Our desire is to work with parents to help each child be successfully potty trained, but we do not want to cause undue stress for a parent or child. Typically, at 24 months, a child is ready to be introduced to the potty training process. We will partner with you to reinforce the process happening at home, once your child is in the two-year-old classroom.

We have set times we send all children (ages 2+) to the potty:

- after eating (three times a day)
- before and after they lay down for their nap
- before and after they go outside to play (twice a day)

Other than that, children are allowed to use the potty any time they want. However, we do not ask between these scheduled potty times. If your child is not asking to use the potty between the scheduled times, then they are probably not potty trained. The child must be in underpants only and not be wetting or soiling them. Accidents happen from time to time, but if it's happening every week, they are not potty trained.

Daily Reports

Daily Reports are used to communicate time and consistency of diaper changes, what and how much they ate, potty training, sleep schedules for infants, concerns or needs to parents. When a child is potty trained daily reports are no longer sent home.

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Behavior Guidance and Discipline

Philosophy

Cathedral Preschool is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for all children. Our goal is to guide behavior in a positive and constructive manner while limiting suspension and expulsion whenever possible. We believe that challenging behaviors are opportunities for teaching, growth, and partnership with families.

General Procedures

Children may not be removed from the classroom in a manner that disrupts required staff-to-child ratios. In rare instances, a child may be brought to the main office, where the Director and/or Curriculum Coordinator will assist the child in calming and regulating their behavior.

Teachers must contact the office and speak directly with the Director and/or Curriculum Coordinator before removing a child from the classroom.

If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, or staff, the Director and/or Curriculum Coordinator must be notified immediately.

Cathedral Preschool reserves the right to contact a parent/guardian to pick up their child if behavior warrants removal for the safety and well-being of others.

We are committed to working collaboratively with families when behavioral concerns arise.

Support and Referrals

Behavior that frequently or significantly disrupts classroom activities may indicate underlying physical, developmental, or emotional concerns requiring additional support.

Upon parent request or administrative recommendation, Cathedral Preschool will assist families with referrals to appropriate early childhood mental health or developmental service providers. The preschool maintains partnerships with community agencies and can provide additional mental health resource information upon request.

Excessive Behavioral Issues Policy

Definition

Excessive behavioral issues are defined as **three (3) violent or aggressive acts within a one (1) week period / (five weekdays)** that result in:

- Harm to another child or staff member, or
- The child placing themselves in an unsafe situation.

Step 1: Initial Conference and Behavior Plan

If a child meets the definition above:

- A conference will be scheduled with the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Administration and the child's teacher will review documented incidents.
- A written Behavior Action Plan will be developed collaboratively.
- The plan will be signed by all parties and implemented immediately.
- Cathedral Preschool may request written parental consent for a professional behavioral or developmental assessment.

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Step 2: Suspension and Required Assessment

If the child again meets the definition of excessive behavioral issues:

- The child will be suspended for **two (2) business days**.
- A second conference will be required.
- Parents/guardians will be required to pursue a formal assessment through an appropriate outside agency.

Age-Specific Procedures

Children Ages 0–3 Years:

The preschool is mandated to refer the child to South Carolina's BabyNet early intervention system.

Children Over Age 3:

- Parents/guardians must schedule an evaluation with an appropriate agency. If therapy or intervention services are recommended, continued enrollment may be contingent upon active participation in recommended services.
- A revised Behavior Action Plan will be developed, documented, and signed.
- If parents/guardians decline assessment or fail to follow through with recommended services, Cathedral Preschool Administration reserves the right to suspend the child for a specified period or indefinitely.

Step 3: Termination of Enrollment

If the child once again meets the definition of excessive behavioral issues after Steps 1 and 2 have been completed:

- Parents/guardians will be asked to make alternative childcare arrangements.
- Enrollment will be discontinued.

Reset Period

If a child completes Steps 1 and/or 2 and then goes **three (3) consecutive weeks (15 business days)** without a behavioral incident report, the process will reset to Step 1 should a future incident occur.

Same-Day Removal for Safety

If a child engages in violent or aggressive behavior, or places themselves in an unsafe situation, **twice within a four (4) hour period**, the child will be required to be picked up for the remainder of the day.

This early pick-up does **NOT** count toward the two (2) day suspension described in Step 2.

Commitment to Fair and Consistent Practice

Cathedral Preschool applies this policy consistently and in accordance with state childcare regulations. All incidents are documented in writing. Families will receive copies of Behavior Action Plans and conference summaries. Our priority remains the safety, dignity, and developmental well-being of every child in our care.

Discipline

The employees of Cathedral Preschool are not permitted to spank or physically punish a child. Constructive techniques for managing behavior and maintaining a child's self-worth will be applied. The Director will provide guidance in these skills to staff and parents. The purpose of discipline is to teach the child self-control and self-correcting techniques. If a child does not respond to correction from the school staff, the

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Director will schedule a meeting with the child's parents and teachers. Cathedral Preschool may terminate this contract with a two week notice or less, depending on the circumstances, in consideration of the welfare of the children and staff.

Biting Policy

Biting is not an unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and staff. This biting policy has been developed with both of these ideas in mind.

As a preschool, we understand that, unfortunately, biting is a part of a preschool setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children who are bitten.

If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child who bit and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our top priority is to keep the children in our care safe. Our staff is trained to help a child who bites learn more appropriate behaviors. While there is no single solution for stopping a child from biting, our staff is here to help them manage the behavior. For most children, biting is a behavior they will outgrow over time. We do not use techniques that alarm, hurt, or frighten children.

For the child who was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified via Class Dojo.
3. An Incident Report form is completed documenting the incident.

For the child who bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child, "No, do not bite."
2. The child will be guided to a classroom cozy corner to separate from the group while staff attend to the child who was bitten.
3. Parents are notified.
4. An Incident Report form is completed documenting the incident.

If Biting Continues:

1. The child will be closely supervised to help prevent further incidents.
2. The child will be observed by classroom staff to determine the cause of the behavior (teething, communication, frustration, etc.). Administrative staff may also observe if needed.
3. The child will be given positive attention and reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
4. Cathedral Preschool staff will work closely with the child and the child's parents to help manage the biting behavior.

When Biting Becomes Excessive:

1. If a child inflicts **three (3) bites within a one (1) week period (5 weekdays)**, in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken, bruised, or leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the behavior and develop a plan for improvement.

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2. If the child **again inflicts three (3) bites within a one (1) week period (5 weekdays)** resulting in broken skin, bruising, or significant marks, the child will be **suspended for two (2) business days**.

3. If the child **once again inflicts three (3) bites within a one (1) week period (5 weekdays)** resulting in broken skin, bruising, or significant marks, the parents will be asked to make alternative childcare arrangements.

If a child who has progressed through Steps 1 and/or 2 goes **three (3) consecutive weeks (15 business days)** without a biting incident, the process will reset to Step 1 if biting occurs again.

If a child bites **twice within a four (4) hour period**, the child will be required to be picked up for the remainder of the day. This will **NOT** count toward the **two (2) day suspension**.

Drop Off and Pick Up

- Please follow the published traffic flow pattern and the speed limit of 7 mph.
- Vehicles must be turned off and keys removed from ignition before entering the school.
- Do not leave children in vehicles without an adult.
- We will not release a child unless the person picking up your child is listed on the Authorization for Pick-Up Form and shows proper identification.
- Children must be signed in/out from their classroom daily.
- Children must be dropped off in the Preschool lobby with a staff member upon entering the building.
- We do not allow drop-off during naptime (12:00 pm - 2:30pm).
- Parents must accompany their children from their classroom to their vehicle.
- Children cannot play in or near the parking lot.
- **For the safety of the children we ask that parents not accompany their child into the classroom.**
- Each family will be issued (2) two key cards that will open the Preschool entrance between 7:00 am and 6:00 pm. Each additional or replacement card is \$25. Please notify the Preschool if your card is lost or stolen. Strong magnets or extreme temperatures may render cards ineffective.

Late Child Pick Up

- Cathedral Preschool **closes promptly at 6:00 pm**.
- We do not offer service after 6:00 pm.
- **There will be a flat-rate fee of \$25 for any part of each 15-minute interval of late pick-up past 6:00 pm for a child.** (For example: 14 minutes late = \$25 / 16 minutes late = \$50.)

Your child's preschool experience, including their care and safety, is of paramount importance to us. We appreciate the special partnership we have with all our Cathedral Preschool parents. To ensure the best communication possible, it is vital that we are able to directly contact an authorized person at any time your child is with us. Please assist us with this essential element of your child's safekeeping by updating your call list and providing us with the phone numbers of additional persons who are authorized to drop off or pick up your child in the event you are unavailable.

Our day officially ends at 6:00pm. If we are unsuccessful in reaching any of the authorized persons from your call list on your child's behalf within an appropriate grace period (*30 minutes to 1 hour at most*), we will contact the proper authorities. **Excessive late pick-ups may result in disenrollment of the student.** Thank you for your assistance and understanding.

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Registration Requirements

These items are required on file before the first day of attendance

- Application
- Birth Certificate
- Statement of Child's Health (DSS Form 2900)
- Parental Consent Form
- Current Immunization Record (DHEC FORM 4024)
- Pick-Up Authorization
- Emergency Contact
- Child Awareness Report
- Signed Tuition Agreement
- Completed ACH Form

(* Registration / Moving Up - Typically August to August)

Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Cathedral Preschool wants to maintain a healthy school environment by taking steps to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. The term "Communicable Disease" means an illness which arises as a result of a specific infectious agent, which may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a susceptible host or infected person or animal to other persons.

Any student with a communicable disease for which immunization is required or is available, will be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognizable periods of communicability. Students with communicable diseases for which immunization is not available will be excluded from school while ill. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, Cathedral Preschool may require an independent physician's examination of the student to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease. Cathedral Preschool reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to enforce its communicable disease policy and to take all necessary action to control the spread of communicable disease within the school.

Any child who is diagnosed as carrying a disease classified as "communicable" is not allowed to become or remain a student at Cathedral Preschool as long as the disease is present. Once the school has written verification from a physician that such a child has become disease free, he may be considered for enrollment or re-enrollment at Cathedral Preschool. This policy applies to, but is not limited to, all diseases that may be sexually transmitted, including Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). For school purposes, any student testing positive for antibodies to the AIDS virus is considered to be infected with the virus. Cathedral Preschool believes that these measures serve to minimize the further spread of diseases.

Communicable Childhood Diseases

When diagnosed with any of the communicable diseases listed below, a child must have written consent from either a physician or the Health Department to return to Cathedral Preschool. In addition to a doctor's note, the specific recovery criteria for certain illnesses must be met prior to returning.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Chicken Pox | 6. Pinworms | 11. Step Throat | 16. Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease |
| 2. Measles | 7. Scabies | 12. Lice | 17. Rotavirus |
| 3. Mumps | 8. Ringworm | 13. Mononucleosis | 18. Influenza |
| 4. Pneumonia | 9. Impetigo | 14. Fifth's Disease | 19. COVID-19 |
| 5. Whooping Cough | 10. Conjunctivitis | 15. Meningitis | |

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First Aid Procedure

1. First aid treatment will be administered to stop bleeding, restore breathing, or prevent shock or infection, up to and including, CPR.
2. Parents will be notified immediately. If they cannot be reached in the event of an emergency, the child will be transported to the appropriate medical facility. This information must be completed on the **DSS Health Form 2900** and will be on file for each student in case the parents cannot be reached.
3. A representative of the school faculty will stay with the child until the parent arrives.
4. Internal medication will be given only by or on the order of a physician.

Illness

For the well-being and health consideration of all our students and staff, parents are asked to keep home any student with a fever and/or a contagious illness. It is the policy of Cathedral Preschool that a student must stay home until the child is symptom-free for 24 hours. If your child goes home sick from Cathedral Preschool with a fever and/or a contagious illness, please make alternate care plans for the following day. We ask that you pick your child up within 1 hour when sick. Your child is welcome to return to class when he/she:

- has been free from diarrhea for 24 hours and has had a regular bowel movement.
- has been fever-free (without the use of any fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours.
- has received the prescribed dosage of antibiotic over a 24-hour period (for any type of strep or bacterial infection).
- is no longer vomiting and has eaten and retained a meal.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Fever | 5. Vomiting |
| 2. Flu symptoms | 6. Diarrhea |
| 3. Persistent cough | 7. Strep Throat |
| 4. Conjunctivitis | 8. Lice |
| 9. Mononucleosis (<i>until released by physician to return to school</i>) | |
| 10. Any other communicable diseases | |

Immunizations

South Carolina state law requires Cathedral Preschool to have on file current immunization records recorded on SC DHEC Form 4024 and medical records for each student. It is the responsibility of parents to keep up-to-date records in the school office.

Medication Policy

Written, signed and dated parental consent is required prior to the administration of any prescription or over-the-counter medication or administration of special medical procedures. **Medication will only be given if the prescribed dosing is 3 or more times per day (less frequent dosing can be managed at home).**

1. All medication shall be used only for the child for whom the medication is labeled.
2. Medications shall not be given in excess of the recommended dose.
3. Over the counter medications should be ordered by the prescribing health professional for a specific child. The written order from the health professional should specify medical need, medication, dosage, and length of time to give the medication. **No medication will be given on an "as needed" basis.**
4. Prescribed special medical procedures ordered for a specific child shall be written, signed and dated by a physician or other legally authorized healthcare provider.
5. All medications shall be kept in their original labeled containers and have child protective caps. The child's first and last name shall be on all medications.
6. The parent must complete a Medication Release Form indicating the date, dosage and time to administer.

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Rest Periods

- Infants rest on their own schedule. Crib sheets are provided by the Preschool and washed by the school bi-weekly.
- All other students rest two and a half hours following lunch. The school will provide a sleeping cot, and parents provide a cot sheet with elastic corners and a blanket.

Serving Meals

- The school will meet nutritional needs for children old enough to eat table food for the portion of day that the children spend at the school by providing a light morning snack, a well balanced lunch, and an afternoon snack. This menu will be posted online and a copy sent home each month.
- Meals will not be served after everything has been cleaned away.
- Children will need to be fed before coming to school if they are going to miss the time their class is scheduled to eat.
- **No breakfast food is to be brought into the school by the parents.**
- The staff will only put the food in front of the children at the time that classroom is scheduled to eat so no child will miss the scheduled snack.
- If a child will not be here in the morning but will be here in time for lunch, the parents will need to call the school by 10:00 am so there is enough food prepared for your child.
- **No outside food allowed.**

Bottles and Baby Food *(Nursery only)*

Bottles will be prepared at home and brought in daily labeled with the child's first & last name and date on bottle and cap. Baby food will be provided by parents and several jars can be stored at the school so parents will not have to bring daily. Those must be labeled as well.

Outside Solicitation

Outside solicitation is prohibited at Cathedral Preschool. This policy includes the selling of any item, distribution of political or religious materials, and the circulation of petitions.

Cathedral Preschool Closings (see **Calendar and Fees** for actual dates)

- Cathedral Preschool Staff Professional Development
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday
- Christmas - New Year's Break
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

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Emergency Closing of School

Please listen to the radio or watch television to be notified when the Preschool is closed. Announcements are also typically placed on www.cathedralpreschool.net and posted on ClassDojo. In the event inclement weather necessitates the closing of the Preschool before 6:00 pm, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The decision will be made by the Administration.
2. Faculty & staff will be notified.
3. Local radio and TV stations will be notified.
4. Children will be released to individuals indicated on the Authorization for Pickup Form.

Emergency Procedure Drills

Drills are conducted throughout the year.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

Parents are welcome to send cookies, cupcakes or a cake to share with their children's friends on birthdays and special occasions. **By law these foods must be prepackaged or prepared by a licensed kitchen.** Please consider the age group when bringing in treats and arrange celebrations in advance with the teacher. Goody bags will only be given out upon the arrival of each child's parent. Please read packages for age warnings.

1. **Due to the high risk of peanut allergies, please do not bring products containing peanuts into the school.**
2. **Invitations and small party favors, if brought to school, must be for the whole class, leaving no one out. Children will not be expected to bring a gift for such functions.**
3. **Latex balloons are not permitted.**
4. **Candles are allowed but may not be lit.**

Candy from Home

Children cannot come to the Preschool with candy or gum. Please do not discard any food, gum or candy in the parking area or on the grounds. This can attract insects and/or children may pick it up and eat it.

Toys from Home

Toys from home are not allowed.

Tuition (see *Tuition Agreement*)

- Tuition is contracted on an annual basis and is payable weekly. All tuition payments will be drafted by ACH in advance on the Friday prior to the week of service.
- **If a bank holiday falls on Friday, the draft occur on the next business day.**
- A late fee of \$5 per day will be assessed for each day payment is not received after the due date.
- If an ACH payment is not successfully processed within one week of the due date, Cathedral Preschool reserves the right to terminate this contract without prior notice.
- If an ACH draft is unsuccessful, full payment must be made at the front desk no later than the following Monday morning. Care will not be provided, and the child may not be dropped off, until payment is received in full.
- Tuition will not be reduced or prorated due to illness, vacation, holidays, weather-related closures, teacher workdays, delays, or any other absences occurring during the Tuition Agreement period.