

# **Parent Handbook**

2019 – 2020

Three Chopt Presbyterian Church  
9315 Three Chopt Road  
Henrico, VA 23229

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**PROMISES PRESCHOOL at TCPC  
2019-2020  
Parent Handbook**

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**Promises Preschool at TCPC  
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[www.promisespreschool.org](http://www.promisespreschool.org)**

**Hours of Operation: 8:55 a.m. until 12:00 noon  
Monday through Friday  
School year begins in early September and ends in May.**

### **WELCOME**

Welcome to our school! Whether you are new or returning from last year, we are delighted that you are part of our preschool. Please read this handbook carefully, as it has been designed to serve as a guide and source of information to help your family understand the policies and procedures of our school. Circumstances throughout the year may create additions and/or revisions to existing policies and you will be notified if this occurs.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Early childhood is the most critical period in human growth and development, for it is the period when the foundation for learning is laid. As children grow, they go through an orderly series of developmental stages that are similar. However, the rate at which children progress through these stages can vary dramatically from one child to another. The program at Promises Preschool is based on the philosophy that each child is an individual who develops at his/her own rate.

To help our children develop to their fullest potential, we believe an environment must be created which encourages a child's curiosity about the world. The environment should provide opportunities to think creatively and to make decisions and choices within appropriate limits.

Above all, a child should be in an environment where love and respect are shown for each child and where all children learn to love and respect themselves and each other.

## **PROGRAM PURPOSES**

Promises Preschool at TCPC is operated in compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716 as an Exempt Child Day Center. The purpose of the Preschool is to support children by providing quality early childhood education so that children develop to their highest potential in physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual growth. We also offer support to the family and help parents in the early years of child rearing. In addition, the Preschool intends to provide an example of the highest qualities of Christian faith. The Preschool will provide a well supervised, positive, and nurturing environment where each child can:

- Develop an awareness of God's love and God's world
- Develop a sense of self-esteem and trust
- Learn to express feelings in healthy ways
- Develop a better understanding of environment, family, and community
- Develop the ability to interact appropriately and effectively with peers
- Communicate effectively with teachers and classmates
- Become more independent
- Develop muscular coordination and growth
- Acquire an ability to think, reason, and solve problems.

## **CLASSES**

**2-Year-Old Classes** for children who are 2 years of age by 10/31.  
Average Class size: 8 - 10 students. 2 day classes

**3-Year-Old-Classes** for children who are at least 3 years old by 9/30.  
Class size: 12 - 15 students. 2, 3 and 4 day options available

**4-Year-Old Pre-Kindergarten Classes** for children who are at least 4 years old by 9/30.  
Class size: 14 - 18 students. 4 day and 5 day options available

## **STAFF**

Each class is staffed by a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher or two Co-teachers, and the Preschool Director or Resource Specialist is on the premises at all times. All staff are required to complete 16 credit hours of continuing education each year of employment. All staff have college or post-secondary classes in education and at least one year of experience with preschool children and three references. In accordance with state regulations, all staff must complete background checks with the Virginia Department of State Police and the Virginia Department of Social Services. All staff are certified in CPR and First Aid. Our highly qualified staff brings a variety of skills and abilities to the Preschool. The teacher/student ratios at Promises Preschool are kept low. This allows teachers to work with small groups in the classroom and facilitate social, physical and academic growth in each child. However, we are not staffed to provide ongoing individual care for one student. Please contact the director before enrolling if your child requires a 1:1 teacher/student ratio.

## **CURRICULUM**

We want children to learn in an atmosphere filled with praise, stimulation, and imagination. We offer a balanced curriculum of play, creative art, outdoor/indoor recreation, conversation, story time, experimentation and exploration, dramatic play, and group activities. Each class has age appropriate learning activities centered around units and themes. These activities promote growth in three key areas: social, physical, and academic development.

In addition to the daily educational, recreational, and social activities provided by our teaching staff, many supplemental activities are offered including Chapel, Music and Movement Class, Media Center, Science Experiments. Promises Preschool does not sponsor school field trips. We do, however, bring special guests and programs to the students at school. The Promises Parents' Group organizes social gatherings and events for preschool children and their parents outside of school hours.

## **ACTIVITIES**

**Play** – We respect the art of play. Our teachers provide an environment where children can develop the ability to interact with peers, make choices that increase feelings of independence, develop fine and gross motor skills, and become more aware of the feelings of others. We offer three gated play areas outside; two playgrounds and God's Garden, our outdoor learning center. During inclement weather, we transform the downstairs fellowship hall into an indoor play area and gym.

**Process Art** – Children have access to a wide variety of art materials each day that encourage their creativity and means of expression.

**Conversation and Story time** - There are abundant opportunities for children to develop their language skills through discussions of stories, show and tell time, puppet shows, etc. In addition to daily story time and circle time, students visit our Media Center once per week. With parents' permission, children are allowed to check out one book at a time from the preschool's library. Through group reading and various activities in the Media Center the students learn about specific authors and illustrators throughout the school year. We also have a "Mystery Reader" program coordinated by the classroom teachers.

**The World Around Us** – As children learn about themselves and their family, there is a natural curiosity about the world around them. We offer them the opportunity to explore and experiment with wind, water, sand, magnifying glasses, and other tools for exploration. Teachers use lessons from the **Growing Up Wild** curriculum and God's Garden allows the students to explore nature. Special guests from the community help students learn about community helpers, fire safety, dental health, nutrition and exercise, plants and animals, and many other topics. Our International Curriculum introduces the children to many different people and cultures of the world throughout the school year.

**Readiness Skills** – There are year-round activities to help the student recognize letters and letter sounds, numbers, colors and shapes, develop language skills, learn to write, build math skills, follow directions, take turns, share, and cooperate. **Handwriting Without Tears** curriculum is implemented in the 3 year old and pre-kindergarten classes. Their preschool experience and the academic skills learned here will help prepare them for elementary school.

**Music** – Music is used in the classroom each day. Music teaches rhythm, rhyming, and working together. It is also used as reinforcement for concepts. Music is an easy and effective learning tool for the preschooler. In addition to daily classroom music, our music resource teacher visits each week to lead Music and Movement Classes.

**Christian Education** – Promises Preschool is a ministry of Three Chopt Presbyterian Church. Children learn about God's love and the teachings of Jesus Christ through Chapel lessons, songs, prayers and other activities.

### **AL'S PALS**

The Al's Pals curriculum is used in the Three Year Old and Pre-kindergarten classes. This research based curriculum helps children learn how to get along with others, manage anger, use self-control, solve problems, and make healthy choices. Through music, brainstorming sessions, role-plays, creative activities, and interactions with staff & puppets, students will learn to:

- Express feelings appropriately
- Make and keep friends
- Stop and think & solve problems peacefully
- Use kind words
- Cope with difficulties
- Keep themselves safe and healthy
- Care about others
- Gain self control

The overall purpose of the Al's Pals curriculum is to build children's strengths so they can deal with the many challenges and opportunities they will face as they grow older. Throughout the year, letters will be sent home to provide parents with basic information about the concepts the children are learning through this curriculum.

### **GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE**

Below is an example of a daily schedule. The amount of time each class spends on a particular activity and the order of scheduled activities vary. In addition, the daily schedule can include Chapel, Music class, Media Center, Science Experiments, Special Recreation, and other special guests.

8:55 a.m. – 10:00a.m. Learning Centers and Free Play (learning centers encourage cooperative play, sharing, development of literacy & math skills, science exploration, creativity, gross & fine motor development).

10:00a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Circle Time: Discussion about current theme, weather, calendar, numbers, letters, shapes, and colors.

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Group learning activities

10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. Prayer and Snack time

10:50 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. Outdoor/Indoor Recreation

11:25 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Group activities

## **SNACKS**

Please send a healthy, shelf-stable snack that does not require refrigeration or heating with your child each day. Promises will provide water in a disposable cup. 2-Year-Old parents may wish to provide a suitable cup for their toddler. Snacks will not be served before 10:00 a.m. (unless medically necessary). Teachers will help your child open their snack if needed but your child should be able to eat their snack independently. Our staff will not feed your child unless medically necessary.

**Promises does not allow peanut or tree nut products at preschool.** Please do not send any snack that contains peanuts or tree nuts.

Birthdays are special and we wish to acknowledge your child's special day at Promises. You may provide a special treat for the entire class on your child's birthday. We will sing to them and give them a birthday crown to wear throughout the day. **Remember that our schedule does not allow and we are not staffed to provide a party for your child. Please do not request that teachers go beyond the normal protocol for your child. If providing a snack for the class, regulations require that any shared snack be prepared in a commercial kitchen. Therefore, shared snacks must be store bought or prepared in the preschool's kitchen. If you would like to provide a snack for the entire class, please speak with your child's teacher in advance to discuss details.**

## **AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT**

After School Enrichment is an extended day program that allows your child to pack a lunch and stay until 1:30 p.m. for activities, socialization and recreation.

Students in the 3-Year-Old and Pre-kindergarten classes are eligible to participate in this program. Sign-up sheets will be sent home in advance. The cost varies depending on the activities planned.

Please pack only nonperishable foods as lunches cannot be refrigerated. Promises Preschool will provide water to drink. **Please do not pack any peanut/nut products in your child's lunch.**

## **POSSESSIONS**

Each day, your child should bring their school tote bag in order to take home artwork, books, and notes from the teacher and director. Children may bring in personal items and toys on designated "show and tell" days scheduled by their teacher. Each child will be assigned a designated area to store his/her belongings. **Please label your child's belongings to help insure the return of all possessions.**

### TOILETING/DIAPERING

Students in the 2-Year-Old Classes will have a scheduled diaper change each day. Diapers will be changed before or after this scheduled change as needed. Toddlers who are potty trained will be taken to the bathroom as needed. For students who are not potty trained, parents should provide diapers in their child's school tote bag each day.

It is expected that students in the 3-Year-Old and Pre-kindergarten classes will be potty trained, and they will be taken to the restroom as needed. Our student/teacher ratios and facilities do not allow for scheduled diaper changes in the 3 year old and Pre-kindergarten classes.

Adults will follow all hand washing procedures after changing diapers or assisting children in the bathroom. Children using the bathroom will be required to wash their hands before leaving the bathroom.

### CLOTHING

Children should feel free to participate fully in all school activities and enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Please consider the following when helping your child select what to wear:

- Pants that are easy to pull up and down are best for children this age. This helps make toileting faster and easier (reducing accidents). It also helps them feel a sense of accomplishment when they are able to be independent when visiting the restroom.
- Tennis shoes or other closed toe shoes are best and safest for preschool. Open-toed and/or open-back sandals, clogs, flip-flops, and dress shoes should not be worn to school because of the potential to slip, trip, or stub toes while playing. **If children arrive in unsuitable footwear, they may not be allowed to participate in some recreational activities.**
- Children should not wear jewelry that dangles or can get caught on equipment.
- Dress clothes or "Sunday School" clothes should not be worn to school. Clothes should be sturdy enough for outdoor play and washable for those messy art activities.
- **The children play outside everyday as the weather permits, and we ask that you dress your child with that in mind. Be sure to mark all hats, sweaters, gloves, coats, etc. with your child's name.**
- Long skirts and dresses should not be worn to school because of the potential for a child to trip and fall.

\* Please send a seasonally appropriate change of clothing. We will only use this set of clothing in the event that your child has an accident and needs to be changed.

**Please make sure to write your child's name on all of their clothing (including coats, hats, and gloves) and other belongings to help insure the return of all possessions.**

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Regular, verbal communication about your child's progress, adjustments and needs will be ongoing throughout the year. Teachers will conduct telephone conferences with parents during the fall semester of school. There will also be a scheduled parent teacher conference day during the spring semester. If you feel the need to have a special conference with the teacher at another time throughout the year, please let her know and she will schedule a specific time with you.

**Please do not attempt to have this time during drop off or pick up time as this would interfere with the arrival and departure of other students. If there is a situation which needs to be addressed immediately, please see the Director.**

**Daily Activity Sheets** will be posted each day outside of your child's classroom highlighting a few special classroom activities from the day. Please use the information on these sheets to generate conversation with your child about his or her school day.

It is extremely important that you read all communications from our school. Information about upcoming events will be posted on the preschool blog and Facebook. **Written notes may be sent home in your child's tote bag. Please check your child's tote bag each day after school.** Classroom websites are updated frequently and should be checked for pertinent information regarding your child's class activities and schedule.

The students' school bags are to be used for communication from the school only. **Parents-** all notes you wish to place in other children's school bags **MUST** first be approved by the director. This includes birthday party invitations and information about events being held outside of the preschool. **Advertising of any business or profitable event is strictly prohibited by the church.**

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving guidance, redirection and positive verbal rewards. These all promote self-control without inhibiting a child's spontaneity and child-like behavior. They also reinforce a child's positive self image while helping to model appropriate behavior for other students. Time away from classroom activities is used only when necessary and for brief, age-appropriate durations. Physical means of behavior management are prohibited. Parents will be contacted if persistent unacceptable behavior is observed.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

Our program is in compliance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services standards. This ensures you of our responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of all children entering our program. To comply with the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services requirements, we are required to obtain the following documentation from parents before your child may attend our program:

- Child's Birth Certificate or Passport
- Up-to-date immunization records
- Family information form

Other paperwork required by Promises Preschool includes the following:

- Preschool Registration form
- Preschool Contract
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Care form
- Carpool Permission form

### **ILLNESS/INFECTION CONTROL POLICY**

In a child care setting, children come into contact with groups of other children. In this situation illness can spread rapidly if stringent measures are not taken. The staff at Promises Preschool will take constant precautions to prevent the spread of disease. We will do our part to curb the spread of illness by proper hand washing of staff and children, cleaning toys and table top surfaces, and working to maintain sanitary conditions throughout the center.

You can help in our effort to keep children healthy. We ask your cooperation in the following ways:

1. Notify us if your child has been exposed to any contagious illness
  
2. Do not send your child to school if he/she shows any of the symptoms listed below. If we detect any of these symptoms at school, we will notify you immediately to pick up your child.
  - Fever
  - Severe coughing or sneezing
  - Difficult or rapid breathing
  - Yellowish skin or eyes
  - Unusual spots or rashes
  - Sore throat or trouble swallowing
  - Infected skin patches
  - Vomiting
  - Severe itching of body or scalp
  - Pinkeye – tears, redness of the eyelid lining, swelling, discharge
  - Diarrhea or loose stools that is not contained

Other signs to observe include:

- Decreased activity level
- Change in skin color
- Discharge from nose, eyes, ears
- General mood change/unusual behavior

No child who arrives at preschool noticeably ill, with an undiagnosed rash, fever, or symptoms listed above will be admitted for that day. Should a child become ill during the day, parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, we will contact one of the emergency numbers given. The child will wait for his/her parent in the Director's office (a rest area will be set up for the student to quietly play while waiting).

If your child will not be attending school for the day due to illness, please call the school at 965-0400 and let us know as soon as possible. This will help teachers anticipate attendance and adjust plans if necessary. In addition, it will enable us to notify other parents of their child's possible exposure to contagious illnesses.

After an illness, your child should not return to school until they can fully participate in all daily preschool activities, including outdoor play. If your child had a fever, they should not return to school until they have been free of a fever for 24 hours.

### **ACCIDENTS/INJURIES**

The staff at Promises Preschool will do everything in their power to prevent accidents and injuries from occurring by providing close supervision of children and by reporting unsafe behavior and/or conditions to the Director so that corrective action may be taken. All staff are certified in CPR and basic first aid. Parents must complete the Authorization for Emergency Medical Care Form for their child which provides names and telephone numbers of people to contact in the event of an emergency.

Should an accident occur and a child becomes injured, staff will evaluate the situation. If this is a minor incident, staff will provide simple first aid, such as cleaning the wound site and applying a band-aid. If it is a more serious accident, staff will report it to the Director so that the parent, guardian, or emergency contact may be notified as soon as possible. Promises Preschool has an accident/injury form which will be filled out whenever a child has been injured while on the premises.

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Preschool's Emergency Management Plan is kept in each classroom as well as the Director's office. If you would like specific information about our procedures, please contact the director or your child's teacher.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Promises Preschool welcomes, but does not require, parents to volunteer. There are opportunities for parents to assist with activities such as holiday parties, the Media Center, Mystery Reader, Science Experiments, and activities in God's Garden. If assisting with a party, please help us keep parties simple and discuss ideas with your child's teacher in advance. Your child's teacher will provide holiday party sign-up sheets. In addition, if you have a special hobby or talent that you'd like to share with the children, please let the Director or your child's teacher know so we can schedule your visit.

### **VISITORS**

Because of state regulations regarding class size and teacher ratio, it is not possible for children to bring friends to visit. Family members and friends are invited to participate in special events throughout the year such as our Family Fun Nights, Christmas Program, Pre-Kindergarten Graduation, and our End of the Year Picnic.

All visitors, special guests, and parent volunteers are required to stop by the Director's office when arriving at the preschool.

During preschool hours, the preschool facilities, including the playgrounds and God's Garden, are for use by the preschool staff and students only. Preschool hours include after school enrichment activities. You are welcome to enjoy the playgrounds with your children after preschool hours.

### **SECURITY**

In an attempt to provide the safest environment possible for your children while they are in school, the doors to the Preschool will be locked during school hours. The door will be unlocked from 8:50 a.m. until 9:15 a.m. for student drop off and from 11:45 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. for student pick up. Please ring the doorbell if you need to enter the building at another time. Children and adults are able to open the doors from the inside at all times.

### **SIGNING OUT**

You must sign-out your child when you pick him/her up each day. Please let the Director or your child's teacher know, in writing, if someone else will be picking up your child.

The Carpool Permission Form states the names of the people you give permission to pick up your child and any conditions which apply. Until we get to know these relatives, babysitters, neighbors, and/or friends we will require them to show us their Drivers License or some other form of photo identification before we allow them to leave with your child. You may revise your Carpool Permission Form at any time by notifying the Director.

### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP**

\* Drop off begins at 8:55 a.m. and the double doors will be unlocked at that time. Please do not ring the doorbell prior to that time, as teachers are working to prepare their classrooms for your child's arrival. Once you enter the building, escort your child to the classroom. **A quick hug and kiss for your child** at the classroom door will be appreciated since the teachers will be eager to start their morning routines. Please let your child's teacher know a telephone number where you can be reached for the day if it is different from the phone numbers we have on file.

\* **Carpool line drop-off will begin Monday, September 16.** Details about this procedure will be sent home one week prior.

Pick up will start at 12:00noon outside of the classroom doors or from the playgrounds. Please remember to sign-out your child each day. Due to the high volume of traffic in the hallways at this time, we ask that you sign out first and then pick up your child from the classroom. Promises Preschool does not have a carpool line pick-up.

**Please abstain from cell phone use when dropping off and picking up your child.**

**Please do not use the “emergency exit” door located next to the 2 Year Old Classroom to exit the building at the end of the school day.** As indicated, this door should be used for emergencies only.

\* Preschool ends at noon and prompt pick-up is expected. “Pick Up” after 12:10 p.m. is considered tardy. There is a \$1.00/minute late fee associated with repeated tardiness.

During icy and/or snowy weather, the lower parking lot may be closed due to "black ice". Please watch for orange traffic cones which will block the entrance to the lower parking lot. During these conditions, park in the upper parking lot and enter through the main church entrance.

**NOTE: Please supervise your child closely during drop-off and pick-up as many people will be moving about. Also, please hold your child’s hand as you exit the building and while in the parking lots. Drivers cannot always see small children over the front of their cars or behind their vehicles. Never leave your child unattended in the car with the motor running.**

**INCLEMENT WEATHER DELAYS AND CLOSINGS:**

When Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) are closed due to severe weather or other emergency, Promises Preschool will also be closed. If HCPS has a one hour delayed opening, Promises will have a one hour delayed opening. If HCPS has a two hour delayed opening, Promises will be open 10:30am-12:30pm. If weather conditions deteriorate during the school day and HCPS announces an early dismissal, Promises Preschool will close-please pick up your child as soon as possible. **Missed days for inclement weather are not made up.**

**WITHDRAWAL**

Please refer to your copy of your contract for information regarding withdrawal and financial obligation. If a child needs to be withdrawn from the Preschool, please give the director as much notice as possible.

## **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

**The Code of Virginia allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the exemption law. The statements below have been prepared and distributed to meet requirements of the exemption laws.**

### **EXEMPTION**

- In compliance with the Code of Virginia, this Center is exempt from licensure and is classified as an “Exempt” child day center.

### **QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONNEL**

- Staff positions are covered in your parents manual under “Staff.”

### **DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES**

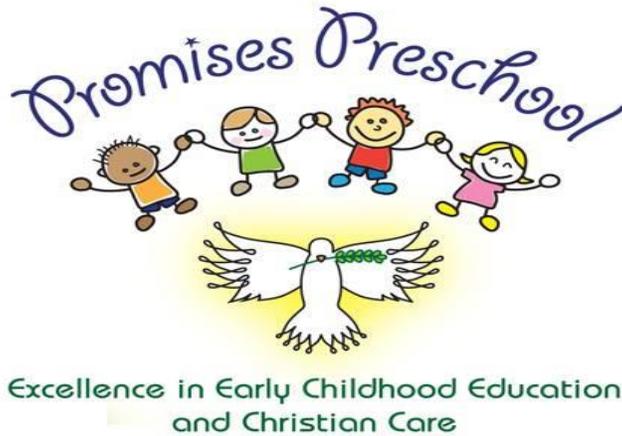
- The Preschool is located at Three Chopt Presbyterian Church, 9315 Three Chopt Road, Richmond, VA
- The number of rooms used for the Center is ten.
- The kitchen facilities are not available for use by the Center to cook meals.
- Outdoor play equipment consists of: three gated play areas including but not limited to: sandboxes, playground structures, climbing cubes, slides, geodomes, ball hoop, see-saw, play houses, musical equipment, and gardening beds.

### **OTHER SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF THE FACILITY INCLUDES:**

- The use of an indoor play area during inclement weather. Balls, small ride-on toys, hoops, bean bags, playhouses, balance equipment, parachutes, tunnels, and other gross motor equipment will be used in this area.

### **ENROLLMENT CAPACITY**

- The maximum number of children in the facility on any given day is 86. This figure is dictated by the local building inspector.



Dear Parents,  
Please complete this form and return it to Promises Preschool by Friday,  
September 13, 2019. It is very important that we know you are aware of our  
policies and practices here at Promises. Thank you.

**Student Name:**

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\* I have received, read and understand the 2019-2020 Promises Preschool  
Handbook.

**Parent Signature & Date:**

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\* I give Promises Preschool permission to include my family's home  
address, phone number and email address on the Classroom websites. I agree  
not to use this information for business purposes or solicitation.

**Parent Signature & Date:**

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