

2016-2017



MIDDLE SMITHFIELD  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK



Middle Smithfield Presbyterian Church Preschool

5205 Milford Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18302 | 570-223-7510

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*Middle Smithfield Presbyterian Church Preschool was established in 1994 to fill a need in the community providing a quality early childhood program for children ages 3 - 5. The leadership of the church felt led to provide a weekday program for young children of church members and community families. The preschool was designed to provide enriching experiences and age appropriate curriculum combined with Christian values and traditions.*

## PHILOSOPHY

*MSPC Preschool will provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences in the areas of cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. Through play and flexible grouping, children will encounter an age-appropriate environment and stimulating activities. The curriculum will provide creative art experiences and the promotion of emergent literacy (pre-reading and pre-writing). Christian values and attitudes will meld the entire teaching program.*

***The preschool is an art-based, experiential program.***

*The classrooms are set up in learning centers which are structured to cover specific concepts and experiences. During a portion of the day, the children will work at the learning centers, making their own choices of the centers in which to work. These centers may include an art center, science center, block center, manipulatives center, puzzle center, reading center, and dramatic play/housekeeping center. The teachers will work with the children during this time, guiding and facilitating their work. This approach to early education is developed from the understanding that children learn best from active participation and hands-on discovery.*

***Early reading and literacy skills are taught in context.***

*Letter and word recognition are developed in meaningful ways through a literature based approach and a print rich environment, according to the developmental stage of the child. A thematic approach to curriculum development is used to combine a topic of study with the necessary skills and concepts.*



## **PRESCHOOL—CHURCH RELATIONSHIP**

*The preschool is a mission of the church and is supported by and accountable to the Session through the Preschool Board of Directors. The preschool is self-supporting financially; therefore, annual tuition is set to meet expenses. The preschool is non-profit.*

## **PRESCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*The Preschool Board of Directors meets at least 6 times a year. The board has the following responsibilities:*

- ✓ adopting a fiscal budget*
- ✓ establishing tuition rates*
- ✓ adopting the school calendar*
- ✓ approving the curriculum guidelines*
- ✓ staffing the school*
- ✓ implementing policies in cooperation with the preschool director*

*Membership of the Board of Directors includes the following:*

- ✓ 2 parents of enrolled preschool children*
- ✓ 2 church members at large*
- ✓ 1 ruling Elder-Chairperson of the Board*
- ✓ 1 preschool teacher*
- ✓ Preschool director*

*More specific information is listed in the preschool by-laws.*

## **STAFFING**

*The preschool is staffed by certified teachers, experienced, non-certified teachers, and a director. We are proud to be able to tell you that our teaching staff combined has over 60 years of experience here at MSPC Preschool!*

## ENROLLMENT

*The preschool will grant enrollment to all children without discrimination in regard to sex, race, or religion. A child must be 3 or 4 years of age by September 30 for acceptance in that year. Children are required to be toilet taught. Exceptions will be made, however, for children with diagnosed medical needs. All children must have age-appropriate immunizations to be enrolled. Children will be enrolled on a first come basis following the completion of a registration form and receipt of the registration fee. The director has the authority not to accept an applicant if it appears the child would not adjust to the preschool environment. Placement of the children into classes will be at the discretion of the director.*

## TUITION

*Preschool tuition is a yearly figure. For convenience, tuition has been divided into nine monthly payments due on or before August 15th and the first of the months October through and including May. Prompt payment is expected. Parents must sign a tuition agreement form during the enrollment process. If payment is not made by the fifteenth of each month a late notice will be sent. If payment is not made by the end of the month a five dollar late fee will be charged. Two months of non-payment will result in the child being removed from preschool.*

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE NOTES

*To ease separation anxiety, say good-bye, give a hug, and reassure your child that you will be back. Long good-byes sometimes make parting harder. Let the preschool staff help your child by getting him/her involved in an activity.*



*Make note of the large preschool bulletin board in the hallway; current information will be posted here.*

*Help your child to respect the church by teaching him/her to walk with "inside feet" and use "inside voices" while walking in the church hallways.*

*For the safety of your children, no child will be dismissed from the classroom with anyone other than the parent or regular caregiver who normally picks up the child without written consent or verbal instruction to the director!*

## SCHOOL CLOSING

*For closing or delayed openings due to inclement weather, listen to WVPO 840 AM or WSBG 93.5 FM, or WYOU channel 22 or WBRE channel 28 local TV stations. You may also call the preschool office and the recorded message will indicate any closings or delays. We will follow the East Stroudsburg School District for closings and delays. Make-up days for an excessive amount of weather related closings will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.*

## ABSENCES

*Please notify the director if your child will be absent for more than 2 consecutive class days. Tuition remains the same regardless of vacation or sick days. This includes extended vacations; you will be required to pay any tuition accrued while you are away from school.*

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

*MSPC Preschool believes that parents are their child's first and best teachers. Since parents know their children so well, it is our desire to be your partner in their preschool education. The preschool will establish open lines of communication with parents through daily conversations, the parent handbook, monthly newsletters, the bulletin board, open house, special visits. Parent-teacher conferences will be held in January for children in the four year old program. You may schedule a conference with your child's teacher and the director as needed during the school year. Opportunities for parent involvement will be made known to parents throughout the school year.*

## DISCIPLINE

*Our belief is that discipline is a growth process by which children learn self-control, and that our actions should be pleasing to God as we learn to act in obedience to Him.*

*Preschool staff are trained in positive behavior techniques which reinforce positive behaviors instead of focusing on negative behaviors. Children soon learn that they receive praise when they demonstrate expected behavior. This reduces much unacceptable behavior because children learn quickly what is expected of them, and they desire to please the teacher.*



*Children whose behavior is inappropriate will be redirected to encourage acceptable behavior. Should inappropriate behavior continue, the teacher will take the child aside and assist the child in discovering alternative ways of dealing with the situation. As a last resort, the child will be escorted away from the area and placed under the supervision of a staff member until he/she regains control. Parents will be notified if an extreme or recurring discipline problem occurs. Your input will be solicited in terms of offering some possible solutions to the situation. If the problem persists, a parent-teacher conference will be required. If, after all of the above methods have been exhausted, and the disruptive behavior persists and begins to have an adverse affect on the class, the parent may be asked to remove his/her child from the school.*

## **HOME TOYS**

*Please leave all home toys at home, so that the children may benefit as much as possible from the materials and manipulatives at the preschool.*

## **Outside Activities**

*Children will be going outside to play-- weather permitting. Please dress children appropriately for the weather, even in the winter, so that the children can experience God's world together with their class. No accommodations will be made for children to remain inside; if you feel that your child is too sick to play outdoors then please keep him/her home for the day.*



### **Guidelines:**

- *send in mittens and a hat*
- *have your child carry in snow pants and boots*
- *shoe boots become too warm if worn all day - please send in alternate shoes*
- *provide pants for girls who wear dresses with tights - those little legs get so cold without extra protection*

*A snack calendar will be distributed. Families will be scheduled in rotation to bring in the snack. Parents are encouraged to use this as an opportunity to plan with their child what food he/she would like to share. Birthdays will be included in the snack calendar. Please make note of the snack suggestions sent home early in the year and avoid chocolate and high levels of sugar as some children react adversely. The preschool staff reserves the right to say, "No, Thank you" to any snack that they feel is inappropriate.*

## **FIELD TRIPS**

*Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips and must sign a permission slip. Staff will not transport children to field trips.*



## **FIRE DRILLS**

*Under supervision of the preschool director, fire drills will take place at least twice during the school year.*

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **FIRST AID**

*The director and staff have first aid training. The preschool staff will give appropriate first aid to a hurt child. Minor cuts and bruises will be reported to the parent verbally at dismissal time.*

### **EMERGENCIES**

*A parent will be contacted by phone and asked to pick up his/her child if it is the judgment of the preschool staff that immediate medical attention is necessary. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be phoned. If it is the judgment of the preschool staff that the injury is of an emergency nature and the parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain with the child until the parent arrives.*

## ILLNESS



Please exercise careful judgment in sending your child to school if he/she does not feel well. A child who is coughing frequently, has a runny nose or a fever should remain at home. A child who becomes ill will be isolated at school and given appropriate care until picked up by a parent or guardian. If the staff sees evidence of a communicable disease, parents will be contacted immediately. Children should remain home for a period of exclusion following:

<i>Fever/vomiting/diarrhea</i>	<i>may return after being free of symptoms for 24 hours</i>
<i>Diphtheria</i>	<i>two weeks from the onset or until negative culture tests</i>
<i>Measles</i>	<i>four days from onset of rash</i>
<i>Mumps</i>	<i>nine days from the onset or until swelling subsides</i>
<i>Pertussis</i>	<i>four weeks from the onset or seven days from start of medication</i>
<i>Rubella</i>	<i>four days from onset of rash</i>
<i>Chickenpox</i>	<i>six days from the last crop of "pox"</i>
<i>Strep Throat</i>	<i>24 hours after start of medication</i>
<i>Scarlet Fever</i>	
<i>Tonsillitis</i>	<i>24 hours after start of medication</i>
<i>Conjunctivitis (pink-eye)</i>	
<i>Ringworm</i>	<i>until judged noninfectious by child's physician</i>
<i>Impetigo</i>	<i>until judged noninfectious by child's physician</i>
<i>Scabies</i>	<i>until judged noninfectious by child's physician</i>

**\*\* No medication, vitamins, etc. will be administered by the preschool staff**



## **HOLIDAYS**

*Holidays will be celebrated with reverence to our faith as we teach the children Christian traditions. Holidays will be celebrated as follows:*

***Birthdays***--Child brings in special snack for the class and may be the special helper for the day.

***Halloween***--will not be celebrated. A pumpkin and apple festival will be coordinated at the end of October.

***Thanksgiving***--The traditional Thanksgiving story will be taught at a level that the children will understand.

***Christmas***--December curriculum will focus on traditional activities and the story of baby Jesus.



***Valentine's Day***--Activities will focus on sharing.

***Easter***--Curriculum will teach the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and spring as a season of new life.