

Dear Parents,

What a wonderful blessing it is to welcome your children into our community here at First Presbyterian Church! I have been told by countless people that the preschool, under the loving guidance of Ms. Cece Neal and Ms. Dawn Kliebert, is one of the jewels of El Paso. Proverbs teaches us that we should "train children in the right way, and when they are old they will not stray." Thank you for allowing us to be a part of that training, part of your faith journeys together, and for the opportunity to walk alongside your children in the most formative years of their lives. I would love to meet you and get to know you better, so feel free to stop by our offices and say hello, and if I can be of any assistance throughout the school year, please let me know. Also, if you don't already have a church home, we enthusiastically invite you to worship with us on Sunday mornings at 9:00am or 11:00am, or join us for Sunday School (for both adults and children) at 10:00am. May this year be one filled with excitement, love, and fun for all of us!

Peace and Blessings,
Neal Locke, Pastor First Presbyterian Church

HISTORY OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

In answer to the needs of the surrounding community, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of El Paso, Texas appointed a Board of Directors to begin a Preschool program. After many months of hard work, the five-member Board hired a director and established First Presbyterian Preschool in January of 1981. The school doors opened in June of 1981 with an enrollment of 15 students and three staff members. One year and a half later, the enrollment had grown to 55 students and a staff of five. By 1986, the enrollment reached 100 students and the staff numbered ten. In February of 1991, the school achieved accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Presently, the program reaches approximately 150 students, between the ages of 12 months and 6 years, and boasts a staff of 26.

PHILOSOPHY

First Presbyterian Preschool seeks to reveal and nurture the worth and dignity of each child, while fostering physical, social, spiritual, and intellectual development at the child's own pace. As a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, we believe that each child is full of knowledge and interests, and thrives as a result of an individual approach to learning. Together, students and teachers explore the world around them, creating learning landscapes where they can reason and construct, shaping their intellectual and social potential. Sponsored by a Christian church, we share with our children the stories of our religious heritage, and also welcome and engage with the rich diversity of faith traditions in our community.

GOVERNING BODY

The First Presbyterian Preschool operates under the authority of the Session of First Presbyterian Church of El Paso, Texas. Direction is provided by a Preschool Board of Directors:

Elizabeth Margo, President
Megan McCrory, President Elect
Camille Kerr, Treasurer
Amanda Bustamante, Secretary

Board Members: Michelle Borunda, Priscila Cano-Lopez, Autumn Follett, Lindsay Kendall, Neal Locke, Elizabeth Margo, Allison Marshall, Meghan McCrory, Scarlett Mercer, Blair Morilla, Laura Price, Lauren Steinmann, Diana Stone, Suzanna Hallmark, Preschool Staff Member, Dawn Kliebert, Preschool Staff Member and Cece Neal, Preschool Staff Member

STAFF

Cece Neal, Director - Ms. Neal has a BA in Preschool and Elementary Education from the University of Florida. She has worked in early childhood since 1979. Cece is the founding director of First Presbyterian Preschool. She is a member of The North American Reggio Emilia Alliance and on the Paso Del Norte Association for the Education of Young Children. She is also a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC), and the Southern Early Childhood Association.

Charlene Lievanos, Assistant Director - Ms. Lievanos has a BA in Sociology and a CDA (Child Development Associate). She has worked at First Presbyterian Preschool as a teacher since the Fall of 1999 and has worked in early childhood for thirty plus years. She is a member of the NAEYC, the TAEYC, the Southern Early Childhood Association. She currently sits on the board of the Paso del Norte TXAEYC as Secretary.

Dawn Kliebert, Administrative Assistant to the Director - Ms. Kliebert has several years of previous experience in the administrative, management and financial fields. She began working at First Presbyterian Preschool on March 1, 1999, gaining valuable experience about our program as the Administrative Assistant to the Director, as an alumni parent and as a Board member at the Preschool.

Suzanna Hallmark, Bookkeeper – Ms. Hallmark has been with First Presbyterian Preschool since February of 2015. She attended Trinity University in San Antonio, earning a degree in Asian Studies/Business, before going back to college later on to study accounting and earn her CPA license. She started working at First Presbyterian when her youngest son was in Kindergarten here. Her sons are all grown up now, but she still feels lucky to be a part of this amazing preschool.

Teaching Staff: (Teachers obtain 24 hours of training each year in addition to First Aid and CPR.) Teresita Calzadilla, Pamela De La O, Erika Gamero, Tina Gladden, Denali Gonzales, Italia Gonzales, Melissa Gonzales, YokeWan Gunstream, Lila Gutierrez, Vanessa Johnson, Claudia Juarez, Bonnie Kassanjee, Ashley Mendoza, Michelle Meredith, Marisol Munoz, Ali Neal, Teresa Ramos, Olivia Romero, Marina Schlinke, Alma Seyffert, and Claudia Valdivia

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admissions:

The Preschool is open to all children 12 months through Kindergarten, regardless of race, nationality, or creed, who may benefit from our type of program. To maintain the nature of our program, however, we reserve the right to decline to admit any child, in our sole discretion. We additionally reserve the right to withdraw any child from our program, in our sole discretion. All necessary admission paperwork, incident and accident reports, progress reports or other program documents will be filed in the preschool office. These files are kept confidential and, unless otherwise requested, available only to administrative and teaching staff or regulatory authorities.

License:

The Preschool is licensed by The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. This agency has the right to visit the Preschool announced or unannounced and have access to the building, files and records.

Classroom Placement:

Children are assigned to a class according to their individual needs, days attending, temperament, gender, and age.

Early Birds:

Early Birds is a service provided for parents who need to drop children off before school begins. Children will begin their Reggio inspired day in our Certified Outdoor Classroom or in an indoor classroom. The fee will remain constant regardless of how many days in a month your child attends. The earliest you may drop your child off is 7:30 a.m.

Core Morning Program:

The Preschool is in session Mon-Fri from 9:00 am to noon. Kindergarten begins at 8:30 am and ends at noon. Children who don't attend Early Birds should be brought to school at 9:00 am. Bringing your child on time helps the child prepare for the day. When you bring your child, you must leave him/her in the care of a teacher.

Extended Day:

Extended Day is a program offered to all children who attend the Preschool. Your child may attend 1-5 days a week depending upon availability. The children may stay through lunch until 3:00 pm. Special enrichment programs are offered at this time. You will need to provide a lunch for your child. If your child's lunch requires refrigeration, please provide an ice pack or other cooling device in his/her lunch. Upon arrival, lunches should be placed in your child's classroom cubby. All groups offer a nap time during Extended Day. If your child requires a nap, we ask that you fill out a nap form so that we can accommodate each child's needs.

Pick-up:

Pick-up is the responsibility of the parents. If an emergency situation arises and you are unable to pick up your child at the designated time, please notify the Preschool immediately, so that we can reassure your child. Children will remain with their teachers for the first 10 minutes after the designated pick-up time, then the children will be taken to the Preschool office, where they will stay until the parent/guardian arrives. Parents of children who remain in the care of the Preschool will be charged a fee of \$1.00 for every minute that the child remains in the care of the Preschool. If we suspect the person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol we will not release the child and request police assistance. Individuals unknown to teachers will be asked to show a photo ID.

Cubby System:

Our cubby system is for the children and classroom use only. These cubby's are at the children's level. We ask you to refrain from keeping any ointments, sunscreen, insect spray, medication and other items that are harmful to children, in your child's bag or cubby. Also, please do not distribute anything into another child's cubby. That should go through the teacher or office.

Field Trips:

The Preschool encourages field trips. Depending upon the child's age, field trips can be expected. You will be notified in writing well in advance of each field trip. The child/adult ratios range from 2-1 to 5-1 depending on the child's age. Parents are asked to attend field trips to help maintain ratios. Parents with proper insurance are also asked to drive. Each child is safely secured in a seat belt or car seat and each car also carries a cell phone, a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

Parking Lot Safety:

Parking lots are a source of danger to young children. Please assist us in following these safety rules:

- All Preschool foot traffic will need to enter and exit through the assigned gate.
- The gates to the playground, on the parking lot side, will remain locked. During Preschool hours three gates will be unlocked for emergency exits. These gates need to remain closed.
- Enter and leave the parking lot with extreme caution. Be on the lookout for wandering children.
- Always hold your child's hand when going to and going from an automobile.
- Please avoid conversing with other adults in the parking lot, unless your child is seated safely in the car with doors closed.
- On our part, we will take walks to the parking lot with your child and discuss safety precautions.
- **NEVER leave your child/children unattended in the car while picking up other children!** If necessary, ask another parent to watch your sleeping child.

Health:

The health form must be completed, signed, and dated by a physician and returned **before** the first day of school. The Texas State Department of Health rules that every child should be immunized for DTaP, Polio, HepB, Hib, PCV, MMR, Varicella and Hep A. All children who reach the age of 4 will need to have their vision and hearing tested.

- If your child is sick, please email the office by 9:00 am. Teachers who have often planned special activities like to know if your child will not be able to attend.
- Parents are requested to notify the Preschool office if a child has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, streptococcal throat infection, meningitis, impetigo, head lice, conjunctivitis, etc.
- Your child may be sent home if any symptoms of illness appear during the day. In such cases, your child will be immediately isolated from the others and you will be contacted. The Preschool will not administer any medications unless we have a signed and completed Authorization for Dispensing Medication form on file and all medications administered will be documented on the form.
- Be sure to check bags for prescription medication, over the counter medication, sunscreen or other items that may be hazardous to children (example: small toys, food that may cause allergic reactions in other children).

Keep Your Child Home If They:

- Have a fever or has had one during the previous 24-hour period.
- Have vomited or had diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
- Have an active cold.
- Have a heavy nasal discharge.
- Have a constant cough.
- Are fussy, cranky, and generally out of sorts.
- Are tired. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness.
- Have symptoms of a possible communicable disease. (These are usually sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, and abdominal pain, plus a fever.) Please notify the school immediately if the child does have a communicable disease.
- Have a rash, please consult a physician before returning to school.

Your Child May Come to School:

- If a cold is over, but a minor nasal drip remains.
- If there has been an exposure to a communicable disease, but the school has been notified so that the incubation period can be determined.

Evacuation/Emergency Preparedness Plan/Security :

While we hope that we never have to react to an emergency on our property, or in our city, we do have a formal Emergency Preparedness Plan that will be followed in such an event. We regularly practice fire drills, severe weather drills and lock down drills, as per state mandate. Staff members have walkie talkies for added safety. If necessary to evacuate our property, we have arranged to relocate to the YWCA located at 1600 Brown St. (02), 533-7475. You may request a copy of the full Emergency Preparedness Plan at the Preschool office.

Accidental Injury:

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. The Director or Administrative Assistant, if the Director is unavailable, will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of the child until the arrival of a parent, an ambulance or paramedics. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers and emergency contacts.

Clothing:

Provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Because of messy art activities and active outdoor play, provide clothing that is washable and sturdy. Jackets and sweaters should be labeled with your child's name. Send children in closed-toe rubber-soled shoes. It's a good idea to leave a complete extra set of clothing in your child's cubby.

Special Programs:

The children participate in two programs during the school year. The programs are held at Christmas and at the end of the school year. We also celebrate religious holidays which take place in the Chapel whenever possible. Parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends are invited to attend all the programs. Students who do not normally attend school on the day of a program (i.e. Tuesday/Thursday or Monday/Wednesday/Friday) are asked to join their teacher in the classroom before the program is scheduled to start.

Birthdays & Other Special Days:

We celebrate birthdays during snack. Small individual icecream cups or frozen yogurt is handled easily by the children and greeted as a special treat. Your child's teacher will add a song, candles and a birthday ribbon to make this a special time for your child. The Preschool will celebrate many special days, including birthdays. However we will not distribute candy, candy bags, goodies or other unhealthy items to the children. Please refrain from sending them to school.

Birthday Book Club:

Your child is invited to join the Birthday Book Club by donating a book or money for a book to the school in honor of his/her birthday. A special bookplate is placed inside the book giving the donor's name, birthday, and age at the time of the gift. The books are kept in the library and are available for use by all classes.

Inclement Weather Days or Closures:

If the El Paso Public Schools have canceled classes, the Preschool will be closed as well. However, as a safety measure for our teachers, the Preschool may close even if the public schools are open. The Preschool will notify you by email/text if there is to be no school on a day when the public schools have decided to be open. Please do not risk your child's safety by venturing out when the roads are hazardous.

Play Day:

Play Day is an opportunity for you and your child to meet his/her teacher in a small group and comfortable settings before school starts. Teachers will contact the parents of their students a week prior to Playday and arrange a time for you to come and visit.

Communication:

Teachers communicate with parents by emailing a weekly letter. The Preschool encourages close communications and cooperation between parents, teachers, and the Director. Conferences may be initiated by the parents or by the Preschool, as need arises. All teachers will have parent conferences during the school year.

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the Director and/or your child's teacher as soon as possible. All information will remain confidential. Changes that may affect your child's behavior, security, and well being include: either or both parents being away from home; new person in the home; illness of either parent or sibling; any hospitalization; accident

or death in the family; new caretaker, moving; contemplated separation or divorce; or death of a pet. The Director and the classroom teacher will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment which may affect your child.

In the rare case in which conflict arises, please schedule a time to visit and resolve the issue with your child's teacher and or the Director. If further action is needed, contact the Board of Directors. Please refrain from calling/texting your child's teacher during school hours. All messages during school hours should go through the Preschool office.

Pets

Pets are not allowed on the preschool campus.

Snacks:

Snack time is a period of pleasant interchange of information between children, and between children and adults—times in which they can enjoy each other's company and show consideration for one another. Snack will be served between 10:00-10:30 am.

Everyday a different child is responsible for bringing snack for the class. A snack calendar is emailed to each family at the beginning of every month so that you will know when it is your child's turn to bring the snack. You will also be notified of any food allergies within the classroom and asked to refrain from bringing certain items. Bringing the snack is very important and special to the children. They enjoy sharing something from home with their friends. They are also the class leader on their snack day. If you forget to bring snack on your child's assigned day, the school will provide one. We ask that you please replenish the school's snack supply by bringing a non-perishable snack the next day. Cookies and cupcakes are welcome only on birthdays. Snacks will be served with water. Please refrain from sending any other drinks. Send any plates, cups, napkins, spoons or forks that are needed with snack. When you send snack 'ready to serve' it helps us comply with our licensing regulations and allows the staff to spend more time interacting with your child and encouraging their development.

Children need foods that consist of good nutrients and are rich in protein, minerals, and vitamins rather than the empty calories found in sugar and fat. Simple, easily digested foods are most appropriate for preschoolers. Please avoid sending hard-to-digest foods such as rich pastries, donuts, donut holes, cookies or sweets, sauces, gravies, fried foods, pickles or highly processed and seasoned items. Other foods we cannot serve are popcorn, nuts, whole grapes, raw peas, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots, meat larger than can be swallowed and raisins and other small dried fruits since these foods can easily cause choking. Snacks should not contain high fructose corn syrup, artificial sweetener or colors, hydrogenated fats or junk sugars.

HEALTHY SNACKS FOR GROWING PRESCHOOLERS

GRAINS- provide complex carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and fiber for good health. Look for 2-5 grams of fiber per serving.

WHOLE GRAINS- breads, crackers, bagels, tortillas, bread sticks, English muffins, cereals, pasta, brown rice, corn meal and bran.

VEGETABLES-provide vitamin A, vitamin C folate, potassium and fiber. FRESH SEASONAL VEGETABLES- cherry tomatoes, celery, cucumber circles, colorful pepper strips, baby carrots, sugar snap peas, broccoli and cauliflower.

FRUITS-provide nutrients such as vitamin C, folate, potassium and fiber. FRESH SEASONAL FRUITS cantaloupe, watermelon, cut grapes, apples, oranges, bananas, plums, clementines, blueberries, strawberries, peaches, applesauce with natural sugar or low sugar fruit cups.

DAIRY- provides calcium, potassium, vitamin D, protein and other nutrients. Healthy bones and teeth! ORGANIC OR NATURAL if possible-all kinds of hard cheese, cream cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, low fat or fat free.

PROTEINS- provide vitamin B (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin and B6), vitamin E, iron and magnesium. Tuna packed in water or olive oil, natural peanut or almond butter, nitrate, and hormone free meats.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Annual Fees:

A registration fee and supply fee make up the annual fees due at time of registration. A portion of the annual fee is considered a registration fee and is non-refundable (\$130).

Tuition Payments:

Invoices will be sent out on the last day of each month. Families are given two weeks to pay the invoice. If the invoice has not been paid by the 15th, a late payment fee of \$15 per child will be charged on the 16th of the month. Children will not be able to attend school if a payment is delinquent by more than 30 days. If you have a problem paying the tuition by the date requested, please discuss your situation with the Director or Bookkeeper. A discount of 3% is offered to those parents who wish to pay the FULL year's tuition in advance. The discount also applies to the Early Bird, Extended Day and All Day tuition. This must be paid by the first day of

school in order to receive the discount. It is recommended that your account be paid online with your bank account or a credit card. If you choose to use your credit card, a 3% fee will be added.

Families will be informed of any special collections which are sanctioned by the preschool, but optional, through email communication from the Director. Preschool families should never feel obligated to participate in purchasing group lunches, teacher gifts or similar collections. The choice to participate in these collections is at the individual discretion of each family.

Annual fees, last month tuition and the current year tuition MUST be paid in full by the last day of school to ensure your child's spot in the Preschool program for next fall. If the monies are not current your child's spot will be filled with the next name on the waiting list.

	<u>Annual Fees</u> <u>Reg. & Supply Fee</u>	<u>Monthly Tuition</u> <u>(9 – 12)</u> <u>(Kinder 8:30 - 12)</u>	<u>Monthly Snack</u>	<u>Monthly Tuition - All Day</u> <u>(7:30am – 5:20pm)</u> <u>(discount to bundle)</u>
Kindergarten				
5 days	\$340.00	\$350.00	\$57.00	\$812.00
Pre-Kindergarten				
3 days (MWF)	\$280.00	\$265.00	\$34.00	\$609.00
5 days	\$340.00	\$345.00	\$57.00	\$812.00
3 Year Old Class				
2 days (TR)	\$240.00	\$208.00	\$24.00	\$444.00
3 days (MWF)	\$280.00	\$260.00	\$34.00	\$604.00
5 days	\$340.00	\$338.00	\$57.00	\$806.00
2 Year Old Class				
2 days (TR)	\$240.00	\$208.00	\$24.00	\$444.00
3 days (MWF)	\$280.00	\$260.00	\$34.00	\$604.00
5 days	\$340.00	\$338.00	\$57.00	\$806.00
Mother's Morning Out				
2 days (TR)	\$240.00	\$265.00	\$24.00	\$495.00
3 days (MWF)	\$280.00	\$322.00	\$34.00	\$660.00
5 days	\$340.00	\$395.00	\$57.00	\$857.00

Additional Options to Morning Schedule

Early Birds:	
7:30– 8:30 - Kinder Only	\$34.00
7:30– 9:00 - All Other Students	\$39.00
8:00- 9:00 - All Other Students	\$34.00

Extended Day: 12:00pm – 3:00pm	Please circle days:	Mon.-Science PreK/K-Choir	Tue.-Yoga/Art	Wed.-Music/Spanish	Thu.-Spanish PreK/K-Choir	Fri.-Art
1 day			\$67.00			
2 days			\$134.00			
3 days			\$201.00			
5 days			\$281.00 (Discount on 5 Day)			

All Day: 3:00pm – 5:20pm	Please circle days:	Mon	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.
1 day			\$57.00			
2 days			\$114.00			
3 days			\$171.00			

Church Member Discount:

If you are a member of First Presbyterian Church, you are eligible for \$130 discount on annual fee and a 10% discount on monthly tuition.

Payment in Case of Withdrawal from Program:

If a child is to be withdrawn from the Preschool, a thirty-day written notice is required. If such notice is not given, one month's tuition beyond the withdrawal date will be billed. This policy also applies to our Extended Day All Day program. The only exception will be made for active duty military families who are relocated due to a change in military orders.

N.S.F. Checks:

There is a \$25.00 charge for each check returned to the school for insufficient funds.

Financial Assistance:

The Preschool Board desires that all students be able to attend the Preschool, regardless of their ability to pay the tuition fees. To fulfill that desire, the Board has formed **The Adair Margo Scholarship Fund** to provide assistance to families in need. All scholarships are awarded by the Board. Scholarships are offered on a percentage basis. Each application is carefully analyzed and a varying percentage of assistance is offered based upon the need of each family.

- Preschoolers may qualify for up to 80% assistance*.
- Kindergartners may qualify for up to 50% assistance*.
- Annual fees are the responsibility of scholarship applicants.

*Please note: Scholarships are only awarded on the base program (not extended day or all day) and max awarded is 80% for MMO-Pre-K and 50% for Kinder. Exceptions have been made for extenuating circumstances.

Criteria considered in the awarding of The Adair Margo Scholarships include financial need, families with other children enrolled in the Preschool, and volunteer hours contributed by the scholarship parents. Preference is given to children enrolled in the Preschool in prior years and to families who are members of First Presbyterian Church. Scholarships are awarded for either half or one year at a time. Each spring the parent/guardian must reapply for the following school year. If you are interested in applying for financial aid, please print and complete the Financial Aid Application found on the website. All completed applications must be turned into the Preschool office **by April 30 of each year.**

Financial Needs of The Preschool:

The Preschool is a non-profit school, which operates at the pleasure of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church. The Church graciously donates the space and utility requirements for the preschool. All salaries, security, maintenance, classroom supplies, and equipment are provided by the Preschool tuition and annual fees. The fees collected do not cover the cost of a growing and improving school. We are in constant need of funds to expand our library, purchase new learning games, obtain new outdoor equipment, and to initiate new programs needed to keep the Preschool up-to-date. No gift is too small and all donations are tax deductible to the giver.

Ways to Donate May Include:

ADAIR MARGO SCHOLARSHIP FUND – Provides financial assistance for family hardships and for children who otherwise would not be able to attend.

TEACHER TRAINING FUND - Provides for quality early childhood education through workshops and seminars for our staff.

BIRTHDAY BOOK CLUB - All students and friends can donate a book to the Preschool in honor of their birthday.

SPECIAL WISH LIST - Special needs and requirements of the educational curriculum that are not met by our budget include playground maintenance and updated equipment, audio-visual equipment, software and computer equipment needed for the curriculum program, and various manipulatives for the classroom learning centers.

VOLUNTEERING - The Preschool is always in need of volunteers! You may choose to help in the classroom, the office, the playground, at special functions, or become a Board member. We are always in need of donations consisting of paper goods, snacks, paper, art supplies, etc.

CURRICULUM

Our child-centered, developmental curriculum is continuously renewed and adapted. We stay abreast of the latest research in early childhood education both on a national and international level. We review and reform our curriculum after careful reflection on theory and practice, keeping in constant focus our unique community of learners.

The curriculum of First Presbyterian Preschool is influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach to early education. The Reggio approach promotes key fundamental values relating to how children learn. These core values have been adapted to our school based on our culture, environment and the specific needs of our unique community. Our interpretation of the Reggio core values, as outlined in the summary of our curriculum below, continues to progress as our educational methods develop to connect the intellectual, spiritual, social and emotional needs of each child we serve.

The distinguishing features of our curriculum: Each child is viewed as a strong, capable, resilient, curious citizen with great potential. Children arrive prepared with amazing skills! As educators we facilitate and support the revelation of these skills through our developmentally appropriate curriculum, from infant to kindergarten. Inspired by their own interests, exploration and wonder, children have ample opportunities to become a successful community of learners.

The most recognizable feature of Reggio early pedagogy is the use of the environment as the third educator, following parents and teachers. The center-based environments are rich with stimuli and related opportunities, contributing to the quality of experiences for both children and the adults involved in the school. The environments prompt communication and relationships thus inspiring an extraordinary social exchange.

In collaboration, the child, teacher and parents along with the community are all active in the learning process in an authentic way. Each “player” is a rich natural resource available to support the education of each child and one another. Through a very powerful documentation process we are able to continuously detail an account of each child’s learning journey. Teachers use an assortment of documentation methods resulting in a portfolio with artwork, photos, writing samples, progress reports, and quotes from the child.

Our curriculum also offers a dual-language program. A language teacher is assigned to each group along with the regular classroom teacher. Children are exposed to the repetitive rudiments of the Spanish language through daily greetings, prayers, songs, finger plays, books and stories, natural routines and new vocabulary. The benefits of dual language are directly related to higher brain development, flexible thinking skills, higher intelligence levels and cultural, racial and religious tolerance and understanding. Bilingualism is a strength and an asset that also promotes future professional advantages.

Building Blocks of Christian Character are the nine character builders that form a common thread throughout our entire program. This thread ties classroom to music to playground to home. It unites children to teacher to parents. Through Building Blocks we aspire to grow in the way we love and support one another.

Music produces “beatful”, “tuneful”, and “artful” children. The ability to keep a steady beat is vital to language and motor development. The ability to match pitch creates an inner-voice, which is vital to intellectual development. And finally a shared experience that promotes healthy emotions, and builds a sense of beauty is the “art” part of music classes. In a society that seems increasingly disconnected and individualistic, music at our school emphasizes positive feelings and belonging.

Young children are actually natural yogis! Their trust in others, combined with their lack of inhibitions, allows them to accept and apply yoga teachings. Through their focus on breathing and calming techniques, children are allowed the time and space for the mind to slow down and settle. The benefits of yoga have improved our positive and optimistic view of life.

Technology has a respected place in our curriculum. Pre-K and Kinder students use iPads to access the Lexia reading program. Each student moves through the program independently at their own pace.

Our outdoor environments truly unite us in collaboration with nature, as a certified outdoor classroom! The playground’s intentional design encourages skill development in a variety of domains concurrently, resulting in whole child learning. The natural beauty and serene atmosphere serves as an antidote to the sometimes frantic world of young children.

Guidance/Counseling:

First Presbyterian Preschool is a vital part of First Presbyterian Church. The Pastoral staff of the Church is available to our families for guidance or counseling. Their doors are always open.

Guidance & Discipline:

As part of our curriculum, teachers work to assist children in developing appropriate social skills as they build relationships. As children’s social skills develop, conflicts may arise. When children demonstrate inappropriate behaviors or express emotion in an unsafe way, teachers and administrators guide the child as he/she resolves the conflicts, identifies feelings and discovers solutions. There is no one-size-fits-all response to inappropriate behavior and each situation will be given individual consideration and response, always demonstrating a healthy respect for the child.

At all times, our goal is to guide the child as he/she develops. Teachers and administrators will not use physical punishment such as shaking or hitting, use threats or derogatory remarks or withhold food from a child.

Assessment:

Throughout the year, as the teacher plans the curriculum, he/she will use anecdotal observations, photographs, work samples, progress reports and feedback from families to help him/her plan activities that are appropriate for the children in his/her class. Each of these assessment tools provide the teacher with a clearer understanding of the individual abilities and needs of the children in his/her class.

In both informal and organized ways, teachers document how a child progress throughout the school year. During parent/teacher conferences, teachers share this information about each child’s progress with their family. To assist the teacher in developing the most

appropriate curriculum for the children, he/she may share observations and progress reports with the preschool's administrators. Any assessment information is kept confidential in the child's file. In the event that individuals other than teaching staff, administrators or child's legal guardian desires access to assessment information, permission must be given by the parent/legal guardian before that information may be released.

Important Information:

If you would like to contact the local Licensing office or to obtain a copy of the minimum standards please log onto www.dfps.state.tx.us/.

You may contact the Texas Abuse/Neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or at www.txabusehotline.org.

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

All illegal substances including smoking, tobacco and firearms are prohibited.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: