

CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY-HERNDON

Epiphany Preschool Parent Handbook

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Treat a child in the way he



he will not depart from it.

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Welcome!

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Epiphany Preschool! We are so blessed and happy to have you in our school family.

Our goal is to provide a loving and welcoming, Christ-centered program for young children. We want children to find joy in exploring and discovering the wonderful world God has created for them. Our intent is that the atmosphere and environment we provide will motivate children to be all God has intended for them. Our programs will allow your child to develop a solid foundation both in moral and spiritual development.

This booklet is designed to give you some insight into our school and staff. We want to do all we can to meet your child's needs. We are requesting that each family read the Parent Handbook.

We look forward to a wonderful year together!

Sincerely in Christ,

The Staff of Epiphany Preschool

Administration

Epiphany Preschool is a ministry of Church of the Epiphany. The Preschool is accountable to the Rector and Vestry of Epiphany in all matters.

A Preschool Board manages the affairs and oversees the policies of the school.

The Director of the Preschool is responsible for the daily activities of the school.

The Director is assisted by an Assistant Director who helps manage the administrative and business aspects of Epiphany Preschool.

Hours of Business

School Hours are 9:15 am-1:00 pm. Time is set aside during the day for children to eat a bag lunch provided by the parent. The Preschool Office is open from 8:30am to 2:00pm, Monday through Friday, during the school year. We are closed during school holidays. Phone messages are accessed at regular intervals. The Preschool Office number is 703-481-8601 ext. 116. You can also reach the Preschool Staff via email at EpiphanyPreschool@his-star.org.

Our website address is: <http://www.epiphanypreschool.org/>

Philosophy

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL was founded on the belief that a play-based program (interacting with the environment and with others), which integrates a Christ-centered, character education curriculum will allow children to develop to the full potential that God has planned for them.

Epiphany Preschool provides a nurturing environment where children know that they are loved by God and by their teachers through the acceptance and encouragement they receive at school.

The environment and activities will be appropriate to the developmental abilities of the children. Epiphany's **Christ-centered, character-based curriculum** focuses on the traditional Christian values of compassion, respect, caring, responsibility, patience, perseverance, self-control and responsibility. Through play-based activities, children gain confidence in their abilities as they learn to integrate these essential character traits into their lives and interactions with other children.

Materials will be arranged to allow children to work independently and in small groups. Teachers will encourage the children to use the materials to try out their new ideas and problem solving methods, recognizing that the process is more important than the product.

Activities will be provided to develop cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual knowledge and skills.

Daily schedules will have a balance of quiet and active times, structured and unstructured times.

Snapshot of Our Program

3 and 4-year old program

A primary goal in our 3 and 4 year-old classes is to help children have a positive first experience in school. We provide a loving atmosphere where children are encouraged to explore and discover the world around them to help them make a successful transition from home to school. Part of the transition to school means learning to share and cooperate with new friends. Christian-based character traits such as caring, compassion, respect, self-control, perseverance, patience, thankfulness, and responsibility are incorporated into hands-on learning activities. Language is growing by leaps and bounds at this age and much time is spent helping the children express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings. The children are very busy trying on "dress-ups", brushing colors on easel paper, squeezing play dough, stacking blocks, putting puzzles together, digging in sand and water tables, singing songs and listening to stories.

4-5 year old program

Our 4-5 year-olds are involved in a wide variety of group and individual activities. Four year-olds expand their problem solving abilities, grasp of language, and memory and listening skills, while enjoying relationships with classmates. There will be a full year of activities to help the children strengthen their small muscles needed for writing, understand and follow directions, learn to count objects up to 10, use positional words (up, down, etc.), and grow in their ability to focus during group times. We continue focusing on the important character traits learned in the 3-year old classroom. Circle time stories and finger plays, center time "hands-on" learning experiences and creative movement are all part of the 4-5 year-olds preschool experience.

Kids Club

Kids Club offers community childcare in an accepting and affectionate Christian atmosphere. Our program is designed to stimulate children's growth socially, mentally, physically and spiritually through playtime, stories, singing, and craft time.

Financial Information

Non-refundable Fees

All registration fees, supply fees and tuition deposits are non-refundable. Registration fees are due at the time of registration. To guarantee the space for the upcoming school year, a tuition deposit in the amount of one month's tuition is due in May of each year. This deposit will be credited towards your last payment due at the end of the school year. (Example, the tuition deposit you pay in May of 2011 is applied to your tuition payment for June 2012; for the remainder of the school year tuition is paid from September until May.) Again, the registration fee, supply fee and tuition deposit are not refundable.

Tuition

We are entirely dependent on tuition to operate the preschool and to pay our teachers' salaries. The tuition that you agreed to pay for the school year determines our preschool budget. If you choose (or need) to leave the school for any reason, you will forfeit your registration fee and tuition deposit. A 5% discount will be given to those who pay the entire year's tuition by August 30th of the current school year.

Monthly Tuition

1 Day	\$100/month - Mondays or Fridays
2 Day	\$200/month - Mondays and Fridays
3 Day	\$270/month - Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
4 Day	\$320/month - Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
5 Day	\$375/month - Monday through Friday

Tuition Due Date/Late Fees

Tuition is due on the 5th of each month. Please be prompt with your payments. You have the option of changing the date your tuition is due. If you wish to change your tuition due date, a written request must be made to the preschool director.

All tuition and fees must be placed in the box by the preschool office. Please do not hand payments to staff members.

If you experience problems throughout the year in meeting your tuition payment obligation, please contact the preschool director. Every effort will be made to work with you to fulfill your commitment.

A late fee of \$15.00 will be assessed on all tuition payments that are received after the 10th of the month (or 5 days after the due date).

Returned Checks

For any check returned to our office for non-payment, a fee of \$30.00 will be charged to your tuition account. We understand that mistakes happen, however, returned checks and their associated fees create a financial burden for the preschool.

Early Withdrawal from School

If for any reason you withdraw your child before the end of the school year you must notify the Preschool Office in writing one month in advance. Your school supply fee, registration fee and last month's tuition payment will not be refunded.

Cease of Operations

If for any unforeseeable reason Epiphany Preschool must be cease operations before the end of the school year your last month's tuition deposit will be refunded.

Health Information

Accidents/Medical Emergencies

In the event your child has an accident at school, we will care for your child according to our emergency policies. In a medical emergency, we will call 911 first and then we will contact you.

Communicable Diseases

All communicable diseases (i.e., chickenpox, fifth disease, hand-foot-mouth disease, strep throat, lice, etc.) should be reported to the office as soon as possible. We follow the recommendations of the Communicable Disease Reference Chart for School Personnel provided by the Virginia Department of Health regarding exclusion and admission to school.

Food and Peanut Allergies

Please be aware that EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL tries to provide a peanut-free environment however, the education classrooms are shared space and are used for many church activities. We cannot guarantee that peanut products are not used in the classrooms during any of these activities.

However, we take this issue very seriously and will take every precaution, to the best of our ability, during school hours to keep our classrooms peanut free. Daily, the tabletops are cleaned thoroughly with soap and disinfectant. All of the snacks served, to the best of our knowledge, are peanut-free.

There will be a sign posted on the door of any classroom with a child that has a life-threatening allergy stating what the allergy may be and instructions should there be a specific action that needs to be taken. Ex. No peanut products allowed. If you notice that this sign is not posted on the door of a classroom that has a child with a life-threatening allergy, please tell the classroom teacher and we will make sure it is replaced ASAP!

It is our desire to provide a safe environment for you and your child while they are in our care.

Special treats for birthday celebrations will be handled in the following manner:

- If your child has an allergy, your child will receive a snack that is preapproved by you at the beginning of the year. You are always welcome to send in your own snack for your child on these special occasions.

Illnesses

If your child becomes sick at school he or she will be taken to the office to be cared for until your arrival. The school will call you at home or at work. If either parent cannot be reached, we will call your emergency contact.

Children who have been ill should not return to school until they are 100% symptom free for a full 24 hours without taking medication. This means: no vomiting, no fever (temperature over 99 degrees), no severe coughing, and no thick nasal discharge. If a child comes back to school too soon, he or she will be sent home to prevent possible infection of other children.

Medications

No medications are given at school unless we have an individualized health plan on file. Prescribed medicines that need to be administered during school hours require written direction from the child's physician.

Required Forms

We are required by law to see an original birth certificate or passport for each child registering at EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL for the first time. We will copy the registry number from the document onto the child's registration form, verify that a staff member saw an original document, and return it to you.

We must also have on file an original State of Virginia School Entrance Health/Immunization Form with a physician's signature stating that the child is up-to-date on all his or her immunizations. This required form must be completed on a yearly basis so that your child's Health Form is no older than one year. (Example: if your child's Health Form was completed in February of the current year you will need to have a new form on file the following February.) A current, updated Health Form is required for your child to attend school. The Preschool Office can provide you with this form.

Special Health Needs

We accept children with life-threatening allergies on a case-by-case basis.

If a child has special medical needs or severe allergies, the school requires an individualized health plan. These forms require school, parent, and physician participation. These forms will be mailed to you before school begins or may be picked up in the office. A personal appointment **MUST** be scheduled with the director of the preschool before your child may attend school. At this meeting you will receive more specific information that will assist us in keeping your child safe.

Specific Specialized Health Procedures

When a child has a special health need, an individualized health plan is developed. The individualized health plan is developed through the efforts of the child's doctor, parents and EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL personnel. The individualized health plan will include the following information from the child's doctor:

- Specific name of the condition
- Reasons for the health procedure to be administered in school
- Exact procedure to be followed in school to include:
 - *The time for the procedure to be administered at school
 - *The time intervals between applications
 - *The exact conditions or symptoms that require administering the health procedure and precautions that school staff should be aware of before, during and/or after the administration of the procedure.

The plan will also include:

- Signed medication authorizations by parents and doctors (if needed)
- A specialized emergency plan, if necessary
- When specific procedures are required, such as the use of inhalers or epi-pen, the school personnel working directly with that child as well as the administrative staff will be trained in the administration of the procedure. The training will be done by the parents, a doctor, or through a first aid class. Only trained personnel will administer such procedures.

Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival Procedures

Morning classes begin promptly at 9:15 am. Building doors will be open at 9:00am and classes begin at 9:15am. Parents may park in any of the unreserved spots in the Church of the Epiphany parking lot. An adult must escort children to their classrooms and remain with them until school begins. The responsible adult must walk all children for whom they are responsible to their individual classrooms. Under no circumstances should a child of any age be allowed to exit a car or be left at the entrance to the building to walk to class alone. All children must be signed in, at the classroom, by a responsible adult.

Child Pick-Up/Dismissal Procedures

Children must be signed out, at their classroom, by a responsible adult. Building doors will be open at 12:50 PM for dismissal. Please be sensitive to classroom activities while waiting. The teachers will dismiss the children when they are ready.

Any child remaining at the end of dismissal will be brought to the Preschool office to wait to be picked up. The pickup person must ring the call button next to the door near the church office and come to the Preschool office to pick up the child.

In child custody cases or other issues of concern regarding the release of children, the preschool requires a written note to the Director explicitly stating pick-up authorizations and restrictions. These written notes will be kept on file in the Preschool office.

Parents have the responsibility of developing their own carpools and notifying the school of their child's pick-up plan before the official pick-up plan begins. Please be sure to inform the office of any pick-up changes throughout the year.

All Preschool parents are required to fill out paperwork specifying who will be picking up their child after school.

Please remember that as of July 1, 2007 Virginia law requires that all children under the age of eight (8 years old) be in an appropriate car/booster seat whenever they are in any vehicle.

Going Home with Other People

If someone other than the parent or authorized individual (such as a grandparent or a neighbor) is to pick-up a child, a "Going Home Note" must be written and given to the child's teacher notifying us of the pick-up change. That person must show photo identification before the child will be released to them.

If your child is going home with another preschooler or you are bringing another child home with you, the following procedure must be followed:

- The parent must complete a "Going Home Note" and turn it into the child's teacher for each day their child is going home with a child who is not in their carpool.

These forms are available in the Preschool office.

Late Pick-Up

Your child counts on you to be there for them and it creates a burden for our staff if you are late in picking up your child. Please call the office if you know you are going to be late so that we can tell your child. If you are repeatedly late in picking up your child (more than 10 minutes after dismissal) you will be given a warning the first time you are late and then assessed a \$20 fee for every time you are late after that. We know that things happen and do not assess a fee the first time you are late. However, if it is a chronic problem, the fee will be charged.

General Information

Child Abuse

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL staff is required by Virginia State law to report any suspicions of child abuse.

Virginia State law allows Child Protective Services (CPS) to interview children before notifying parents.

Classroom Discipline

Some of the most important aspects of growth for preschoolers are helping them relate appropriately to others, express their emotions in acceptable ways, and participate properly in classroom activities. A developmentally appropriate environment with interesting, well-planned centers helps children focus and make good choices. Children are guided in their behavior through clearly stated expectations, modeling of appropriate behaviors, positive reinforcement, correction, and redirection. If children are having significant or recurring difficulties in any of the above areas, parents are contacted so they and Preschool staff can work together to help the child.

Aggressive Behavior Policy

In the case of aggressive behavior, the following steps will be taken:

1. If a child physically injures another child, the teacher will calm the injured child and, if necessary, treat any wounds.
2. The teacher will calmly and firmly talk to the aggressor, discussing and modeling, when necessary, appropriate ways of handling a conflict.
3. If your child sustains a physical injury by another child, a written accident report will be sent home explaining the incident.
4. An accident report also will be sent to the parents of the aggressor and a copy will be filed in the child's record.
5. If this is the second instance of a child acting as an aggressor and causing physical harm, the child may not come back to school until a meeting has occurred between the teacher, the director, and the child's parents to determine what further actions are needed. During this time of suspension the parent is responsible for tuition payments.
6. In cases of serious or potentially serious injuries, the EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL administration reserves the right to suspend a child from school. Additionally, if a child's behavior is continually disruptive and endangers the safety and/or the ability of the other children to learn, taking a disproportionate amount of the teachers' time, the parents will be required to meet with the classroom teachers and the Preschool Director. Ultimately, the student may be asked to leave school.

Communication

Communication between the school and parents and the classroom teacher and parents are an important key to your child's success in preschool. Pick up and drop off times are good for a quick "check-in" with your child's teacher. If you feel that there is a need for a more in-depth conversation, please schedule a time to talk with your child's teachers.

Fire Drills

We have monthly fire drills and work closely with the County Fire Department to ensure the safety of our school community.

Playground

Children will be outside on the playground every day unless temperatures go below freezing, it is raining or snowing, or the playground is wet or covered in snow. Children should dress appropriately for the weather, including jackets, hats, and gloves as needed. Tennis shoes are best for safety on the playground equipment.

If the weather is too severe for playing on the playground, games and activities will take place in the Church's Great Hall upon availability.

The playground is only available for the children attending EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL that day during their scheduled playground time. Parents with siblings are not permitted to be on the playground or on the playground equipment while classes are in session.

Potty Training

Children are required to be potty trained before attending EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL. Potty Trained is defined as the ability to consistently control bladder and bowel functions without the use of Pull-Ups. It is understood that occasional accidents may occur. The teacher will notify the parents and director of any difficulties a child is having with potty training at two week intervals for the first six weeks of the school year.

If the potty training process has not been satisfactorily accomplished six weeks into the school year, it will be necessary for the child to withdraw. When potty training is accomplished, the child may be considered for re-enrollment if space is available. Your last month's tuition deposit will be refunded to you.

For the occasional accident that may happen, each child will be required to have a change of clothing placed in a zip-loc bag with the child's name on it and turned into the teacher the first week of school.

School Closings

We follow Fairfax County public schools closure decisions in cases of inclement weather. However, school days missed as a result of inclement weather will not be made up.

1. When the County is closed, EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL is closed.
2. When the County has a 1-hour delay: Classes begin at 10:15 and end at 1:00.
2. When the County has a 2-hour delay: Classes begin at 11:15 and end at 1:00.

Fairfax County Public Schools announcements can be found on the web at www.fcps.edu; on television Channel 'red21' and/or the local network stations; or by phone - FCPS Hot Line 800-839-FCPS (3277).

Announcements may also be heard on WTOP radio and found on their website (www.wtopnews.com).

Lunch

Children are required to bring in a sack lunch each day. Please be sure your child brings foods that are nutritious, easy to open, and not too messy. Be sure to include a drink, napkin, and any utensils that your child needs to eat their lunch.

REMINDER -- Please make your child's lunch peanut free (no peanut butter). Even the smell and/or touch of peanuts can be life threatening to students with allergies.

Special Needs Children

Children with special needs are considered for enrollment on a case-by-case basis. It is imperative that when registering a child that a parent is honest and forthcoming with all of their child's needs. If, during the course of the year, a child's special needs affect our ability to provide an appropriate learning environment, we will work with the parents to determine whether we are the best school to fit their child's needs.

Visitors

All visitors in the classroom or on the playground who are not school staff must sign in at the office and receive a "visitor name tag" before joining the class and sign out when leaving the school campus. If you wish to visit a class that your child is not currently enrolled in, this may be pre-arranged through the office with the consent of the classroom teacher.

Exemption from Licensure

The Code of Virginia, Section 63.1-196.3 allows child day care 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. In compliance with the above Code, EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL is exempt from licensure. Listed below are items necessary for disclosure to parents.

Applicants to EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL staff are evaluated based on his or her: Personal relationship to Jesus Christ and their walk of faith; experience working with preschool age children; love for children and ability to relate to others; educational background, and ability to plan creatively and implement an effective program for children.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL is located in the education classrooms of Church of the Epiphany. The school occupies 4 classrooms and the school administrative office on the first floor. The fenced playground behind the church's Great Hall includes climbers, swings, slides and running space.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL provides no food service beyond a daily snack.

The maximum number of children that the school can enroll is 60.

Upon employment, all EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL staff are subject to a criminal background check.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL staff are required to receive annual certification from a practicing physician that they are free from any illness or disability which would prevent them from caring for children. They are also required to have a tuberculin skin test every two years.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights and 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, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies or admission policies.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL is covered by public liability insurance through The Nuzum Insurance Agency and Mount Vernon Fire Insurance Company.

EPIPHANY PRESCHOOL has implemented all necessary procedures and policies in keeping with the exemption from licensure requirements of the State of Virginia. Detailed information is available to parents, guardians and the general public in the School Administrator's office.