

# Westminster's Preschool Handbook 2021-2022

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## CHURCH PASTORAL STAFF

Senior Pastor	Rev. Donald Lincoln
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care	Rev. Anne Hatfield
Associate Pastor for Contemporary Worship	Rev. Jon Frost
Associate Pastor for Spiritual Growth	Rev. Jennie Clark
Director of Ministries with Children, Youth & Families	Chris Clark

## PRESCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sasha Reimann-Spiess, Chairperson	Jackie Steinmetz, Director
Co-chairperson	Meg Audevard, Assistant Director
Diane DiSieno-Lane, Session Liaison	Patrick Fitzgerald, finance chairperson
Steve Brown, Trustee Liaison	Perk Musacchio
Erica Drewes, secretary	Andrew Husband
Karen Finley, scholarship chairperson	Jenna Kicinski
Valerie Watkins, church financial administrator	

## PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

## PRESCHOOL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.

## WPC FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Jacqueline Steinmetz, [jsteinmetz@westminsterpc.org](mailto:jsteinmetz@westminsterpc.org)  
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Karen Randel, [krandel@westminsterpc.org](mailto:krandel@westminsterpc.org)

## PRESCHOOL STAFF

Parent-and-Me	Jackie Steinmetz & Jen Zarelli (F)
Young 3 Year Old class	Jennifer Zarelli & Angela Boyd (M/W a.m.)
3 Year Old Classes	Meg Audevard & Betty Petersheim (T/Th) Ann Marie Kelly & Nicole Pomeroy (M/T/Th a.m.) Molly Bugbee & Angela Boyd (T/Th/F a..m.) Janice Walton & Anne Cassidy (M/W/F a.m.)
PreK-4 Year Old Classes	Cindi Finnegan & Candi Anderson (M/W/F a.m.) Liz Dieperink & Stephanie Piccini (M/T/W/Th a.m.) Rachel Hillworth & Susanne Perkins (T/W/Th/F a.m.)
PreK 4/5 Year Old Classes	Brenda Lehman & Meghan Edwards (M-Th a.m.)
Pre K 4 & 4/5 Extended Day Class	Brenda Lehman & Susanne Perkins (T/Th p.m.)
3/4/5 Extended Day Class	Janice Walton & Jen Zarelli (M/W p.m.) p.m.)
3/4/5 Extended Day Class	Molly Bugbee & Jen Zarelli (T/Th p.m.)
Friday Fun Day	

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Mission Statement.....3

2. Goals For The Child.....3

3. Enrollment Forms given to the parent during a Visitation.....3

4. Preschool Admission / Enrollment Guidelines.....3

5. Registration Procedures.....4

6. Enrollment Forms Given at Parent Orientation & Returned to the Preschool.....4

7. Preschool Tuition, Related Fees, Discounts, and Delinquency.....4

8. Scholarships.....5

9. Participation Guidelines for the Parent-And-Me Program.....6

10. Participation Guidelines for volunteering in a classroom.....6

11. Hours of Operation.....6

12. Arrival and Pick-up Procedures.....6

13. Policy on the Release of Children After School.....7

14. School Calendar.....8

15. Inclement Weather.....8

16. Health Policy.....8

17. Allergies.....10

18. School Absences.....11

19. Leave of Absence for a child.....11

20. Program Withdrawals.....11

21. Refunds.....11

22. Safety Policies.....12

23. Behavior Adjustment Policy.....14

24. Communication With Parents.....14

25. School Conferences.....15

26. Dress Code.....16

27. Change of Clothes.....16

28. Backpacks.....16

29. Toys From Home.....16

30. Snacks.....16

31. Lunches.....17

32. Birthdays.....17

33. Personal Fund Raising.....17

## 1. Mission Statement

The purpose of this program is to support families in their child-rearing efforts by providing a program that promotes a loving, Christian, and safe environment in which young children are enabled to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically, as well as encouraged in their development of faith. Our program is available to children of all genders, nationalities, races and religions.

## 2. Goals for the Child

The goals of Westminster's Preschool address the needs of children; the ways they develop and learn and the kinds of experiences that are the best for them. The uniqueness of a church-based program stems more from "the way we do it" rather than "what we do". Because we believe that each person is a child of God we strive to:

- Help the child grow **socially** and **emotionally** by providing an environment that gives them the opportunity to make personal choices, to exercise self-direction and self-control, to practice good manners, to interact with others in a positive way, to communicate effectively, to develop good listening skills, and to gain independence and self-confidence. We strive to provide the necessary skills for the family and child to have a smooth transition into the elementary school years.
- Stimulate **intellectual** growth through exploration, experimentation, observation and discovery. Children will be enabled to develop at their own natural pace through developmentally appropriate activities. Attention will be given to sharpen the child's abilities to focus on the activity, follow directions and communicate, while keeping a sense of wonder and encouraging the natural creativity that is part of every child.
- Offer experiences which will aid in the development of **physical** growth through a variety of activities. Specific areas include large and small motor skills, alternating quiet and active experiences, and learning to experience the environment through all of the senses.
- Enhance the development of **faith** by providing a loving, caring environment in which children have opportunities to learn about God's love through nurturing, acceptance and understanding by a highly qualified and caring staff.

## 3. Enrollment Forms given to the Parent during a Visitation

- Class Offerings
- Age Level Developmental Goals
- Registration Form: to be completed and returned along with payment for registration fee (to be kept in student file)
- School Calendar
- Allergy Action Plan (if needed)
- Food Allergy Action Plan, Asthma Management Plan, Latex Allergy Management Plan (if applicable). The original "Plan" is kept in the Allergy Emergency Book in the Preschool Office.

## 4. Preschool Admission / Enrollment Guidelines

Registration in the preschool program will be accepted if there is an opening in a class appropriate for the child. In addition, enrollment will be based on church membership, priority status, class size, class composition, staffing and facilities. Children must enroll for the entire school year (September-June) or for the remaining portion of the school year if enrolling late.

Westminster's Preschool does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

- Preschool age guidelines used for enrollment are as follows: Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the Director.
  - For the 2 ½-Year-Old classes, the child must be two by February 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - For the Young 3-Year-Old class, the child must be three by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

- For the 3-Year-Old classes, the child must be three by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- For the Pre-K-4-Year-Old classes, the child must be four by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- For the Pre-K-4/5-Year-Old classes, the child must be four by February 1<sup>st</sup> and not older than 5 years, 6 months by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The only exception is in the case of a child with an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) or a similar treatment plan.

**5. Registration Procedures.** Registration procedures will be according to the guidelines set forth by the Preschool's Board of Directors. These procedures are published one time each year and are distributed at least two weeks prior to registration. In general, registration is done online, by mail or in-person in the following order of priority: church members and employees, currently enrolled students and their siblings, by the number of years a family has had a child registered at the preschool and general public. A Registration Form must be completed and accompanied by a Registration Fee. This fee is non-refundable, non-transferable, and is an annual fee to ensure your child's place in the program. When registration forms are completed for more than one child in a single family for a given school year, a Registration Fee must be paid for each child. Note: All outstanding tuition payments and late fees from any given year must be paid in full in order for a family to register for a subsequent school year.

**6. Enrollment Forms Given at Parent Orientation and returned to Westminster's Preschool**

- Student Information Sheet – kept in individual classroom Emergency Book
- Emergency Contact/Parent Consent/After School Release Form – original kept in Preschool office in the Emergency Book and one copy kept in individual classroom Emergency Book
- Class List – for family use only, parent must review and inform the Preschool office of any changes
- Child Health Assessment Form – kept in Preschool office student file
- Photo/Media release/Facebook Form – kept in Preschool office student file
- Handbook – Newsletter Memo – to be completed and returned to the Preschool office
- Snack/Birthday List of Peanut/Tree nut-free snacks
- Confidentiality. Children's records will be kept confidential. They will be shared with the child's parents/guardians upon request, but no records will be made available to outside parties without the parent's/guardian's consent. The only exception is in the case of a legal document such as a subpoena or court order.

**7. Preschool Tuition, Related Fees, Discounts, and Delinquency**

Westminster's Preschool is a not-for-profit organization. It is funded solely on funds collected from enrolled students. All fees and tuition amounts are approved by the Preschool's Board of Directors.

Tuition Payments. Tuition becomes due beginning June 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrolling school year. For ease of payment, tuition may be paid in equal monthly installments. The first monthly payment for 2 ½, Young 3's, 3, Pre-K-4, Pre-K-4/5 and full-year enrichment classes is due on or before June 1<sup>st</sup>. Failure to remit these payments by June 1<sup>st</sup> will result in your child's removal from the program.

Beginning in October, the payments for the 2 ½, Young 3's, 3, Pre-K-4 and Pre-K-4/5 and full-year enrichment classes are due *on or before the \*first day of each school month*, with the final payment being due on May 1<sup>st</sup>. *No tuition payments are due in September or June.* The remaining payments should be paid on or before the first day of each month thereafter beginning in October and ending in May. If the first day of the month falls on a weekend or during a school holiday, tuition payments are due by 3:30 p.m. the first day the preschool is in session following the weekend or holiday whether the child comes to preschool on that day or not. Monthly tuition amounts are posted on the front of the tuition drop box.

The Preschool Director, Assistant Director, WPC Financial Assistant, and/or Administrative Assistant collect all fees and tuition. A tuition payment drop box is available outside the Preschool office for your convenience. Please do not put your child's tuition payment in your child's backpack. Payments will not be accepted by Teachers or Teacher Aides – *there are no exceptions to this rule.*

Monthly tuition payments may be made at one time with 8 separate checks for the 2 ½, 3, Pre-K-4, Pre-K-4/5 and full year enrichment classes dated with the dates on which the payment is due, for example check #101 dated 10/1/19 for October's payment, check #102 dated 11/1/19 for November's payment, etc. The Financial Assistant will immediately

endorse these checks and store them in the Preschool's safe until processing on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month in which that tuition becomes due.

Late Payment Fee and/or Delinquent Accounts. If there are extenuating circumstances that prohibit you from making payment by the first of the month, please let the Preschool Director or Financial Assistant know *before the first of the month*. A ten day grace period **may** be granted as needed. If payment is not received on or before the first day of the month or by 3:30 p.m. on the first day the Preschool is in session following a weekend or holiday whether the child comes to school on that day or not, a late payment fee of \$10.00 may be added to the unpaid balance. A written e-mail notification will be made by the Financial Assistant. The written notification may be followed up with a telephone call depending upon the circumstances. This fee is added again to the unpaid balance on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month. **If tuition payment and applicable fees are not paid in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the account is considered delinquent, and the child will be considered for immediate withdrawal until payment and fee(s) are received.** A written notification and telephone call will be made to the parents or guardians indicating that the child is not allowed to attend the program until payment is made.

Any payments mailed to the preschool, *including automatic bank checks*, must be postmarked prior to the first of the month they are due, or a late fee will be assessed.

Other Fees. If a parent remits any fee or payment by personal check, and that check is returned for insufficient funds, a \$25.00 fee will be added to the child's unpaid account balance.

Discounts. There is an Early Payment Discount of three percent (3%) when the total tuition is paid by June 1<sup>st</sup>. There is a Sibling Discount of five percent (5%) applied to the younger sibling's tuition. These discounts cannot be combined for one child in a family. They can, however, be used for different children within the same family (e.g., older child gets early pay, younger child gets sibling discount).

A child cannot enroll in an Extended Day class until all tuition and/or late fees have been paid.

All outstanding tuition payments and late fees of any given year must be paid in full in order for a family to register in subsequent years.

## 9. Scholarships

Because we believe that every child should be eligible to attend at least one year of preschool prior to entering kindergarten regardless of economic status, we offer a tuition assistance program to our students currently enrolled in our Pre-K-4-year-old and/or Pre-K-4/5-year-old classes. Financial emergencies for children enrolled in the Parent-And-Me, 2-1/2-year-old, Young 3-year-old, and 3-year-old classes are dealt with on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Preschool's Board of Directors.

To apply for a scholarship, the family must contact the Preschool Director, Assistant Director and/or WPC Financial Director and complete an Application for Tuition Assistance form. Scholarship funds are available for tuition, and/or the Extended Day classes. Scholarship requests remain strictly confidential and will be granted for the June payment (September's tuition payment) and for the remaining months (October through May tuition payments). If the need changes parents are responsible for informing the Preschool Director or WPC Financial Director

The Scholarship Fund. The "Debra Lou Vernier Education Fund" was established by Westminster's Preschool in memory of a mother of two of our preschool graduates. Your generous donations to this fund help Westminster's Preschool continue to carry out its ministry to children of all economic statuses. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please make your check payable to the "Debra Lou Vernier Ed. Fund" and give it to the Preschool Director or Assistant Director or Administrative Assistant.

## 10. Participation Guidelines for the Parent-And-Me Program

The parent or adult family member caregiver must be actively engaged with their child in all classroom activities at any given time. To support this and protect the privacy of all students, the use of cell phones during class time is prohibited. If someone needs to get in touch with you during class hours, they can call the preschool office (610-399-3910) and

someone can come and get you or give you a message. Failure to do so will result in a warning given by the Preschool Director. The third warning will result in the child's dismissal from the program.

Because of our active engagement policy, no younger siblings are allowed to attend Parent-And-Me. Older siblings are allowed on an emergency basis and must have the approval of the Director prior to the class.

## 11. Participation Guidelines for volunteering in a classroom

All volunteers must sign in on the Visitor's Log.

## 12. Hours of Operation

- The Preschool's Parent-And-Me class hours are 9:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
- The Preschool's 2 ½-year-old classes' hours are 9:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
- The Young 3-year-old class' hours are 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- The 3-year-old through Pre-K morning classes' hours are 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Extended Day class hours are from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Friday Fun Hours are from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Soccer Shot hours are from 11:20 am – 12:30 pm and from 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm. (when applicable)

## 13. Arrival and Pick-up Procedures

Arrival. All children in the Parent-And-Me and 2-1/2-year-old classes must be walked to his/her classroom by their parent/care-giver each day. All other children will be met by one of our preschool staff members at the circle drive outside the church's front for the morning Pre-K-4 class and the morning Pre-K-4/5 classes, or at the preschool entrance for all Young 3-year-old, 3-year-old and other Pre-K-4-year-old classes in the morning and **all** afternoon classes. Children participating in the-morning Friday Fun Day class will be part of the carline if they arrive by 9:00 a.m... Children enrolled in the in the afternoon Extended Day classes are walked from their morning classroom to the Extended Day classroom or lunch room by a staff member.

Arrival by Car Line. Our car line is designed for your convenience; however, your child's safety is our *first priority*. Accordingly, we are asking you to adhere to the following safety policies. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the discontinuance of the car line for the remainder of the school year for everyone.

- Keep your child in his/her car seat until a Preschool employee comes to your vehicle.
- Do not allow your child to exit your vehicle without the supervision of one of the preschool staff members, or allow him/her to walk along the sidewalk unattended.
- Parents do not need to exit their vehicles while in the car line.
- Have your child ready to exit the vehicle BEFORE a Preschool employee comes to your vehicle. This includes: shoes on, coats/sweaters on, backpack ready to go. If your child is not ready to exit the vehicle, you will be instructed to park your vehicle and walk your child into class. We want our car line to move as quickly and efficiently as possible to maximize your child's classroom time.
- If a child is having difficulty separating from his/her parent, the driver may be asked to park and walk the child to the line of waiting children. Parents are encouraged not to walk the child into the building but to allow the staff members to handle the situation from this point on.
- Look all around your vehicle before pulling out of the car line.
- **Do not go around the car in front of you** – you may hit a staff member taking a child out of a car or you will be in the blind spot and may cause an accident.
- Anyone not participating in the drop-off car line should exit through the church's "far" parking lot rather than the Preschool entrance driveway.

### Dismissal by Carline

- Each family will be issued a Name paper which should be displayed on the driver's side window or hung on your review mirror so that it can be viewed easily.
- A staff member will go inside the building and call out the child's name.
- A staff member will accompany your child to your car, open the car door and put the child inside. This staff members will NOT buckle your child into his/her car seat.

- Please pull over into a parking spot, get out of your car, and buckle your child into the car seat.
- Please be very careful pulling out of your parking spot.
- Please be prompt in picking up your child, as there is no provision for childcare past program hours. Children become anxious if all their other classmates are leaving the building and their parent/caregiver has not yet arrived. ***Please contact us if you anticipate being late.*** Children should be picked up at 12:00 p.m. (all other morning preschool classes or 2:00 p.m. for Extended Day classes).
- There will be a ten minute grace period, from 11:45-11:55/12:00-12:10 (a.m. classes), 2:00-2:10 or 3:00-3:10 (p.m. classes), to pick up your child. If you are consistently late picking up your child, there will be a \$1.00 charge for every minute beyond the grace period. This fee may be added to your child's account balance. *This policy will be enforced at the discretion of the Preschool Director.*
- **Late Pick-Up.** At five minutes after dismissal time, the children who have not been picked up will be taken by a Preschool Staff Member to the Preschool Director's office. If you are late picking up your child, you will be asked to sign your child out noting the time of pick-up and you may be assessed the Late Fee if the time exceeds the grace period.
- If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, a note stating who will be picking him/her up must be presented to the teacher or Director at arrival time or notification must be made by telephone or e-mail ([preschool@westminsterpc.org](mailto:preschool@westminsterpc.org)). If that person is not listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/After School Release Form, photo ID must be presented at time of pick-up.

#### 14. Policy on the Release of Children after School

Each child enrolled in Westminster's Preschool must have a completed Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/After School Release Form filed in the Preschool office ***on the child's first day of preschool.*** This form must list the name(s), relationship(s), and telephone number(s) of anyone authorized to take the child from the premises. Children will be released ***only*** to the person(s) pre-authorized by the custodial parent(s) on this form. Any changes in the information provided on this form, such as address, telephone number(s), email address, custodial privileges, should be given to the Preschool Director as soon as possible.

**Caregivers other than parents/guardians.** All regular care-givers authorized to escort a child home must be introduced to the Preschool Director and child's teacher and/or teacher aide ***prior to releasing the child into his/her care.***

**For Established Carpools.** The name(s), address (es) and telephone number(s) of all drivers in an established carpool must be listed on each participating child's Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/ After School Release Form. If the members in a carpool change at any time during the school year, the Preschool Director and the classroom staff members need to be notified.

**Play Dates and Exceptional Circumstances.** In exceptional cases that require someone other than a child's pre-authorized person to pick the child up (for example, children who have planned a play date, or if a relative is in town and plans to pick the child up after school), **written notification** needs to be provided to the classroom teacher and/or Preschool Director ***prior to releasing the child to that person.*** If that person is not listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/After School Release Form, photo ID must be presented at time of pick-up.

**Emergency Circumstances.** In emergency cases that require someone other than a child's *pre-authorized* person to pick the child up from school (for example, car break-downs or traffic delays), or if members of Westminster's Preschool staff do not recognize the person attempting to pick a child up from school (and no pre-authorization has been provided), staff members will take any and all appropriate steps to identify that person and to seek authorization to release the child into his/her care. A staff member will ask the person to provide photo identification and will contact the child's parent/guardian or emergency contact person for verification. Prior to releasing the child, the individual who is picking up the child must complete an Emergency Release Form. In addition, that Emergency Release Form must be completed by the parent, guardian or regular care-giver stating that Westminster's Preschool staff ***had*** authorization to release the child to someone other than their pre-authorized (in writing) person.

#### 15. School Calendar

Days off from the Preschool are according to the West Chester Area School District calendar and at the discretion of the Preschool Board of Directors. They include school district holidays and teacher in-service days. Notification of such closings shall be made to the parents in advance either in the Preschool’s School Calendar, Parent Handbook, monthly newsletters, and/or in the teacher’s monthly calendar.

**16. Inclement Weather**

Program closures due to inclement weather will be according to West Chester Area School District closures or according to weather forecasts that the Preschool Director determines could affect the transportation safety of the preschool’s students and/or staff. If West Chester elementary schools are closed, we are automatically closed. If they are on a two-hour delay, then we will be operating on a modified schedule: all morning classes will be from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; and afternoon classes will be from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Afternoon Extended Day classes will run from 12:30-2:00. If WCASD is closed but holding a virtual on-line day, the Preschool will be closed.

If the Preschool is closed or delayed due to inclement weather, you should receive a Parent Update e-mail from the Preschool as long as you gave us permission to contact you by e-mail. Announcements will also be made on ABC, NBC, CBS and FOX news. In addition, a message will be left on the Preschool answering machine 610-399-3910.

**17. Health Policy**

Your child’s health is a matter of great importance to all of us at Westminster’s Preschool. The utmost in care will be taken to provide your child with a healthy and safe school experience. Because allergies of all types are becoming more prevalent in preschool-aged children, our intent is to provide as safe an environment as possible.

The Child Health Assessment, including a completed immunization schedule according to the child’s age, is required at the beginning of each school year or at the time the child is admitted to the program. This form ***must be signed and dated by a physician*** and filed in the preschool Director’s office ***by September 1st***. Failure to provide the completed Child Health Assessment (medical form) in a timely manner shall result in the child’s suspension from the program until the form or its missing component is provided. If you are a returning student, the Child Health Assessment form you provided last year is valid for one year from the date indicated on the most current form.

If you choose NOT to provide immunizations for your child on religious grounds or on the basis of a strong moral or ethical conviction similar to a religious belief:

- You must complete and have in the child’s personal file the “Statement of Exemption to Immunization Law for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania” form which indicates your objection
- Be aware that your child would be excluded from the preschool for up to 21 calendar days after the known case of the disease (measles, mumps, rubella, whooping cough, etc.) has been disclosed. (This exclusion could last longer if additional cases have been reported.)

COVID specific regulations are written in a separate document entitled: **COVID-19 Health and Safety for COVID for Westminster’s Preschool – 2021-2022 school year**. Please refer to this document for all policies and procedures if a case of COVID is suspected.

The following is a list of the most common childhood diseases, but it is not all inclusive. If your child has a communicable disease not listed, please check with the Preschool’s Director about re-admittance following illness. Please notify the Preschool Director if your child has been infected with a contagious disease. In turn, you will be notified if your child’s class has been exposed to a contagious disease.

<b><u>DISEASE</u></b>	<b><u>INCUBATION PERIOD</u></b>	<b><u>EXCLUDED FROM CLASSES UNTIL</u></b>
Chicken Pox	10 - 21 days	all blisters have crusted over
Common Cold	1 - 3 days	Fever subsides and the mucous secretions are limited and controllable
Conjunctivitis	2 - 14 days	Verification that prescribed medication

“Pink Eye”		has been used for at least 24 hours and no itching, redness or discharge appears in the eye(s)
COVID	10-14 days	the symptoms have subsided, the incubation period is over and/or the child receives a negative test result.
Coxsackievirus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease)	3 – 6 days	Fever subsides
Fifth Disease	None	Exclusion not warranted, but must notify Director as this is very dangerous to pregnant women.
Head Lice	24 hours	A lice treatment shampoo has been used and all nits have been removed
Impetigo	Variable	Treatment begun & lesions crusted over
Influenza & Gastroenteritis	1 - 3 days	Fever subsides, diarrhea & vomiting gone for 24 hours
Measles	7 - 21 days	Rash disappears
Mumps	12 - 26 days	9 days after onset of swelling
Poison Ivy/Oak & Poison Sumac	None	Exclusion not warranted, but must notify Director. Infected area(s) should be covered with clothing or bandages if possible.
Ringworm	10 - 21 days	Treatment begun
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever	1 - 3 days	24 hrs. after antibiotic begun & rash is gone
Whooping Cough	7-10 days	from the beginning of the symptoms until 2 weeks after the coughing begins, depending on age, immunization status, previous episodes of infection with pertussis and antibiotic treatment

Please observe the isolation period carefully. This is the period when children are to be **excluded** from classes. If your child has been away from the program for a prolonged period of time due to illness, the Preschool Director may ask to see a note from your physician prior to re-admitting your child to the program.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified immediately. We do not have the provisions to care for sick children, other than for a brief period of time until the parent arrives. If you cannot be reached, we will contact your child’s other parent or emergency contacts listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/After School Release Form. If no one can be reached and the child needs immediate medical attention, the Preschool’s Director, or her representative, will call 911.

We ask you to keep your child home if he/she exhibits:

- Running nose (thick greenish/yellow discharge)
- Vomiting (in the last 24 hours)
- Red or watery eyes/ mattering
- Skin rashes (any)
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Abdominal cramping

- Diarrhea (2 loose movements)
- An elevated temperature (99.6 or over) in the last 24 hours.

Listen to your child's complaints seriously. Consider if you would want another parent to send their child to be with yours if that child had the same symptoms that yours is experiencing.

As part of the program's responsibility for promoting the total development of children, the teachers will be observing the children as they come into class, as well as throughout the day. If the teacher observes signs of illness, the child will be taken to the Preschool Director's office where further assessment of the situation will be made and a determination reached about calling a parent. ***It is very important that a parent be available by telephone while the child is at the program in the event of an emergency.***

We **will not** administer medications except in the case of extreme allergic reactions or if the medication is an inhaler or nebulizer

## **18. Allergies**

If your child has severe allergies, they must be noted on his/her Emergency Contact/Parental Consent/After School Release Form and discussed verbally with the Preschool Director and your child's teacher. In addition, an Allergy Action Plan must be completed at the beginning of each school year so that the preschool staff will know what to do in case of accidental exposure. This form must be updated if your child's allergies change during the year. If your child has an allergy that is considered extreme and requires medication, any medication provided to the preschool must be in the original container, clearly labeled as belonging to the child, labeled with the current date, and a completed and signed Allergy Action Plan from the parent on file in the preschool office.

*Allergies and Snacks* - If your child has a food allergy that is considered extreme, you may be asked to provide his/her daily snack and/or an itemized list of snack items he/she is allowed to have. Westminster's Preschool will not be held liable for extreme allergic reactions, provided all precautions were taken to prevent exposure.

## **19. School Absences**

If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, including vacation time with the family, please notify the preschool office and/or your child's teacher.

## **20. Leave of Absence for a Child**

- If a parent asks to hold their child's spot in a particular class for a period of time of more than one month, the family will be requested to pay at least ½ tuition for the time period requested.
- The following reasons may be given for the leave of absence: illness, vacation, family emergency/obligation.

## **21. Program Withdrawals**

The program Director reserves the right to drop a child from the program for the following reasons:

- Delinquency in payment of tuition or fees as determined by the Board of Directors;
- If a child continues to exhibit disruptive behavior after all other remedies have been unsuccessful (see Behavior Adjustment Policy above).
- Westminster's Preschool Board of Directors reserves the right to drop a child from the program if the child's parent/guardian exhibits disruptive behavior while on school/church property.

Westminster's Preschool reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any student at any time according to the best judgment of the school.

Parents may withdraw their child prior to the end of the school year for any reason:

In all cases of parental withdrawal, **two weeks written notice** shall be required, except in the case of serious illness or accident. You are responsible for making payment for the two (2) weeks between notification time and the actual withdrawal of your child.

## 22. Refunds

Refunds for Registration Fees, and tuition payments will be made based on the following guidelines:

- Refunds for Registration Fees, as stated on the Registration Form, will not be made.
- Refunds for the June 1<sup>st</sup> payment will not be made
- Refunds for Preschool or Extended Day tuition beginning with the October 1<sup>st</sup> payment will be made on a case-by-case basis when the child has withdrawn from the program. If a tuition refund is given, it shall be made on a pro-rated basis at a rate determined by the Board of Directors.
- Dismissal from Parent-And-Me. No pro-rated monthly refunds will be given if a child in the Parent-And-Me program is dismissed due to the adult's failure to participate one-on-one with their child in the program. The only exception to this is if the child's tuition for the year has been paid in full. In this instance, tuition refunds will be given for months subsequent to dismissal.
- Overpayment of Final Tuition Payment. If after you have paid your final tuition payment and you have an account balance of \$25.00 or less, the overpayment will automatically be credited to our scholarship fund. Overpayments of over \$25.00 will be refunded.
- Refund Disputes. Disputes over refunds will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Preschool's Board of Directors. Inquiries shall be made through the Preschool Director.

## 23. Safety Policies

The staff is informed of safety rules, special hazards, and commonly occurring accidents. They have received detailed instruction on evacuation procedures, fire safety and how to report an accident. A staff member with first aid and CPR training is on the premises at all times.

All doors entering into the Preschool will remain locked through the security system during Preschool hours. If you need to enter the building during this time, you will have to ring the doorbell and get buzzed in by someone in the preschool office. Once in the building, you must sign the log book and wear a name badge. There will be a short window of time during drop off and pick up when the doors will remain open.

Accidents. If a child is involved in an accident while in the program or at the Preschool:

- A staff member will apply first aid if it is a minor injury.
- An individual who witnessed the accident will complete an Accident Report.
- Staff members must protect the anonymity of all children involved in the accident.
- The child's parent/guardian, as well as the Preschool Director, will be given a copy of the Accident Report.
- The child's parent/guardian will be required to sign the report.
- A copy of the signed report will also be filed in the child's personal file in the Preschool Director's office.
- If the accident is serious, the Preschool Director will contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact person who will make a decision regarding transporting the child to the hospital.
- In the event of a serious emergency requiring *immediate* medical attention, and time does not permit, or the professional staff is unable to contact the parent/guardian immediately, the Emergency Services (911) will be contacted, and the child will be transported to Chester County Hospital by ambulance. The parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible and will be responsible for the payment of any medical bills.

Incidents. If a child is involved in an incident with another child(ren) while at the Preschool (such as biting, scratching, sand in the eyes):

- A staff member will apply first aid if it is a minor injury.
- An individual who witnessed the incident will complete an Incident Report.
- The staff member who completes the Incident Reports must protect the anonymity of all other children involved in the incident.
- The child's parent/guardian, as well as the Preschool Director, will be given a copy of the Accident Report.
- The child's parent/guardian will be required to sign the report.
- A copy of the signed report will also be filed in the child's personal file in the Preschool Director's office.
- The parents of all other children involved in the incident will be given a copy of the Incident Report.

Fire Drill Policy. The Preschool Director will conduct a fire safety day for each class in the fall in order to train and instruct the children on what to do in case of fire. Fire drills will be conducted twice each semester for each class.

Evacuation Policy. In the case of an emergency in which the Preschool staff members or students cannot re-enter the building, we will transport the children and staff to Stetson Middle School. Once all children are secured safely to that school, parents or emergency contacts will be telephoned and instructed where to pick up the children.

Other Emergencies. Written policies for other emergencies are available in the preschool's Safe School Plan.

Safe Driving Around the Preschool. Parents and Preschool staff members are asked to observe the following safety guidelines:

- Do not speed while in the church parking lot (please drive less than 15 m.p.h.).
- Observe the "Slow" and "Stop" signs posted around the church parking lot.
- Do not talk or text on your cell phone while driving around the church parking lot.
- Look all around your vehicle before pulling out of your parking space.
- Do NOT park in the portico area along the curb. If you park in this area you will be asked to remove your vehicle immediately.
- Do not park in the designated Handicap spaces unless you have a handicap license plate, or have obtained prior permission from the Preschool Director.
- Anyone not participating in the drop-off car line should exit through the church's "far" parking lot rather than the Preschool entrance driveway.

Supervision of Your Children.

- You **must** supervise siblings of your enrolled child at all times while waiting for your preschool student to be dismissed. ***This is not our staff's responsibility.***
  - Siblings are not permitted to play on the steps or in the exit areas.
  - Siblings are not permitted in the learning center rooms (unless they have prior permission from the Preschool Director). These are set up to be used by both morning and afternoon classes and must be kept as neat as possible between sessions.
  - When the large multipurpose area is set up for indoor play, siblings are not permitted to play with or on the equipment.
- Once your child is released from his/her classroom, it is **your responsibility** to supervise him/her and exit the building in a timely manner. The staff members are trying to put toys and equipment in the supply closets during this time and need the area to be clear.
  - Please do not allow him/her to run around in the large multipurpose area.
  - Please do not allow him/her to exit the building unattended by an adult.
  - Please do not allow him/her to play with the indoor play toys that are behind the divider wall.
- Children are not allowed to exit the preschool through the stairwell door next to the Director's office. This is a church storage area for large equipment and should only be used as access to the second level.
- While in the parking lot, it is **extremely important** that you supervise your child(ren) **at all times**.
  - Please do not leave siblings unattended in parked vehicles.
  - Please do not allow your child to play around or behind parked cars, under any circumstances.
  - Please do not allow him/her to run through the garden area(s) or pull on the downspouts.

- Please do not allow your child(ren) to walk or play on the stone wall outside the building.
  - Please do not allow your child(ren) to play near the detention pond.
  - Please do not allow your child(ren) to throw stones down into the storm drains.
- Parents are instructed to keep their children off the playground either before or after their scheduled class time. Classes are scheduled to play on the playground throughout the day, and the teachers of the scheduled classes cannot be responsible for children not enrolled in their classes.

## **24. Behavior Adjustment Policy**

Westminster's Preschool is dedicated to providing a special environment for the social, emotional and intellectual growth of each child enrolled here. We strive to meet the needs of the children in a supportive, loving, Christian manner. All needs will be met with patience and understanding, utilizing language, modeling behavior and consequences appropriate to the developmental age of the child. Our aim is to help the child become self-regulating so he or she develops control over his or her own behavior. Our role is one of a "guide" to help a child learn to develop this self-control.

Our staff will follow the following procedures:

- In the beginning of the school year, the Classroom Teacher will inform the students about the class rules. These rules include, but are not limited to, sharing, keeping hands and feet to themselves, listening, waiting their turn, using indoor voices, walking inside the facility and respecting teachers, peers and school property.
- The Classroom Staff is responsible to watch their students at all times and be able to anticipate if there is a problem within a group.
- If a problem arises with an individual or within a group, the Classroom Staff will:
  - Remind the child(ren) of the class rules.
  - Attempt to give the child(ren) the appropriate language to express his/her needs in the situation (for example, if Johnny is hitting Charlie, give Charlie the words, "please stop hitting me, Johnny.")
  - Re-direct the child from the problem and engage him or her in another area of interest. They will have a quiet conversation discussing the situation.
  - Explain to the child that he or she may return to the group when ready to "play nicely".
  - Inform the Director (if necessary) of the problem and the Director will observe the child.
- Should the Classroom Staff's discipline fail and disruptive behavior by a child continue:
  - The parents will be notified by the Classroom Teacher.
  - The teacher and parents will develop a cooperative plan that can be carried out at school and home, which will help the child cope with his or her difficulty.
  - The classroom staff will maintain contact with the Director for progress reports and suggestions.
- If the child continues to engage in disruptive behavior after the cooperative plan has been implemented:
  - The Classroom Teacher will notify the Preschool Director.
  - The Preschool Director will contact the parent and the child should be taken home for the remainder of the day.
  - The child may come back to school, but the parent may be required to sit with his/her child throughout the preschool day. This may continue for no more than two weeks at the Preschool Director's discretion.
- If having the parent physically present with the child or taking the child home does not mitigate the child's disruptive behavior, or if having the parent in the classroom is not advantageous to the child, classroom staff, or the other children, the child may be asked to leave the program for the remainder of the school year. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Preschool Director and the Board of Directors.

## 25. Communication with Parents

Preschool. The Preschool's monthly newsletter can be found on the church's website [www.westminsterpc.org](http://www.westminsterpc.org) under "LEARN" on the pull-down menu or you may request that a paper copy be sent home with your child.

You may also contact the preschool by e-mailing your concerns to the Preschool Director or Assistant Director. The e-mail addresses for these individuals are on page 1 of this Parent Handbook.

Teacher. You will receive monthly calendars from your child's teacher. This document will include a general overview of the topics and projects we will be working on, birthdays and other special events. This will help you plan accordingly, as well as help you reinforce class activities at home. The teacher may also communicate by email with special reminders. Dry Erase boards outside your teacher's classroom, as well as bulletin boards near the Director's office, will also display important news and information. Please remember to check these boards regularly.

If you wish to speak with your child's teacher regarding a concern about your child, please arrange a mutually agreeable time either before or after class time. Our focus is on the children 100% during class time. It is not fair to you or the children to take time for a lengthy discussion during class time. Also keep in mind that several of our teachers teach both in the morning and for afternoon classes, and they need time in between classes to eat their lunches and prep for the afternoon class. Please be considerate of your child's teacher.

While the Preschool understands that communication with a parent is important and necessary, we respect the fact that all of our teachers are not comfortable with giving out their personal e-mail addresses. If you would like to contact your child's teacher via e-mail, you can always write a message to her via the preschool's e-mail ([preschool@westminsterpc.org](mailto:preschool@westminsterpc.org)) and we will pass on this information as quickly as possible.

Church. Phone calls should be made to the main church office **ONLY** in case of extreme emergency. All other calls should be made to the preschool phone (610-399-3910). Please leave a message if necessary, and we will get in touch with you as soon as possible.

## 26. School Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year for all children in our 3-Year-Old, Pre-K-4-Year-Old, and Pre-K-4/5-year-old classes: November (fall) and March/April (spring). The November conference is designed to let the family know how the child is adapting to preschool. The March/April conference is designed to discuss the child's progress and his/her readiness for the next age-level class.

Teachers will provide written evaluations of each child to the child's parent/guardian at the Parent-Teacher conference in November and March/April. The purpose of these evaluations is to provide feedback about the child's progress.

Our teachers are willing to discuss your child's progress throughout the school year. Please make an appointment to talk with your child's teacher at a mutually agreeable time either before or after class time.

## 27. Dress Code

Westminster's Preschool is a place where children are allowed to be children. Your child will be encouraged to experience new things such as sponge painting, finger-painting, cooking, etc. A child should be least concerned about his/her clothing while at school. To help your child experience each new activity to the fullest, he/she should be dressed in clothing that is:

- Simple enough so the child can take care of his/her own bathroom needs if toilet trained;
- Washable and appropriate for all kinds of indoor and outdoor play;
- Loose enough to provide comfort and freedom of movement.

We strongly suggest that your child wear closed-toe shoes or sneakers while at preschool. This will help keep sand and wood chips from bothering your child's feet throughout their day.

Please label all items of outer clothing with first and last name of your child or initials.

## 28. Change of Clothes

All children must have an emergency change of clothes that is appropriate for the season (including pants, shirt, underwear and socks) in their backpack. These should be brought each day and checked each night to see if they have been used. We do not have available storage space to keep extra clothes at school. Please remember to have all clothing labeled.

## 29. Backpacks

Each child should come to Preschool each day with his/her own backpack. The backpack should be **clearly** labeled **on the outside** with your child's name. The backpack is instrumental in disseminating important information from the Preschool as well as your child's artwork and readiness materials. Please check your child's backpack every day after school so you can stay up-to-date on your child's activities as well as Preschool news and activities.

## 30. Toys from Home

Toys from home should only come to class on designated "show and tell" days. Favorite toys that cannot be shared with other children should remain at home. Please speak to your child's teacher if you feel a "lovee" is necessary to ease separation difficulties. Toy guns, swords or war toys are not allowed at our preschool; we appreciate your understanding in this matter.

## 31. Snacks

- Our intent is to provide as food-allergen-free environment as possible. We ask parents and Preschool staff members to pay attention to ingredients in snacks for allergens.
- Snacks are the responsibility of the parents. In order to maintain an adequate snack supply, we request that each enrolled child provide a large container or two smaller containers of a non-perishable, peanut-free snack twice each year according to this schedule: (for example: one (1) 30 oz. box of Goldfish crackers or two (2) 6.6 oz. bags of Goldfish crackers)
  - Last name A – K in September and January
  - Last name L-Z in November and March
- If the family donates something perishable that should be eaten by the children in their child's classroom (like yogurt tubes, fresh fruit or vegetables, soft pretzels, pudding, etc.), the teacher or teacher's aide should be aware of this snack, the snack item will be placed in the refrigerator, labeled with the teacher's name, and eaten in a timely manner. Left-over fresh items can be given back to the parent or placed back in the refrigerator for consumption by other classes...
- Items that contain any nut or nut product or processed in a facility that processes nut products will be promptly returned for exchange of a nut-free item.
- Snacks are kept in our supply closets in the Preschool office and used as needed by any/all of the classes
- Children are instructed to bring a filled water bottle to preschool every day. If they forget, they will be offered water from the water filtration system on the refrigerator located in the kitchenette.
- The Preschool supplements the snack items parents provide with products from class cooking projects. Teachers may request parents to supply special allergen-free snack items for certain days (e.g., holiday celebrations, special projects). All items brought from home must be nut-free.
- As a general rule, we are not allowing any fresh-baked items to be brought from home during this current school year due to COVID-19. Exceptions may be made by contacting the Preschool Director.

**Allergies of all types are becoming more prevalent in preschool-aged children.** Children with **extreme** food allergies should notify the teacher and bring their own snack each day or keep a small supply in a container in the classroom. These special snacks should be labeled with the child's name. We urge you to look at the ingredients in these special snack items to make sure that they do not contain peanuts/tree nuts and are not processed in a plant with peanut/tree nut products. *Items that contain any nut or nut product will be promptly returned to the parent for exchange of a nut-free item.*

### **32. Lunches**

All Extended Day classes require the family to send in a lunch for their child. These lunches will be inspected for products containing peanuts/tree nuts. If an allergen food item is found or suspected, it will be removed and returned to the family at the end of the day. If an item is suspicious of being a peanut product (such as soy nut butter in place of peanut butter) we would appreciate it if you would label that item with a note so that it doesn't have to be removed.

### **33. Birthdays / Holiday special snacks**

Birthdays are very special occasions and we like to treat them that way! Birthday snacks may be provided, but must **never** include any peanut or tree-nut products. Please follow the guidelines on the reverse side of the Snack Policy. Children with severe food allergies may provide a 'special' snack that can be kept in the freezer, refrigerator or classroom cabinet that can be used when the other children are having a special birthday treat.

*Birthday invitations for parties outside the classroom should **NOT** be distributed at preschool. If invitations are found in the backpacks, a classroom employee will remove them and bring them to the Preschool Director. The Director will return them to the parent with a copy of the class list, including home and email addresses, so the invitations can be mailed. There will be **NO** exception to this rule.*

### **34. Personal Fund Raising**

Westminster Presbyterian Church policy states that an individual cannot promote a business or sell a product through any program sponsored by the church without prior approval from the Session (governing body) or pastoral staff of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Accordingly, Westminster's Preschool cannot permit the family members of any student enrolled in its program to hold fund-raisers or to collect money for gifts when the funds collected would financially support or promote that individual's business or product(s).