



PARENT RESOURCE HANDBOOK

Pines Presbyterian Preschool
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2022-2023

“Young children do not do their best learning while sitting down at a desk, trying to be quiet, and listening to the teacher lecture... Young children learn from activity, from exploring real objects, talking with people, and solving real problems such as how to balance a stack of blocks or how to negotiate a zipper.” — David Elkind, Author

PINES PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

Mission Statement and Goals

The **purpose** of Pines Presbyterian Preschool is to provide an environment where preschool children may develop socially, physically, emotionally, spiritually, creatively and intellectually in a Christian atmosphere.

We at Pines share with you the responsibility of developing a healthy personality in your child at a period of time when growth is rapid and important. Our program supplements home training by offering experiences adapted to the growth needs of young children.

Our **goals** for each child are:

- TO help him/her discover what our Christian faith is all about through a pervading atmosphere of love and concern.
- TO develop a good self-image in a child, a sense of accomplishment, a feeling of worthiness.
- TO have a controlled environment where a child can learn about his/her world and work out problems.
- TO develop curiosity, an inquiring mind.
- TO learn how to get along with his/her peers, to respect property rights of others and to learn about sharing.

Program Philosophy

Pines Preschool provides developmentally appropriate educational and social activities for children. Some parents express concern when they ask their child, "What did you do at school today?" and the child responds, "Play!" Play is the work of a child. Young children learn by doing. They use their entire body and all their senses. Children are active all day long - moving, exploring, investigating, and discovering. Play helps children develop well-rounded personalities in all areas of life - physical, cognitive, emotional, and social. As a child plays, many experiences are happening to enable that child to grow and mature. The play they engage in is laying the foundation for all future learning and success in life.

State Licensing

Pines Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to provide care for 99 children per day ages 18 months through Kindergarten. As a licensed facility we operate using the Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers as a basic guideline for setting policy and procedures. A copy of the Minimum Standards is available through the school office for anyone interested in reading and reviewing these basic guidelines. Parents may review the current Licensing inspection report at any time.

To report child abuse or neglect call TDFPS hotline to make a confidential report at:

FPS child abuse hotline 1-800-252-5400 www.dfps.state.tx.us

Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services 713-940-3009

Accreditation

Pines Preschool previously was accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It was the decision of the preschool's governing body to withdraw our affiliation with NAEYC in June 2007. We do not agree in the philosophy with some of the new criteria of NAEYC. In addition, it is difficult as a small, part-time church school to comply with the new standards. The governing body of Pines Presbyterian Preschool and the Memorial Area Preschool Administrators (MAPA) association continue to explore the possibility of association with another accreditation program. Regardless, Pines pledges to maintain the high standards of excellence we have followed for the past 50+ years and assures a safe and nurturing environment for our children.

Teaching Staff

We believe that the primary asset of a good school is its teachers. Our staff members are chosen carefully, not only for their educational background and experience, but also for their kind personalities. They understand and relate well with young children, have an abundance of patience, display a calm manner and practice the fine art of speaking positively with the children. All staff members are required to obtain 24 hours of training annually within the field of early childhood education. This group of teachers realize the importance of staying abreast of the ever-changing needs of today's families and the findings of current research regarding the education of young children. We do not require our employees to receive annual vaccinations, although they are strongly recommended.

Classes

Pines Preschool and Kindergarten is a 9-month program (September – May) offering classes for children from 18 months through Kindergarten:

Bees: 2-day classes for toddlers (18-27 months)

Butterflies: 2-day classes for 2 ½ year-olds

Frogs/Rainbow Fish: 2- or 3-day classes for 3-year-olds

Teddy Bears/Turtles: 5-day Pre K classes for 4-year-olds

Ladybugs: 5-day Bridge

Owls: 5-day Kindergarten

Classroom Activities

We believe that every child should be allowed to grow and mature at his or her own pace with a balance of self-directed and teacher-directed activities. We provide an environment that is supportive, nurturing, warm and responsive to each child's **individual needs**. We strive to create an environment in which each child develops a good self-image and a sense of self-worth. Each class has **developmentally appropriate** activities for the child's selection that may include: blocks, manipulatives, books, water activities, cooking, music and opportunities for dramatic play, sorting, graphing, sequencing and language development in our learning centers. During group times, the child will enjoy outside play, stories, music, games, science projects and motor skills activities. The classroom centers change regularly to focus on a **different theme** designed to expose the children to the many aspects of the world around them. A classroom specific Activity Plan is posted in each classroom and is available to parents upon request.

Pines Preschool has two teachers in most classes and provides a low teacher/child ratio. Team teaching enhances development of all skills and provides personal attention for each child.

Pines Preschool offers classes for children from 18 months by September 1st through Kindergarten age. Our Bee and Butterfly students attend 9:00-11:30AM through October and 9:00-12:00PM beginning in November; the Frog and Rainbow Fish classes attend 9:00-Noon; the Teddy Bear and Turtle classes are from 9:00-Noon except on Tuesday, which is until 2:00PM. The Bridge students attend from 9:00-1:00PM except on Tuesday, which is until 2:00PM. The Kindergarten students attend from 9:00-1:00PM except on Tuesday and Thursday, which are until 2:00PM. We offer consecutive day classes, the number of days depending on the age of the child. School usually begins the first week of September and ends the third week of May.

Kindergarten Class

The Kindergarten class curriculum is planned to establish continuity with the Preschool / Pre-K goals and to fully prepare the child for first grade. Our kindergarten teacher(s) use both large group, small group and 1 to 1 instruction to teach reading, handwriting and math concepts/skills, allowing the child to develop intellectually at his/her own rate of growth. The materials and experiences provided are designed to challenge and develop each child and to give the freedom to discover, to explore and to meet his/her own needs. The curriculums we use include *All About Reading*, *Handwriting Without Tears*, and *Mathematics Their Way*.

Music Program

Our music teacher works with each class weekly. The children are exposed to a variety of activities including learning new songs, using rhythm instruments, dancing, and enjoying music. We offer our music program in addition to the regular classroom music.

Motor Skills Program

Our motor skills teacher supplements the classroom program with additional activities and body movement skills weekly. With the use of music, games and equipment, the children explore their growing awareness of large muscle use and coordination.

Attendance

Regular attendance is recommended for consistency in the child's schedule and adjustment to the classroom environment. **Each child must be accompanied by the parent or caregiver to the child's drop off location.** Teachers are there to welcome the child and to receive any important information pertaining to the child's day. If your child is experiencing separation anxiety, you are welcome to remain nearby until your child feels comfortable in the school setting. You should offer assurance that you will return and encourage your child to play with the other children. Routinely, when a child becomes involved in a classroom activity, the anxiety passes and the child is comfortable to stay.

No make-up days or refunds will be made for absences due to illness, weather problems, or vacations. If unforeseen building problems occur where school is cancelled for 4 or more consecutive days, a 10% refund of one month's tuition will be returned upon request. Tuition is based on an annual fee and divided over the 9 month period, regardless of holidays. Please notify the Preschool office at 713-467-9358 if the child will be absent, late, or on vacation.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Pines Preschool reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to: 1. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations. 2. The director deems the child too ill to attend. 3. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, employees, or other children were the child to be present at the Preschool. 4. Parents failure to maintain accurate, up to date records. 5. Parents failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion. Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the preschool.

PARKING AND PICKUP

Parking is available immediately south of the church off of West Bough street. For security reasons, please do not use the small driveway (on Kimberley) north of the church for Preschool parking. **Cell phones and texting is not allowed while driving in and out of the parking lot.** Do NOT leave your car running or leave children unattended in parked cars. THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IS VITAL.

For the 2022-2023 school year, we will only be using the drive through carpool lanes for our 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM dismissal times or in the event of rain or a special event at the church. At all other times, parents should park and enter the building through the front office to pick up their child from their classroom, W-12 (Mindful Movement students), or the Gym (Soccer Shots students).

Parents must notify the office if there is change in the usual pickup person. A parent may authorize another person to pick up their child by:

- 1) Listing the authorized person on the student profile form,
- 2) Bring a written, dated, permission slip to the child's teacher authorizing the child's release to someone else on the day of the release. NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON EVEN IF THE PERSON IS KNOWN TO THE CHILD. WRITTEN PERMISSION IS MANDATORY. WE WILL ASK FOR PICTURE I.D. OR A TEXAS DRIVER'S LICENSE. A PHOTOCOPY WILL BE KEPT ON FILE. NO CHILD MAY BE PICKED UP BY ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN (18).
- 3) A parent may call to authorize the emergency release of a child as long as we are able to verify that the caller is actually the parent. We may ask questions pertinent to your child or ask to call the parent back for verification.

ARRIVAL TIMES

Pines Preschool opens every day at 8:45 AM for Kindergarten families. Parents and caregivers may drop off all other students at their classroom beginning at 8:55 AM. Those families arriving before 8:55 AM are welcome to read book with their child(ren) in the Library located in W-12. Students must remain with their caregiver at all times until checked into their classroom.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The Preschool enforces a monetary fee for late pickup. ***Parents that are chronically late will be fined a late fee upon pickup.*** This policy is designed to address the problem of REPEATED tardiness to pick up children after school or extended day. "Late" is defined as 10 minutes after the designated time of pickup. Please note, however, our day ends on the hour, not 10 minutes after. The school clock in the office will be the "official" time. Parents will sign a late sheet when arriving late so that we can keep track of the number of tardies. Teachers will also keep track of attendance and tardiness.

Any parent arriving late (10 minutes or more) to pick up their child will have to check in with the school office before picking up your child. The Preschool charges a scaled late fee as follows:

- Parents will not be charged the first two times they are late.
- The 3rd through 5th late pickups will result in a \$50.00 fine.
- Parents who arrive late 6+ times will be fined \$100 for every late pick-up.

This penalty will reinforce the importance of being on time for those that continually run late. It is always helpful to let the school know with a phone call if you will not be on time. We are aware that things sometimes happen that may cause a parent to run late, and we want to be understanding when those crises occur. However, there have been situations that parents frequently misjudge their time and do not set school pickup as a priority. This can become a problem for the child and their school experience, as well as for the teachers.

School Calendar

Pines Preschool closely follows the Spring Branch School District’s (SBISD) calendar and observes most of the same major holidays, except for the beginning and ending of the school year. Preschool normally opens the first week of September. Each student will meet his/her teacher before school begins with a classroom visit. Each family receives a copy of the school calendar annually.

The calendar and school/classroom activities are communicated through the classroom newsletters and calendar schedules posted at each classroom door. The school office also provides a monthly newsletter to keep parents informed of activities and holidays.

School closings: In case of severe weather (i.e. hurricane, tornado, high water, high winds, etc.), please listen to your radio or T.V. Pines will automatically cancel school if SBISD cancels for weather related reasons. If an emergency situation exists at Pines Preschool (no heat, electricity, water, gas leak etc.) or if we determine that the weather is a threat to our children’s safety, the teachers will then contact each family in their class, either by phone, text or the Remind app.

Each year the scheduled holidays that we follow, according to the SBISD calendar, affect the number of days that each class grouping attends school. So that you will be aware of the number of days that your child will be in school, we have a reference list for your information:

<u>2022-2023</u>	Toddler Bees	T/W	68 days
	Toddler Bees	Th/F	64 days
	2 ½ Butterflies	T/W	68 days
	2 ½ Butterflies	Th/F	64 days
	Y3 Frogs	M/T/W	95 days
	O3 Rainbow Fish	M/T/W	95 days
	3’s R. Fish/Frogs	Th/F	64 days
	Y4 Teddy Bears	M-F	159 days
	O4 Turtles	M-F	159 days
	Bridge Ladybugs	M-F	159 days
	Kindergarten Owls	M-F	159 days

Please note, it is Pines policy that in the months of September and October the Bee and Butterfly classes have shortened days, to ensure a positive transition to the school environment.

Enrollment Information

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION: Parents must complete all required registration information in order for their child to attend Pines. General information identifies parents/guardians, phone numbers, address, individuals to whom your child may be released, physician's info., and allergy/medication information.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS & FORMS: A health and immunization form must be filled out and signed by your child's physician before your child will be permitted to attend the preschool. **It is imperative that all pertinent information be updated to ensure the safety of your child!**

Registration is an ongoing process, with applications being accepted anytime during the school year for families not currently in the program. Placement is made as space is available. If enrollment is full at the time of application, the child will be placed on a waiting list. It is up to the Director's discretion to limit enrollment in a class based on the developmental needs of the children already placed in that class.

Annual registration for the following year begins in January for all families. A \$60.00 application fee along with the registration form is required to be eligible for placement. When a child has been placed in a class and a notification letter sent, the remainder of the registration fee (\$250) will be due (Total: \$310.00).

A Last Month Tuition deposit will be due May 1st. The May deposit is Non-Refundable and may not be applied to any other month. A yearly \$200 Curriculum Fee for Kindergarten and \$100 Activity Fee for Bridge is also due by May 1st to hold the class placement for these students. All fees are reviewed annually by the Preschool Committee and are subject to change. **PLEASE REMEMBER, ALL FEES AND MAY TUITION ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

Registration Policy

REGISTRATION:

Pines Preschool has an open registration policy. The preschool will provide the placement of each child according to the child's age, days preferred, and, in conjunction with teacher recommendations and assessment of each child's needs. Payment of registration fees provides placement of the child into the preschool, but specific class and teacher assignments are not guaranteed by the payment of these fees. In the event a class has more children than the maximum permitted, the school will use a system of prioritizing that class group to determine placement. Acceptance/placement letters for current students will be sent home the week of February 6, 2023. Forms and fees are due into the preschool office ANYTIME before February 17, 2023. We will begin placing new students the week of February 20, 2023.

PLACEMENT:

We will then prioritize:

- 1) Church members (new and current) and children of current preschool teachers.
- 2) Seniority – number of consecutive semesters of enrollment for that child.
- 3) Legacies – number of years of attendance for families with children previously enrolled prior to current placement.
- 4) Multiple children in a family.
- 5) Lastly (when all the options have been exhausted) a pulling of straws between the few who may not fall clearly within the previous categories. It is highly unlikely that we would ever get to the final step without being able to resolve a placement issue.
- 6) New families are placed after all currently enrolled families.

Tuition 2022-2023

Tuition is due on the 1st and payable by the 5th business day of each month. It is not the responsibility of the Preschool office to remind you when tuition is due. Checks may be left in the Preschool office, mailed or sent via electronic check. No statement will be sent. A \$25.00 late fee will be charged if your payment is received after the 5th business day of the month. Pines does not accept credit cards.

In the event of withdrawal from the Preschool, a 30-day WRITTEN notice to the Preschool is required, with tuition due through the entire notice period.

The annual tuition will be payable in 8 equal installments (September through April) without regard to the number of school days in a particular month, or the number of days your child is absent. There will be no May tuition payment due as it is prepaid as the Last Month Tuition Deposit.

	<u>Monthly tuition</u>	<u>Annual tuition</u>
2 day classes:	\$325.00	\$2925.00
3 day classes:	\$425.00	\$3825.00
5 day classes:	\$575.00	\$5175.00
Bridge class:	\$610.00	\$5490.00
Bridge activity fee:	\$100.00 (annual)	
Kindergarten:	\$675.00	\$6075.00
Kindergarten activity fee:	\$200.00(annual)	

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Application for scholarships must be submitted by April 1st. Applications will be reviewed in confidence by the scholarship committee and families will be notified within thirty days. All scholarships are to be based on financial need and limited to one school year. Each scholarship granted is not to exceed one half of the normal tuition for that particular class.

Extended Day Programs

Parents may choose to extend their child's school day with a choice of after-school activities: Lunch Bunch, Art Enrichment, Mindful Movement and Soccer Shots. Registration and payment is made by semester for Art, Mindful Movement and Soccer Shots. Registration for Lunch Bunch is for the year and payment is made by semester. Changes and Additions can be made as space is available.

LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch program begins in September for 4 and 5 year old classes, and in October for the 3 year old classes. Your child brings a nutritious lunch from home and has a supervised playtime until 2:00 PM on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday for \$30.00 per day, paid by semester. The Bee and Butterfly classes are not eligible for this program. Children must be potty-trained and not need a nap to participate in Lunch Bunch. The children must be able to use the toilet independently without assistance from teachers (wiping, re-dressing and washing hands). If a child has more than two accidents within a month, they will no longer be eligible for Lunch Bunch. The child may re-register later in the year at the discretion of the Director. Lunch Bunch will not be offered to the Ladybug and Owl students during the 2022-2023 school year. Parents are encouraged to enroll in Soccer Shots, Mindful Movement, and Art instead.

ART ENRICHMENT is for those children who especially enjoy art activities. Various media will be used. Some art appreciation will be included at age appropriate levels to further encourage and inspire the students' creativity. Art Enrichment is offered after school on Thursdays (Teddy Bears and Ladybugs) and Fridays (Turtles and Owls). Classes are available for 4-year-olds through Kindergarten. Children register each semester.

MINDFUL MOVEMENT Using age-appropriate elements of tumbling, yoga, tai chi and story, students will playfully explore how our bodies work, where we are in space, our breath and balance. Offered Mondays (MTW Rainbow Fish, Turtles, Ladybugs) and Wednesdays (Frogs, Teddy Bears, Owls). Low teacher/child ratios and positive directions are practiced. Tuition is by the semester.

SOCCER SHOTS is an engaging children's soccer program with a focus on character development. Classes will be offered in the gym after school on Mondays (Frogs, Teddy Bears, Owls) and Wednesdays (MTW Rainbow Fish, Turtles, Ladybugs). Students will register by semester online at www.soccershots.org.

Health

MEDICAL FORMS

A current medical form must be completed and returned ***before a child may attend school.*** Those children with diagnosed food or environmental allergies, who have been prescribed epinephrine by their physician, must also have a FARE emergency plan on file with the office, as well as two Epi pens or Auvi-Q pens. **It is imperative that all pertinent information be updated to ensure the safety of your child!**

Immunizations must be current. If certain medical requirements are in conflict with your beliefs/preferences, you must provide the office with an "Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience" form provided by Texas Department of State Health Services.

HEARING & VISION SCREENINGS

Hearing and vision screening is required of all children turning four on or before Sept. 1st. This screening can be done privately or through professionals that Pines Preschool will provide for a nominal fee.

Illness

Parents are asked to notify the school when their child becomes ill with a communicable disease so that the Director can notify other parents in the class through a letter, protecting the child in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) document. **If someone in your immediate household has tested positive for COVID-19, please call the front office immediately to speak to the director and determine the risk of exposure to your child.** Keeping all medical and/or behavioral information up to date is essential and in the best interest of the child.

A sick child belongs at home where he/she is more comfortable and able to recuperate. For the protection of your child, as well as other students and staff, children may be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit any of the following symptoms including, but not limited to: cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; chills; headache; sore throat; cloudy, green or excessive runny nose; loss of taste or smell; diarrhea that cannot be contained in a diaper; vomiting; a temperature reading of 100 degrees or higher (skin reading); rash or sores.

If your child is sick or injured, Pines Preschool will:

1. Assess the nature of the illness,
2. Notify the parent(s) or caregiver.
3. Contact the authorized alternate on the emergency list (if parents cannot be reached),
4. Contact the child's physician, if noted or requested, and
5. If the child is not picked up, and we determine there is a medical emergency, the staff will call 911 for assistance. The parent will be responsible for any charges incurred.

Pines Preschool reserves the right to exclude those children who are not able to participate comfortably in activities including outdoor play or if the child's behavior or injury requires additional care, so much so that it compromises the care of the other children. The final decision as to whether or not a child can remain at school will be at the discretion of the Director.

WHEN CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL?

Children will be allowed to return to school per the following guidelines:

- **FEVER:** Your child should be **FREE of fever** (100 degrees or higher) without the use of fever reducing medicine for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **DIARRHEA:** Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet-trained children if the diarrhea has caused 2 or more "accidents" in a 12 hour period. **Students may return to class 24 hours after their last diarrhea stool.**
- **VOMITING:** Students must be free of symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **COVID-19:** Those students who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms and have had close exposure to someone with confirmed COVID-19 may return to school 10-days after the first symptoms. Exceptions may be made at the director's discretion and/or in the event of a negative COVID test and/or under a doctor's guidance.
- **COLD & FLU:** Students should be fever free (100 degrees or higher) and show improved symptoms for 24 hours. Often parents rush to return their student to class, not wanting the child to miss out. Please consider your child's behavior and keep him/her home another day if he/she seems tired, lethargic or still shows symptoms that would prevent the child from participating in class.
- **STREP THROAT & PINK EYE:** Students may return based on guidance from their pediatrician. Parents must provide a doctor's note with instructions to the front office.
- **HAND, FOOT & MOUTH & CHICKEN POX:** Children must be fever-free for at least 24 hours and all blisters completely healed. For most students this usually takes at least 7 days.
- **LICE:** Parents must treat the child for head lice before he/she can return to school. **The child must be free of all crawling lice.**

Personal medications will not be administered by the school, including sunscreen and bug spray. Any prescriptions or over the counter drugs should be given before or after school. Only life-threatening allergic reaction medications will be kept at the school or administered by school staff.

Please inform your child's teacher if your child was given any type of medication prior to coming to school (including allergy, flu, and/or cold and cough medicine).

Discipline and Behavioral Concerns

Pines Preschool “Discipline” is a positive force directed toward what the child is **allowed** to do, rather than what he/she is forbidden to do. It is based on mutual love and respect, and must be reinforced with teaching, firmness, and consistent reminders. Consistency in discipline is essential. Appropriate techniques for discipline with younger children involve distraction, substitution of an alternative activity (redirection), and a change of focus. The goal of disciplinary training is to enable a child to regulate and control his/her own behavior - self control. Pines Preschool firmly believes in the use of positive discipline, positively-stated language in redirection, and encouraging good behavior instead of focusing on the unacceptable behaviors. Firm limits will be confined to the BIG 3: 1) a child may not hurt himself, 2) a child may not hurt someone else, 3) a child may not damage material or equipment.

Teachers will document inappropriate behaviors that become frequent, severe, result in injury to a child or classmate, reflect a change in the child’s self esteem, or form an unfavorable pattern. In such cases, the school will contact the parents for a conference. We will work closely with the parents to create a plan and find a solution to help the child function appropriately in the classroom setting. It is our goal to help a child become successful in his/her interaction with peers and staff. If the director determines that the classroom environment is unsafe or puts the children at risk, the school will intervene and take the necessary steps to bring about safety, including the right to request withdrawal of the child.

Miscellaneous Information

CHAPEL

Our Chapel theme for the 2022-2023 school year will be *Fruit of the Spirit*. Children will attend chapel together twice a month in the Sanctuary from 9:15-9:30 AM, generally on Tuesdays or Thursdays. Families are invited to join us at Chapel. Chapel themes will vary from year to year. Examples of past topics include *Courageous Kindness*, *Bible Heroes* and *God Knows How I Am Feeling*. Each Chapel will include a time for prayer, songs/worship and age-appropriate lessons led by staff, teachers and Pines Presbyterian Church staff. Attending Chapel promotes attitudes of love, acceptance, and support. Teachers will reinforce Chapel lessons in the classroom during the week.

CONFERENCES

Teachers will have two regularly scheduled conferences with parents during the year. An informal phone conference will occur in late October to assess the transition with school, teachers, peers and scheduling. In late January, a personal conference will be scheduled with parents before registration to discuss developmental milestones, social and academic progress and placement for the following year. If you have questions, please email your teachers at their classroom email address to set up a time to conference.

FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the year we will take interesting field trips with the older children. Each parent is responsible for the transportation of his/her own child. Under no circumstances will a teacher be responsible for the transportation of a child. We do not take the younger children on field trips but will bring interesting resource people to the campus each year.

BIRTHDAYS

Each child's birthday is observed at snack time by singing "Happy Birthday." The parent may wish to send a special snack, **which must be pre-packaged**, to make the day more festive. Please send "approved" snacks in those situations when students in your classroom have been diagnosed with food allergies. If your child has a summer birthday, a time can be set aside for your child to have a half-birthday or "pretend" day to celebrate. We encourage you to do so mid-year versus waiting until the end of school. Candles cannot be used to celebrate birthdays. When having your home birthday party, please extend invitations by phone or mail if you will not be inviting the entire class. It is always a good idea to be sensitive to the children's feelings of inclusion.

LUNCHES

Send a small nutritious lunch. **Please remember that Pines is a peanut, tree nut and sesame-free zone.** Students will not be allowed to bring lunches containing those ingredients into the classroom. Minimum standards states **"Beverages with added sugars such as carbonated beverages, fruit punch, or sweetened milk are not allowed"** in lunch boxes. Water is always best. We encourage you to send a balanced meal for your child that includes a protein and fruit or vegetable. Keep desserts to a minimum. Grapes and hot dogs must always be cut in half or children will not be allowed to eat them.

SNACKS

A mid-morning snack of saltine crackers is provided by the school. We do so out of an abundance of caution for our students with food allergies. When special (birthday or holiday) snacks are served, notices are posted on the classroom bulletin board. Any snacks brought into the classroom by a parent must have the approval of the teachers and the director.

CARPOOLS

The office will provide parents with a list of all students' names, addresses and phone numbers. It is up to each parent to arrange for transportation and provide the school office with the names of those individuals authorized pick-up your child. Each child and/or carpool member must be delivered and picked up from their designated pick up location.

TOYS FROM HOME

It is difficult for a young child to share a favorite toy, such as a doll or car, brought from home. Therefore, **we ask that toys, special items, etc. be left at home.** Most classrooms offer a "sharing time" as a part of their curriculum. Please choose items consistent with those requested by your teachers. Let your teachers know ahead of time if you have a "special" item such as a souvenir from a trip or a picture of a new sibling that your child would like to share. If you have any questions, please check with your teachers.

SCHOOL CLOTHING

Children should be dressed in washable play clothes to provide for an active learning experience. They will be indoors and outdoors, using paints, markers, sand, glue and water. Party clothes are not appropriate for school. **Rubber soled shoes are required for climbing on the playground** (rather than slick leather soles, sandals, boots, etc.). Only children with rubber soled shoes may climb on play equipment. All children may ride bikes, scooters and play in the sand. **Children must bring helmets from home in order to ride the bikes.** Unless the weather is rainy or extremely cold, we will play outside every day. Children need and enjoy outside time. Please label your child's outer wraps with his/her name. Your child's teachers will inform you about extra clothing and/or diapers to be left at school if needed. Remember PLAY is our work and children must be dressed appropriately.

PHONES

Pines has **cell and text messaging** free hallways. **Please refrain from using your cell phone** when dropping off and picking up your child. By doing this, you are choosing your child over your phone. 12

Parent Involvement

After a child is accepted to the preschool, the parents will be invited to participate in various projects, committees, and volunteer tasks. We invite parents to join their child at special events – Build It With Dad, Morning with Mom, Spring Fling, Pumpkin Patch, etc. There is a Parents’ Library available to our families. The books cover a wide range of topics dealing with children and are located in the director’s office. We schedule two Parent U speaker series during the year. Topics might include potty-training tips, positive parenting, setting boundaries, etc. All our parents are welcome to call the office with questions, suggestions, and to participate in our school.

Preschool Committee

The Director is responsible for the day to day operation of the Preschool. The Director is given oversight by the Preschool Committee who in turn is accountable to the Session (Governing body of Church Elders) of Pines Presbyterian Church. The composition of the Preschool Committee includes the Director, two parent representatives, one parent who is a member of the church, two members of the church, a Treasurer who is a church member, and a Moderator who is an Elder and member of Session. Parents who have an interest in servings as a parent representative to Preschool Committee are encouraged to contact the Preschool office or to send a letter to the Preschool addressed to the Preschool Committee Moderator.

Grievances

If at any time during the course of your child’s education at Pines Preschool you have problems, concerns, question or issues, please first confer with the child’s teacher in an effort to resolve the issue(s). If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of that conference, please next discuss the problem with the Director of the preschool. If the Director is unable to assist you to your satisfaction, you may request the Director advance a written request outlining your concerns to the Preschool Committee. The Committee will work to first resolve the issue through the Director or, at its discretion, the Committee may, on a limited basis, meet directly with a parent. In the unlikely situation that a family is unwilling to abide by the school’s policies outlined herein, the Committee reserves the right to remove your child(ren) from our school. All notices will be made in writing at the time of the decision. **Classroom email lists and phone numbers should never be used to share grievances with other parents.**

Emergency Management Plan

The safety of the children at Pines Presbyterian Preschool is of the utmost importance to all of us. As concerns about possible emergencies increase, we want you to know the plans that we have in place, should a crisis occur. While it is impossible to plan for every possibility, we evaluated and updated our crisis response plans and procedures, yearly. We have procedures in place for fire safety, severe weather, gas or chemical leak evacuation, intruders, injury to a child, release of children, national alerts and shelter-in-place. We pray that none of these procedures would ever be necessary, but as always the safety of your children is our primary concern.

SECURITY– Pines Preschool contracts with the Houston Police Department and employs off duty officers to be present on campus during school day five days a week from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM. This is intended to provide a sense of peace of mind for the children, teachers, and parents. The “Welcome House,” located by the entrance to the preschool, will serve as the home base for the policeman when he is not walking the church grounds. All doors of the church are locked during the day.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL – Certain emergencies might lead the school to want to release all students safely and quickly to their homes. Once notified of an emergency dismissal, a parent (or other person authorized by the parent) must arrive promptly for pick up. Teachers and staff will alert parents of the problem via text, *Remind*, and, if necessary, a phone call. Each child must be officially signed out by a parent or authorized person.

FIRE SAFETY – Fire drills are conducted monthly and all classes participate. Every room in the school displays the emergency procedures regarding fire evacuation and notes the primary and secondary evacuation routes. The building is equipped with fire/smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are strategically located around the building.

SEVERE WEATHER – The school is required to conduct a severe weather drill every three months. Teachers are trained in what to do in case of a tornado or high winds. Children will be gathered in the interior corridor, away from windows or exterior doors, until the danger has passed. The school monitors weather with a NOAA weather radio located in the school office. In the event of flooding, children would be kept in classrooms until parents could safely arrive to pick them up.

TOXIC FUMES OR SHELTER-IN-PLACE EMERGENCY – In the case that outside airborne contaminants are present in dangerous levels, the school will implement shelter-in-place procedures. This potential could be due to chemical truck or train accident, chemical plant explosion, pipeline rupture, outside gas leak or acts of terrorism or vandalism. Depending on the emergency and the degree of the threat, the school will decide the level of “sheltering” we will put in place:

- A) All children will be moved to the school office corridor where doors, windows, and vents will be sealed as needed.
- B) The building will go into lock-down mode meaning NO ONE enters or leaves until the threat is lifted.
- C) A/C and heating units will be shut down.
- D) Teachers will have student profiles with contact numbers, cell phones, email addresses, and when able, will begin to contact parents. ***It is essential that we have accurate, up-to-date information on your Student Profiles!***
- F) We will have access to hard wired phone, computer, emergency supplies, and restrooms. Enough bottled water, snacks, diapers, wipes, medical supplies, batteries, etc. will be available for a 24 hour lock-down.
- G) For any emergency, we will change the school voicemail recording to notify you of pertinent information concerning the emergency. We will not be answering the phone, as there will be other priorities to deal with.

DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL! If the school is in lock-down mode, the building will be secured and will NOT be opened to ANYONE. You should not put yourself at risk and should take precautions where you are. The teachers and staff are trained to take care of the children in the event of an emergency and will do so until an “all clear” is given. A battery-operated radio will be closely monitored until the “all clear” is given by civil defense or appropriate authorities.

LOCK-DOWN DUE TO INTRUDER OR SUSPICIOUS EVENTS ON OR NEAR BUILDING -

DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL! If the school is in a lock-down mode, the building will be secured. You should not put yourself at risk and you should take precautions AWAY from the building. Our goal is to keep your children, and you, safe during an emergency situation. The HPD officer will immediately investigate and, if need be, confront the individual. Teachers will be notified if the situation warrants a classroom lock-down or emergency evacuation. 911 will be called. The teachers and staff members are trained to take care of the children in the event of an emergency and will do so until an “all clear” is issued. Again, do not come to the school, you will not be allowed to get your child or enter the building.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION – In the event that the school must be evacuated because of toxic fumes indoors, danger of explosion, or any reason not related to an intruder on campus, the children will follow fire drill evacuation procedures. They will remain outside the building until teachers can safely move them to our “safe haven” across the street. **The Bendwood School Cafeteria, 12750 Kimberley, 77024 (713) 251-5200, is our designated safe hold place and teachers will remain with the children until parents can be contacted for immediate pickup.** Teachers will bring emergency information, cell phones and car keys. Parents or an authorized person must officially sign out their child.

INJURY TO A CHILD – The teacher will treat the injury and report to the parent, if the injury is minor. In the case of a more severe injury, an accident report will be filled out, and the appropriate first aid measures will be taken immediately to care for the child; the parents will be notified, and if necessary, parents will be asked to pick up the child for further medical treatment. If the injury is deemed an extreme emergency, the school will call 911. All teachers and staff are trained/certified in CPR and First- Aid. ***It is very important that all phone numbers and emergency information be kept current so that parents can be reached at all times.***

NATIONAL EMERGENCY – In the event that local, state, or federal government agencies (“Authorities”) declare an emergency, we will comply with the Authorities’ recommendations regarding school closure, or shelter-in-place. Parents are asked to listen to radio or television and follow the guidelines regarding the school closure or shelter-in-place order until the danger has passed.

PANDEMIC OR OTHER LOCAL OR NATIONAL HEALTH EMERGENCY – In addition to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, in the event that an Authority declares a health emergency affecting the area encompassing the Pines Preschool, the Preschool will follow the guidelines and directives issued by the Authorities, including without limitation, the Centers for Disease Control, the State of Texas, the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, Texas Child Care Licensing, Harris County, and the City of Houston. In the event of a directive by the Authorities to close facilities including the Preschool, the Director and your child’s teachers will communicate with you concerning the actions taken by the Preschool to comply with the Authorities’ directives, and any guidelines and protocols that the Preschool develops in conjunction with the Authorities to reopen the Preschool when the Authorities allow.

PANDEMIC OR OTHER LOCAL OR NATIONAL HEALTH EMERGENCY (cont.) -- During any period of closing, Preschool teachers will provide children and parents with classroom materials to allow continuing instruction at home during the closing. In the event of a closing longer than one calendar month, the Preschool Committee, in its sole discretion, may consider a tuition refund of up to 50% per calendar month the Preschool is required to be closed. No refund shall be considered for any period less than one full calendar month, nor shall any refund be given for the Last Month (May) Tuition Deposit and other non-refundable fees paid in advance.

SCHOOL CLOSING – Pines Preschool will follow the lead of SBISD in the event of weather-related school closings. In all other cases, we will make our decision independently from SBISD and as provided in the preceding paragraph. You will be notified by text, phone, or *Remind* if Pines closes for any reason. Otherwise, monitor the TV and radio for school closing information.

FIRE DRILL (18 MO—2 1/2 YEARS) - If in the classroom, the children will be led out with the circle rope (usual mode of moving from place to place). The two teachers plus motor skills teacher will guide or carry the children out the back door of the classroom. They will go directly to the parking lot escape to wait for further instructions. If needed, they will move to Bendwood Elementary, 12750 Kimberley, Houston, TX., 77024 (713-251-5200) to await further instructions.

DISASTER DRILL (18MO - 2 1/2 YEARS) - The children will be led out with the circle rope (usual mode of moving from place to place). The two teachers plus motor skills teacher will guide or carry the children out of the classroom door to the inner wall of the school (across from classroom). The children will sit towards the wall with their heads covered by their arms. The teachers will sit between children to reassure and encourage them that they are safe.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND PROTOCOLS - These preceding emergency management plans and protocols are no guarantee that the response to a specific crisis will be perfect. We can only make every reasonable effort to respond appropriately. The safety of your children is our primary concern, and the Preschool staff is prepared to implement a program that will efficiently deal with any situation that can impact our school, following any guidelines by the Authorities. In a crisis, information available at any given moment may be incomplete but every effort to provide accurate, appropriate response actions will be our priority, based on the information available at the time from the Authorities.

The information below is required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

- A) Each staff member is required to have one hour of child abuse training each year. The training is done through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and is titled “Reporting Abuse/Neglect – a guide for School professionals”. Topics covered include:
- How do I know if its abuse or neglect?
 - What if I’m not sure if its abuse or neglect?
 - How do I make a report?
 - What information do I need to make a report?
 - Is my information kept confidential?
 - Who is required to report abuse and neglect?
- Staff members will also take the E-reporting tutorial on reporting abuse and neglect. The Tutorial will offer a range of helpful hints on how to make an effective e-Report.
- B) Methods for increasing employees and parent awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect and warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect will be learned through greater understanding of the definition of abuse and neglect according to DFPS: (see DFPS flyer “Reporting Abuse/Neglect: a Guide for School Professionals – How do I know if it’s Abuse or Neglect?”)
- Physical injury
 - Sexual conduct
 - Mental and/or emotional injury
 - Neglect
- C) Methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of prevention techniques include:
- Annual Training by teachers.
 - Parent education classes.
 - Suggested readings for parents – <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/ques.cfm> and
 - Articles in the monthly newsletter.
 - Website for prevention techniques-
<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/child-safety-and-prtection/child-abuse-prevention-tips>
 - Volunteer time in your community.
 - Learn about mentoring programs.
- D) Strategies for coordination between the center and appropriate organizations include:
- Having the hot-line phone number posted in office, by the phones, parent handbook, and monthly newsletters. (1-800-252-5400).
 - Website posted in the office, by the phone, parent handbook and monthly newsletters.
<https://www.txabusehotline.org> (24 hours a day, 365 days a year).
 - Contact local professional counselor for further help (this could be a pastor, teacher, coach or trusted friend). A referral list is available in the office.
- E) Actions that the parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should take to obtain assistance and intervention include:
- Call the TXDFPS hotline (1-800-252-5400) or email <https://www.txabusehotline.org>
 - www.childwelfare.gov
 - Contact local professionals such as a pastor, counselor, teacher or trusted friend.

Find us at
www.pinespresbyterianpreschool.com

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Connie Pike, Director
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2021-2022

Pines is an equal opportunity employer.

**No child shall be denied access to the Pines Presbyterian Preschool program
due to race, creed, or national origin.**

Pines Preschool is a gang free zone.