



Parent Handbook
2024 - 2025

St. Paul United Church of Christ
127 St. Paul Street
Columbia, IL 62236
618-281-5102

preschool@stpaulcolumbia.org

Little Friends Preschool
“Serving the area since 1977”

Introduction

- Located at St. Paul UCC, 127 St. Paul ST., Columbia, IL 62236 618-281-5103 ext. 36
preschool@stpaulcolumbia.org
- Classes are held September through May on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 - For children ages 3 - 5 years old.
 - Qualified dedicated teachers
 - Screenings and Assessments
 - Parent/Teacher conferences
 - Friendly, supportive atmosphere
 - Variety of classroom activities, outdoor play, and field trips
 - Classes are led in the spirit of Christian community without any formal religious observance or instruction.

Little Friends Preschool’s goal is preparing children academically for kindergarten while helping them grow socially and emotionally.

Please print, sign and return the last page of this handbook.

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General Information

- Little Friends Preschool follows the Columbia Community Unit School District #4’s school calendar. We will be closed on the same days as the school district.
- Children must be 3 years old by September 1st and potty trained to start preschool.
- Little Friends Preschool respects the confidentiality of each child’s records. Records shall be confidential and limited to the
- preschool director unless a parent or guardian has granted written permission for release of information.
- Preschoolers at Little Friends Preschool are covered by St. Paul United Church of Christ’s property and liability insurance.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory policy

Little Friends Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

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Pickup Information

If a child is not picked up at the designated, agreed upon dismissal time, preschool staff will attempt to call every person listed on the child’s pickup section of the CFS 593 form and the emergency contact(s) listed on the child’s application form. For this reason, it is very important for parents/guardians to provide the preschool with up-to-date emergency contact information and numbers.

Little Friends Preschool will take the following actions if a parent or guardian does not pick up, or arrange to have someone pick up, his or her child at the designated, agreed upon time. The preschool is responsible for the protection and well-being of the child until the parent or authorities arrive. Preschool staff will not hold the child responsible for the situation and discussion of this issue will only be with the parent or guardian and never with the child. A staff person will remain with the child for one hour after dismissal. After one hour, the Columbia Police Department will be called for assistance in locating emergency contacts or in contacting the child abuse hotline.

Little Friends Preschool will also exercise the right to charge late fees calculated at \$5.00 per fifteen minutes a child is left in our care after the scheduled session.

The staff of Little Friends Preschool shall refuse to release a child to any person, whether related or unrelated to the child, who has not been authorized, in writing, by a parent or guardian and has reached the age of 18. Persons not known to the staff shall be required to provide a valid driver's license or photo card issued by the Secretary of State to establish their identity prior to a child’s release to them.

The persons listed in the “child pickup” section on the Illinois Form CFS 593, in addition to the parents or guardians, will constitute the primary list of person(s) occasionally, please notify the child’s teacher in writing and this note will be kept on file in the preschool records.

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Safety

For safety reasons, all entrance doors will remain locked until 8:45 a.m. At that time, doors will open and then relock at 9:15 a.m. If you are running late or pick up a child early, press the buzzer outside next to the door. The church office will let you in. Doors will unlock for dismissal at 11:45 a.m.

The staff of Little Friends Preschool will do everything in their power to ensure the safety and well-being of every child. Neither Little Friend staff nor St. Paul Church can be held responsible for accidents or exposure to communicable disease that might occur due to factors beyond their control.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, Little Friends Preschool follows what the officials at Columbia Community Unit School District #4 determine whether to cancel school or start on a delayed schedule.

If the Columbia School cancels school or starts on a delayed schedule, Little Friends Preschool will be canceled either way.

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Health & Sickness Policy

If your child will not be at preschool, PLEASE call the church office at 618-281-5102 extension 36 and leave a message.

Children will not be allowed to attend preschool under the following circumstances:

- Children suspected of having or diagnosed as having an infectious, contagious, or communicable disease - examples include, but not limited to, COVID-19, RSV, Influenza, Chicken Pox, Pink Eye and Strep throat.
- Children must be free from vomiting and or diarrhea for at least 24 hours (medicine free).
- Children with a fever (oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher or under the arm temperature of 99.4 degrees or higher). Children may return when their temperature is normal for the last 24 hours without a fever reducer in their system.
- Children suspected of having or diagnosed as having head lice.

Accident/Incident forms

- Forms for accidents or other incidents will be completed when something unforeseen happens to your child. The parent/guardian and the director will both sign the form, and each will keep a copy.

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Discipline and Discharge Policy

Discipline Policy

The preschool staff establish and post basic classroom rules: such as, listen to the teachers, follow directions, do not run indoors, do not throw objects, be kind, etc. The children shall be praised when the rules have been followed. If a child breaks a rule and exhibits undesirable behavior(s), he/she will then be immediately corrected with a calm, verbal explanation why the behavior is not desirable. If the same child repeats the undesirable behavior, he/she will be removed from the activity where the behavior occurred and encouraged to participate in another setting. If the child continues to display poor, unacceptable behavior, he/she will then be separated from the group for a regulated period of time, such as, one minute per year of age. If necessary, a note about the incident or behavior will be sent home to the child's/guardians.

No corporal punishment will be used at any time or for any reason. The only time a child shall be held against their will is when he/she is endangering himself/herself or others.

If there is an assessment of a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior, the entire staff shall be aware of it and cooperate in carrying out a specific plan developed for him/her. When a pattern of unacceptable behavior exists, staff will communicate with the parents as to the preschool's plan to modify the child's behavior to be consistent with the parent's efforts at home.

Discharge Policy

After the adjustment period of one month, if a child is still having problems that are disturbing or upsetting to the child or the rest of the class, a conference will be held with the teacher and parents/guardians. After the conference, a one-month trial period will be held using the various suggestions that came from the discussion. After one month, another conference will be held to evaluate the situation, and if all parties involved feel the situation has improved, the plan of action will be continued. If the situation has not improved, the parents will be requested to remove their child from preschool

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Tuition Information

I understand that my child’s monthly preschool tuition will be \$175.00. Exceptions will be the ½ months of December and May in which tuition is \$87.50. Tuition is due on the first day of the month.

A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged on the 5th of the month. If tuition has not been paid by the last day of the month, the student will not be able to return until all tuition and fees are paid.

There is an annual registration fee of \$175.00 payable at the time of registration. **This fee is non-refundable.**

The preschool director will notify parents of any tuition checks returned because of insufficient funds and request payment immediately for tuition plus any bank fees incurred by the preschool.

Any adjustments to the above amounts must be approved by the Little Friends Preschool governing board.

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Signature Page

I have received the Little Friends Preschool Handbook.

CHILD'S NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Initial below stating each policy has been reviewed and read.

____ **Tuition Information**

____ **Pickup Information**

____ **Health & Sickness Policy**

____ **Safety & Weather Policy**

____ **Discipline Policy**

____ **General Information**