



Family Handbook

PLEASE READ ME CAREFULLY

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Welcome to the Pleasant Hill Preschool Family!

Pleasant Hill Preschool (PHP) welcomes you to our Preschool family! The information in this handbook will be helpful in familiarizing you with the policies and procedures at PHP. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask any questions you may have. The Preschool program is a ministry of Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church. We offer a developmentally appropriate program within a loving, Christian environment. Our staff will partner with you to nurture your children on their own unique journeys.

We look forward to a wonderful school year!

Talitha Minton

Director

The Preschool Board

A Preschool Board governs the Preschool. This board reviews the financial records, staff, classes, and curriculum. The board also agrees to fees and policies and governs any other matters which may occur during the school year that are not already covered by the Preschool's By-Laws.

The board is made up of the following members: Preschool Director, Board Chair, Session-Preschool Liaison, Parent Representative, and four At-Large Members from the Pleasant Hill congregation.

Notice of Exemption: This program is not a licensed childcare facility. This program is not required to be licensed by the Georgia Department of Early Childcare and Learning, and this program is exempt from state licensure requirements. PHP falls under the *“Educational programs for children two through six years of age and operate for no more than 4 consecutive hours per day.”*

A Note from Pastor Jennie Sankey

Dear Pleasant Hill Preschool Families,

On behalf of Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church, I want to welcome you to the 2024-2025 PHP school year! We are so excited to have you as part of our school. Our congregation loves having the Preschool's joyful noise and playful bodies in the building. I have the privilege of leading the Preschool in Chapel once a month. The themes we visit during this time are broad: love, friendship, thankfulness.

Accompanied by stories from the Bible, simple songs, and prayers of gratitude, this time together is a delight. Whatever your faith tradition, we are glad you are part of our school, and hope you feel welcome in the PHP community.

This church loves sharing our space with Pleasant Hill Preschool. From the classrooms to the playground to the sanctuary, I believe the playful energy your children bring to this place is sacred. You can trust that in this place your children will be loved, cared for, and safe.

Our Preschool families are always welcome to join our congregation in worship, service, learning, and fellowship, so please feel free to contact me if you would like to know more about the church. As a member of the Preschool board and as a pastor of Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church, I am grateful to be part of this community with you, and we look forward to seeing your children filling our hallways and classrooms soon.

Peace be on your heart as the school year begins,

Pastor Jennie Sankey

Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church
Associate Pastor of Christian Education
Pastor Liaison to the Preschool Board
jennie@pleasanthillpc.org
770-497-0233

Mission Statement

Pleasant Hill Preschool is a Christian preschool. Our program provides a place where play becomes the tool for learning in a warm, loving environment. The curriculum nurtures the child's total growth and development through activities that are appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. Skills are introduced through materials and activities which are both child-centered and teacher-directed. Work is planned that emphasizes the process rather than the product, fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride. The program is designed to meet children where they are, so that success is always experienced, and the love of learning is nurtured. The focus is on the development of the whole child with attention given to cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and faith growth.

We welcome all children and families regardless of their national origin, race, color, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender, and sexual orientation and gender identity. We value the diversity of the families who choose Pleasant Hill Preschool as the place to care for their children, and also invite that diversity in our staffing. All our programs strive to develop strong self-esteem. This goal, along with the modeling of anti-bias attitudes by adults, allows children to be accepting and understanding of others. We work hard to create a bias-free environment and ask parents to support us in this effort.

Philosophy

Our Preschool will provide a quality social experience in a warm, loving Christian environment with the realization that all children pass through various stages of growth and development. Each child's development is uniquely his or her own and will be handled as such. All children will develop positive feelings about themselves, their abilities, and their development. The time your child spends at Preschool will be happy and relaxed. Each class will follow a daily schedule so that your child will derive a sense of security and structure.

Goals and Objectives

1. Promote Christian attitudes and actions
2. Help children know themselves as unique and important persons
3. Provide developmentally appropriate curriculum designed to meet the needs of every child
4. Create an anti-biased environment
5. Give each child a strong foundation for the love of learning
6. Build on fine and large motor skills
7. Expand verbal communication skills
8. Encourage language development
9. Encourage reasoning through first-hand discovery
10. Provide a warm, loving environment

Important General Information

Please make sure to read ALL newsletters, notes, calendars and emails from teachers and the Director. Pay particular attention to days your child needs to bring something in from home. There is no better way to show your child that you think his/her school is important.

PHP uses a car-rider system for morning drop-off and afternoon pickup. YOU MUST follow all the procedures and always show respect for others in the carpool line. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY ALL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES included in this handbook.

Please send all communication *in writing* to the teacher. Verbal messages are not always delivered. Sending a message through Procure is the easiest and best way to communicate to your child's teacher quickly. In case of an emergency or problem, please call the Preschool office at 770-476-7816, and we will be happy to relay your message to the classroom. Preschool office hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. If you call the Preschool during these hours and do not reach us, please leave a message on the voice mail and we will return your call promptly.

General Safety/Security

The doors to our Preschool wing will remain locked during Preschool hours. If you need to enter our preschool for an arranged activity, please do so by ringing the preschool doorbell, located on the drop-off/pick-up doors.

Enrollment Policy

Children will be enrolled in PHP based on space availability. A child must turn the appropriate age by September 1st to be enrolled in the program.

There is a non-refundable registration fee for each child due at the time of registration. The activity fee and supply fee are due with the first two months of tuition. This money will be used to purchase necessary supplies for the Preschool as well as covering the cost of all monthly special school-wide events.

Tuition and Fees Policies

Tuition is broken down into 9 equal monthly payments. The school year runs from September-May. Tuition is paid one month in advance (August-April) and is due on the first of every month. Sickness, weather closings, and absenteeism do not affect the amount of monthly tuition fees. If no payment has been received or is being processed by the seventh of the month, an additional \$25.00 will be assessed. If late tuition is not paid or in process by the ninth of the month, the student will not be permitted to come to school until tuition has been paid in full or a payment plan has been agreed upon with the Director. You will be invoiced on the first of every month through Procure. You can pay through the Procure app using credit card, debit card, or by setting up an automatic withdrawal from your bank account (ACH). Paying through Procure is our preferred method of payment for the school. If you need to make other arrangements for payment, please contact the director.

You will receive a monthly tuition receipt. Please save these receipts for when you need to file taxes. You have access to all receipts through the Procure app for tax filing purposes.

The school Tax ID is: 58-1633411

All tuition payments and fees are non-refundable and only transferrable upon the discretion of the director.

If your child enrolls and starts school after the month has begun, their tuition will be adjusted accordingly: if your child starts school with 50% or more of the days in the month remaining, they will pay the full month's tuition. If your child starts school with less than 50% of the days in the month remaining, they will pay half of that month's tuition.

The annual preschool tuition is collected in nine equal monthly payments and allows for school closings, national holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break. This means that during months that we are only in school for two weeks (December & May), your tuition payment remains the same. Again, tuition is calculated and divided over 9 MONTHS. There will be no refunds made for unattended classes.

Extended Absences

If a student is going to be absent for more than 30 calendar days and tuition is not kept current, the student will be unenrolled and will forfeit their spot in the class. In this case, there is a fee of \$100 for reregistration and reenrollment of the student. Every effort will be made for a student to return to the same class and teacher, but this cannot be guaranteed. There is no exception for this policy.

Sibling Discount

A 20% discount for younger siblings applies to registration and tuition fees only.

Withdrawal from Program

A one-month written notice of withdrawal is required. There is no exception to this policy.

School Hours

Class hours are 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. No child will be admitted early for any reason.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARRIVING ON TIME CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH. All children are happier when they arrive at the proper time. Everything we do in the classroom is important; we do NOT want your child to miss out. Please be on time!

Afternoon dismissal is promptly at 1:00pm and ends promptly at 1:15pm. If no one has arrived to pick up your child by 1:15pm, your child will be taken back to the school office or their classroom to wait for you or an approved adult to pick them up. The adult picking up your child must come to the front doors of the preschool and ring the doorbell to collect them. A \$20 late fee will be charged for every 15 minutes, or part thereof, that a child is

picked up after 1:15pm. Late is defined as no more cars are in the pick-up line and the door to the preschool has been shut and locked.

If you are going to be early OR late picking up your child, please let us know. If you call first, we will be sure to let your child know so they can be prepared. Please leave a message if no one answers your call since we check messages first when a parent is late. You can also send a message through Procure.

Early pick-ups must be done by 12:30pm to ensure there is a minimal amount of disruption to the end of the school day.

School Calendar

THE PRESCHOOL FOLLOWS ITS OWN SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR. The school year for PHP starts on the first Tuesday after Labor Day and ends two weeks before Memorial Day in May.

Our school calendar will be similar to the academic calendar for Gwinnett County Public Schools. When there is a holiday for the Gwinnett County Public Schools, we will also be closed. We are not closed on Digital Learning Days.

In case of severe weather, we will close if the Gwinnett County Public Schools are closed. Please listen to AM750 WSB, a local television station, or check their website.

Your Child's Day

Your child's day will focus on learning centers, large and small group activities, and independent play. These activities will allow children to learn about themselves and to develop relationships with friends and teachers. Except for simple structured games, children need to play in their own ways. The teacher steps in when a situation goes beyond the child's ability to handle it.

Small and large group times enable a child to work both independently and cooperatively. Skills are developed during this time to aid your child for present and future educational experiences (examples: listening and verbal skills, decision making, taking turns, hand-eye coordination, and cognitive development).

Children need a variety of experiences as they choose to express themselves. Art, creative movement, puppets, dress-up, and music add special interest to the day. They will be used for enjoyment and developing creativity.

Preparing for the First Day

Plan your schedule so your child can be rested, unhurried, well fed, and relaxed about the first morning and every day of Preschool.

Expect your child to go to school happily and to have a good time. Your own insecurity will be sensed quickly. Talk about Preschool in a positive way. Name specific activities for your child to look forward to: "You will enjoy playing on the playground!"

Use the teachers' names frequently so your child becomes familiar with them.

Read all newsletters, notes, and calendars. Pay particular attention to days your child needs to bring something from home.

If your child finds adjusting to Preschool difficult, please be patient. It can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks for a child to feel comfortable separating from you. Perhaps a security blanket or other item is needed. Feel free to call the office and check on your child. It helps to know the tears really do stop.

Transportation

PHP does not provide transportation to or from the Preschool. Each family is responsible for dropping off and picking up their child. Carpooling with another family is allowed but **MUST** be in writing. The person picking up your child must be listed on your approved pick-up list and will be required to present a photo ID to the director (or teacher in Director's absence). Please let us know if there is a change to your child's transportation, such as going home with another child or adult. You must send a written note explaining the change. If an emergency arises during the day, please call the Preschool office at 770-476-8716 and let the Director know. She will need to see the ID of the approved person picking up your child. There will be **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this policy.

Car Seats

According to O.C.G.A. 40-8-76 (Georgia Code) children under eight years of age must ride in an approved child restraint system and the driver shall provide proper restraint of a child in a child passenger restraint system appropriate for such child's height and weight and is approved by the U.S. government.

We require all families to have age-appropriate car seats for their child. Please keep this in mind if your child will be riding to or from school with another family. The preschool will allow parents to drop off a car seat with their child during morning carpool if they are riding with another family in the afternoon. The preschool does **NOT** provide car seats but **WILL** enforce this safety measure.

Curriculum

The curriculum at PHP is a developmentally appropriate plan of activities to encourage growth within each age group's objectives. We are committed to meeting the needs of the whole child with learning opportunities for social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual development. We create these opportunities by offering an environment which includes both child- and teacher-guided activities, using large and small groups for instruction. Thematic lessons are planned each month as a fun and interesting way to introduce the underlying age group objectives. We have the WINGS curriculum available for our teachers to use.

Procare/Communication

Procare is a software and an app that the preschool uses to communicate with parents and families, send invoices, manage attendance, etc. Each parent/guardian is highly encouraged to download the Procare app upon registration. This will be used by your child's teacher weekly for communication and sending messages and photos to parents. The director will also use the app to communicate about school wide events and regular newsletters. It can also be used for billing and sending payments to the school.

Specials/Enhancement Programs

To enhance the classroom experience and to help accomplish the overall goals and objectives of the preschool, the following specials are provided. Each one of these is offered once a month so children have one weekly special to look forward to.

- **Chapel Time** - This activity is led by our pastor of Christian Education, Rev. Jennie Sankey. Lessons are made up of stories, songs, and prayers using a variety of resources.
- **Story Time** - The children will meet in the Preschool library for storytelling fun. Puppets and other props are often used to enhance the experience.
- **Music Class** - Let's sing and dance together! This program focuses on a child's gross motor skills, teaching social and emotional learning through song, and fosters a child's creativity and imagination.
- **Special Events** - This will be when families can get involved (if they are available). Each month, a special activity will be planned. Some of these include: Fall Fun Day, Christmas Ornament Making, Storybook Character Parade, etc.

The Preschool will also have two school-wide functions outside of the normal school hours. These include the International Night of Thanksgiving and Art Show in November and the School Carnival/Trike-a-thon in late April.

Immunization Forms

The Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-771 entitled "IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS" requires all daycare centers and preschools to have on file a current immunization certificate. The only acceptable form to verify preschool immunization is DHR Form 3231. It is expected that parents will provide proper immunization forms to Pleasant Hill Preschool before your child's first day of school. Your child will not be allowed to attend Preschool unless proof of immunization is presented before attending. **We do not accept children in our program who have not been vaccinated and we do not accept religious exemptions. Children on a delayed schedule may be granted admission. This is decided on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Director.**

Sickness

The following are the policies PHP will follow to help mitigate sickness:

- HEPA air purifiers in each room
- Daily deep cleaning of each room

- Frequent hand washing/sanitizing built into the classroom routine

Please let us know within 24 hours if your child shows **any signs of illness**. The Preschool assumes that responsible families will **not send** children to school who show any sign of illness, such as:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Congestion | • Fever higher than 100.4 |
| • Sore throat | • Diarrhea |
| • Excessive coughing or runny nose | • Nausea and/or vomiting |
| • Skin rash | • Body aches |
| • Earache | • Discharge from eyes, ears |

Children with a rash will be sent home. We must have a written notice from your child's doctor stating they are allowed back into the school. This is a precautionary measure to ensure that your child is not suffering from something that could be contagious to the other children in the Preschool and is based on the recommendation of several pediatricians in this area. While we realize some rashes occur after a child is no longer contagious, this can only be determined by a doctor's visual examination of your child. Most diseases with rashes are highly contagious; this rule is in place for the protection of all children using the facilities.

We insist, for their own sake and for the protection of other children and staff, that sick children be kept at home until **they have been symptom free for 24 hours** (this is a general recommendation from a pediatrician. Your child's pediatrician may give a different time depending on your child's illness—be sure to ask when they can return). Children should be fever free **without medication** for 24 hours before returning to school. Since the symptoms of COVID-19 are so similar to symptoms of the cold and flu in children, we ask parents to be extra cautious and contact your child's physician to see if a COVID-19 test is needed (this can be an at-home test or PCR test). If any of these symptoms appear at school, parents will be notified to come and collect their child. If parents cannot be reached, we will contact the people listed as emergency contacts.

Symptom Free for 24 hours Defined:

Your child has had a normal temperature of 98.6 and has been symptom free of any of the above for 24 hours before they are allowed to return to school.

Fever Example: Child wakes up from a nap at 3 pm Monday with a fever. Fever is reduced within the hour. Child's fever remains normal for 24 hours but child may not return to school until Wednesday.

Other Symptom Example: Child has diarrhea or vomiting early Wednesday morning around 7 am. Same occurs again at 12 noon, but no symptoms again that day. Child remains free of symptoms by 8 am Thursday morning. Child cannot attend school because he/she will not have been symptom free for 24 hours until 12 noon Thursday. The child may return to school Friday if he/she has remained symptom free.

Please let us know within **24 hours** if your child contracts any highly contagious or communicable disease such as:

- Lice
- Chicken Pox
- Strep Throat
- Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis
- Flu
- Covid-19
- Hand/Foot/Mouth Disease
- other viral infections: Mumps, Measles, Fifth Disease, etc.

The Preschool will then notify other families regarding possible exposure as necessary. You may phone the Preschool at 770-476-8716, or email us at preschool@pleasanthillpc.org. Make sure to ask your child's doctor when they are allowed to return to school, and let the Preschool know.

If you travel to another country, CDC Guidelines on quarantines must be followed.

The preschool will follow current CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 isolation, quarantining, and close contact policies.

The staff are all trained in CPR and First Aid in cases of emergency. Minor bumps and bruises will be treated with lots of TLC, soap, and band-aids. Families will be notified with an accident report.

Allergies/Health Concerns

Prior to the beginning of school, parents of children with severe allergies and/or other health concerns should arrange to meet with the Director and their child's teacher to review appropriate action in case of an emergency, as well as preventative options. Parents should provide a step-by-step, written action plan for the child that will be kept in the classroom's emergency bag as well as in the office.

Medications/Epi-Pens/Inhalers

Prescription medications (including epi-pens and inhalers) may be administered only after a meeting has occurred involving parents and pertinent staff members regarding administration procedures and a written permission form has been completed. The medication must be brought to the school in the original prescription bottle, showing prescription number, name of medication, date filled, child's name, physician's name and directions for dosage. Over the counter medications must be provided and are administered only with the permission of the parent and/or physician. In non-emergency situations, medication will be administered in the Directors' Office in the presence of another staff member. Any medication not picked up after the end of the school year will be disposed of after June 30.

Children requiring EPI-PENS must have at least one EPI-PEN, preferably two, at the preschool. It will be kept in the classroom emergency bag. It is the parent's responsibility to send a replacement Epi-pen if the current one expires during the school year.

Stitches/Casts

We do our best to accommodate children with temporary inconveniences such as stitches, casts, crutches, etc. A child must have a letter from his/her doctor informing us of the child's abilities while at school. This letter must be given to the Director before the child will be allowed to remain in school. The Director may confer with the Preschool Board to determine if the child can remain in school during the time of recovery.

Clothing/Personal Belongings

Mark any removable clothing, books, or other items with your child's name. Lunch boxes and food containers **MUST** be labeled.

Dress your child in clothing for play that is durable, comfortable, and easily managed by the child. The children will spend time on the playground every day, weather permitting, so please dress your child appropriately for safe play.

When choosing clothing:

- Select shoes that give support and allow freedom of movement (tennis shoes). Loose sandals, rain boots, and shoes that slip off easily are NOT allowed.
- It is recommended that children wear shorts/leggings under their dresses and skirts instead of tights.
- We cannot be responsible for ruined clothing or lost articles.
 - Please send extra clothing in your child's book bag on their first day of school. This will be kept in the classroom.

Children's Book Bags:

- Please send your child's book bag every day. It must be large enough to hold a lunch box, water bottle, and a take-home folder (9.5" width and 11.5" height).
- Please do not allow your children to bring toys to school unless a teacher has asked them to do so (show-and-tell).

Lunches

All children will eat with their class in the classroom. This is a great time for them to learn independence, table manners, and conversation skills. We strongly encourage you to send nutritious well-balanced lunches. We are unable to microwave or refrigerate food for any child.

- Children need to bring their lunches in lunch boxes. Please include a napkin and utensils if needed. Label all lunch boxes and containers with your child's name. Please send fruit and veggies that have been cut into **small** pieces.
- Children will be encouraged to eat their "growing" food first. Desserts will be offered when most of their growing food has been eaten. Please do not send whole

- grapes, candy, peanuts, popcorn, hotdogs, or anything that constitutes a choking hazard in the lunch box.
- We are not *banning* sugary foods from the classroom; rather we are *limiting* the consumption of sugary sweets. Making the best quality food available for our children is of course essential for their future health and well-being.

We do not offer snack time in addition to lunch, so please make sure your child eats breakfast before coming to school.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special, and we celebrate after lunch in a SIMPLE manner. Parents are welcome to communicate with their child's teacher the day they want to celebrate their child's birthday. Your child's teacher will let you know what time you can come in and how they celebrate in that class (small treat, have lunch with your child, read a book, etc.). NO party favors, balloons, or goodie bags may be given out or sent home as part of the birthday celebration. Children with summer birthdays may arrange a day to celebrate during the school year. Please remember, NO BALLOONS OR CANDLES are allowed.

School Photos

Individual pictures will be taken in the fall, and class and individual pictures will be taken in the spring. You will be asked to prepay for these.

Visitation and Conferences

Families are only allowed in the Preschool wing for pre-planned events that you have signed up ahead of time to help with: reading to a class, birthday celebration, helping with an event, etc.

Since the teacher's first responsibility is to the children, DO NOT expect a conference outside of the scheduled fall and spring conferences to happen while classes are in session.

Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at school. Please share information that will make us more sensitive to your child's needs.

You may request a conference at any time during the school year. Please write a note to the teacher so that a mutually convenient time may be scheduled.

Mandatory conferences for all classes will be held once in the fall and again in the spring. The fall conference is a 15-minute check-in on how your child is doing, and the spring conference is a 20-minute discussion about their formal evaluation. Our preference is to meet with both parents.

All teachers have morning and after school responsibilities; therefore, the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up are not appropriate times to discuss personal issues concerning your child.

Discipline

Pleasant Hill Preschool believes in maintaining a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency, and firmness. The children are reminded of the rules of the center frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Positive behavior is encouraged by:

- Redirection and substitution – Channel the child’s attention elsewhere and offer something else to do when applicable.
- Model and problem solve – praise examples of expected behavior and offer suggestions to modify behavior with role playing.
- Time apart from the group helps get feelings under control.

Aggressive Behavior

Biting will not be tolerated. If a child bites another child, written notification will be sent to both sets of parents. If the same child bites a second time, the parents will be required to pick the child up from school immediately. A meeting will be scheduled with the teachers, parents, and administration to determine if the child will be allowed to continue in the program (the child will not be allowed to attend school prior to this meeting).

If the teachers and Director agree that all appropriate measures have been taken to handle behavior issues and these measures are not working, the Preschool will request time with the parents to discuss the issues. Most situations can be resolved when the parents and Preschool staff work together.

Dismissal Policy

The Preschool further reserves the right to dismiss a child if this child requires supervision above and beyond reasonable limits or restricts a teacher’s time or ability to work with the other children in the classroom.

The following are additional conditions that will cause your child’s participation to be terminated:

- Behavior problems that cannot be resolved within a designated time frame. We reserve the right to terminate participation immediately if we consider the behavior to be severe or to represent a safety issue, or if we feel we have exhausted all efforts and behavior continues to worsen.
- Unresolved disagreements with parents over policies.

Students with Special Needs

The Preschool Board reserves the right to dismiss any child having a physical, mental, or emotional condition, which, in the Board’s and Director’s judgement, poses a possible threat to the health, welfare, or safety of other students. The Preschool further reserves the right to dismiss a child if this child requires supervision above and beyond reasonable limits or restricts a teacher’s time or ability to work with the other children in the classroom.

The Preschool cannot accommodate any child having a physical, mental, or emotional condition which requires special supervision or handling and/or which requires the dedication of special facilities or teachers for the child.

If your child requires an individual evaluation or observation in a classroom setting by a county or private specialist, the parent/guardian needs to make arrangements with the Director and the child's teacher before that evaluation or observation occurs. It is also beneficial to receive a report from the specialist so that we may be more helpful in working with your child. The specialist may require the teacher or Director to fill out an evaluation form, and we will accommodate this request. If your child requires further services to occur within the school day, this is very welcome and must be coordinated with the Director and teacher. We are happy to work with any other childcare professionals and developmental specialists to ensure your child has the most tools and services at their disposal.

Screenings and Evaluations

PHP knows that early intervention is important. We have an occupational therapist, physical therapist, and a speech therapist on campus twice a year to conduct screenings. This is optional and is paid for by the parent/guardian. If payment for the screenings proves to be cost prohibitive, yet important for the teachers and parents to gain a clearer perspective of the needs of the child, financial assistance is available to a limited number of families. If this is the case, please contact the director. Teachers will also refer to the CDC Milestone guidelines if they have concerns about your child's development. They will refer you to your child's pediatrician for further steps and may recommend further evaluation to be completed by special educational services in your county of residence.

Bathroom/Potty-Training Policy

The following guidelines have been established:

2-year-old program - Children who are not yet trained will be changed as necessary. The Preschool expects the children to come to school in a clean, dry diaper/pull-up. Diapers are to be furnished by the parents. Please label all diapers/pull-ups with your child's name. Children who are trained will be assisted in the bathroom as needed (clothing, wiping, flushing, handwashing).

When a child is getting ready to be trained, the parents need to speak with their child's teacher to be sure they both feel the child is ready to begin training in the school environment. Please try to begin training during a school vacation so that the child has the best chance to succeed at school. Please remember, the teachers will cooperate as much as possible, but they cannot be expected to take an individual child to the bathroom every 20-30 minutes. Please include a change of clothes, underpants and socks in the child's school bag and replace when necessary. The teachers will ask the child in training at least 3 times a day if they would like to use the bathroom, but we will never under any circumstances force a child to sit on the toilet. As you train your child at home, please keep in mind that "training" a child includes wiping, flushing, hand washing, and cleanliness of the bathroom. When

children are learning bathroom use, it is best to avoid overalls, snaps, belts, zippers, tights, hose, and bodysuits/onesies. Elastic waist pants and simple layers are best.

3-year-old program – Children must be fully potty-trained and will be expected to use the bathroom independently and leave it clean. Flushing the potty, wiping, pulling up and down clothing, and washing hands are independent skills we expect of each child. At Preschool, we verbally encourage children to assist themselves—we do not assist with wiping.

4-year-old program - All children are expected to be totally independent in all areas of bathroom use (clothing, wiping, flushing, handwashing, cleanliness of bathroom).

For all potty trained children - While we expect more accidents the first week or so of school, continued frequent accidents after 2 weeks has elapsed may necessitate a brief break from school for a few days to work on solidifying potty training skills. Exceptions to this policy can be made in the event of medical needs and/or behavioral and developmental delays. We will work with families as much as possible to facilitate success in this new skill.

Fire Safety/Severe Weather Procedures

Fire safety is a part of the curriculum for the children and emphasis is on safety procedures. Our practices will be done in an effective, non-threatening manner. Evacuation routes are posted in each room. Fire drills will be conducted monthly throughout the year. We also will have a special visit from our local fire station to help emphasize the importance of fire safety.

Emergency procedures are in place as well for any severe weather/intruder situations that may occur.

Point of Refuge

Should there be a reason for the Preschool to vacate our building and church property, our Point of Refuge will be W. P. Jones Park. The park is located adjacent to the church property on Pleasant Hill Road.

Emergency Closings

Rarely does any preschool have to close due to illness or contagious health reasons of the children or staff. However, if more than 2/3rds of our children should be sick or affected on any given preschool day, we reserve the right to close our Preschool until we feel the brunt of the illness or reason for the closing has passed.

Should the staff of the Preschool have a high absentee rate of more than 50% of teaching staff, and no substitute can be found, we reserve the right to close the school until it is determined that we have enough teachers/substitutes to hold classes safely.

Should there be any structural damage or condition to our building that would make it unsafe or unsuitable to occupy the building, we reserve the right to close the school.

Should severe weather occur or be predicted after Gwinnett County Schools have opened for that day, we reserve the right to close the school.

Every means and consideration will be given to notify parents of an emergency closing. If there is no time, or not enough time to call the parents, a note will be posted in our morning carpool line, if possible, alerting you to the closing.

Missed Days

If more than 5 days are missed due to weather or other unavoidable conditions, these days will be made up at the discretion of the Preschool Board.

Custody

If there are any custody issues regarding a child, a copy of the court order/ document verifying legal custody must be presented and will be kept on file in the Preschool Office.

Child Abuse

We are required to report any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children Services.

Family Participation

Parental and family involvement is the best indication of a child's educational success. To help facilitate this, we request that each family volunteers two hours of their time each school year. This time can be divided up into increments of one hour, if need be. These hours can be spent volunteering during special events, in the set up or preparation for special events and activities, or helping teachers and the director around the school. There will be specific tasks assigned when volunteering so there will be no guesswork as to what a family member would be doing. Sign-ups will be made available multiple times throughout the school year through Sign-Up Genius. In the case that family schedules or transportation access limits their physical involvement, options to donate small items to the school for events and activities will also be available.

Families are not allowed in the Preschool wing unless they have signed up ahead of time to help with a special event or to celebrate their child's birthday.

Room Parent

Being a room parent is another excellent way to get involved in your child's class, our school, and fulfill our request for family volunteers. Room parents play a crucial role in assisting the teachers and enhancing the classroom experience. They help the teachers communicate with parents, coordinate volunteers for special classroom events and/or activities, and help coordinate any classroom contributions to teacher birthdays and/or teacher appreciation. Every classroom uses their room parent(s) in a unique way, so specifics vary slightly

between classes. Please contact the director and your child's teacher if you have any questions about this role in your child's classroom.

Parents as Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are needed on occasion. If you are interested in being a Substitute Teacher, please sign up at the Parent Orientation, Open House, or let the Director know. You will need to complete a background check before being allowed to substitute in a classroom. You will never be asked to substitute in your child's classroom. Substitutes are considered contract workers, are paid \$50/day, and are paid by check from Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church. Substitutes are contacted by the director through the WhatsApp group. Many requests for substitutes are last minute, but you may also be asked in advance if dates are known. Substituting is not always convenient, but it is an extremely important need throughout the school year. You can add or remove your name at any time by contacting the Director.

Cell Phone Use Policy

For the safety and well-being of the children at the Preschool, a cell phone (including hands free) should never be used while driving on the church's property, during drop-off/pick-up time, or while attending an event. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Social Media

Please take time to "like" us on our Preschool Facebook and Instagram page. We will only post children's photos on our social media with your permission. We will never include children's names. We understand if you want to post photos of your child while at Preschool events on social media, but please respect the privacy of others and do not post any other child's photo or video without parent permission.

Insurance

Our insurance policy provides liability coverage for your child if an injury is related to church's negligence (failure to maintain a safe environment, lack of adequate supervision, etc.) If there is no negligence, the church is not liable for a child's injury.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Morning Drop-Off

Beginning the first day of school, all cars will enter the church property using the main entrance on Pleasant Hill Road or by turning left on Park Bluff Lane, then turning left into the **second** entrance to the church in the back of the sanctuary. When you enter, you will immediately turn left and continue circling the long way around the parking lot. (This will eliminate cars being stuck in the turn lane on Pleasant Hill Rd.) Continue until you approach the covered driveway that is located in front of the sanctuary. At 9:30 AM, our teachers will begin unloading the children.

2-year-olds: All children must be unbuckled prior to entering the drop-off line. Because 2-year-olds are still rear facing, they may remain in their seats and teachers will gently lift them out of their seats and out of the car. Please have their bag ready to go on the floorboard under their seat so teachers can easily reach it. It is strongly recommended that no adults sit in the back with the child. This makes the physical separation and transition to school that much harder for everyone, especially during the first few weeks of starting school.

3s and 4s: All children must be unbuckled prior to entering the drop-off line. 3- and 4-year-olds need to be fully unbuckled and ready to exit the car with teacher assistance when it is their turn for drop-off. Teachers will not lift 3- and 4-year-olds from their car seats. Please remove any and all barriers that would prohibit your child from safely and easily exiting the passenger side of the car. If your child needs more assistance getting out of their seat, please park and assist them out of their car seat before joining the line. Your child can also sit in the front passenger seat while in the drop-off line if they are unable to safely exit from the rear passenger door.

All children must exit from the passenger's side of the car onto the sidewalk. This will avoid children and teachers having to walk between the cars. As soon as your child and their teacher are on the sidewalk, you may slowly proceed to exit the church property. Do not drive around another car unless instructed to do so by school staff. If you arrive at school after 9:40, please ring the Preschool doorbell located on the sanctuary doors where pick-up and drop-off occur. **No child may enter the building alone.**

Afternoon Pick-Up

Afternoon pick-up will follow the same procedure as the morning drop-off. We will begin loading the cars at 1:00 pm. Each afternoon, you will need to hang the name card from your rearview mirror. All children will get into the car directly from the sidewalk. Please pull to the first available parking place to buckle your child into the car seat. **It is the responsibility of the driver to buckle the child(ren) into their car seats.**

If you walk up to get your child, your child will be released LAST after all cars are gone. This is for safety reasons as well as respecting those families' time who have been waiting in line.

If you need to pick up your child early, please message us ahead of time if possible. When you get to the school, you may park under the covered driveway and walk up to ring the Preschool doorbell located on the sanctuary doors where pick-up and drop-off occur. Early pick-up must be completed by 12:30pm. Children will not be released between 12:30-1pm unless it is an emergency.

Helpful Reminders for Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- Our morning drop-off line begins at 9:30 am and ends at 9:40 a.m.

- Hangers with name cards have been provided to you so that the teachers know which car to put the child(ren) in. Please place the hanger on your rearview mirror so that the name is clearly visible to us.
- Names for each child riding home with you must be on the card. If you are in need of extra pick-up cards, please message the Director.
- Parents may arrange their own carpool with friends or neighbors. Please provide this information in writing to the teacher.
- DO NOT allow a child to lean out of a car window or sunroof, or to open the car door.
- We ask that you refrain from using your cell phone during drop-off and pick-up time. Attention from all adults keeps our drop-off/pick-up line safe.
- Please drive slowly at all times.
- It is most important that you do not pull around a car that is in line unless a teacher has instructed you to do so.
- Please put your car in **Park** as your child is loading and unloading the car. Holding down the brake is not sufficient.
- Drive to the first available parking space to buckle up your child. This will keep our carpool line from backing up.
- If someone other than you or a person listed on the authorized list is to pick up your child, we **must** have a written note. Notes can come through Procure, email, or a text to the school phone number. If none of that is possible, please call the Preschool before 12:50. If someone comes to pick up your child and they are not on the authorized pick-up list or you have not given us written permission to release the child to them, your child will **not** be allowed to leave with them.
- It takes the attention, cooperation, and patience of all families to keep our drop-off/pick-up line safe and running smoothly. We thank you for your help.
- Every child **MUST** be in an age-appropriate car seat.

FOR SAFETY REASONS, ALL CHILDREN MUST USE THE MORNING DROP-OFF AND AFTERNOON PICK-UP LINE UNLESS YOU ARE A WALKER.

Stormy Weather Drop-Off/Pick-Up Instructions

Fortunately, we do not have to deal with stormy weather often, but when we do, we have the following instructions.

1. If we are advised of dangerous conditions (tornado watch or warning, severe downpour, hail) or if they are occurring, we will not begin our morning drop-off/afternoon pick-up. Parents are urged to come into the building for safety reasons until weather conditions improve.
2. Should snow, sleet or any dangerous condition begin during Preschool hours, please make arrangements for immediate pick up of your child.

Pleasant Hill Preschool is not a licensed preschool and is not required to be licensed by the state because we fall under the definition "Educational programs for children two

through six years of age and operate for no more than 4 consecutive hours per day." PHP carries liability insurance sufficient to protect your child in the event of an injury.

Pleasant Hill Preschool does not discriminate in its enrollment based on race, color, sex, creed, ethnic or religious background. However, we are not equipped in staff or resources to educate students with significant learning, emotional, and physical disabilities, or with severe visual or auditory impairments.

Children with mild physical handicaps and/or developmental delays are enrolled at the discretion of the Preschool Board and Director.



2024-2025 School Calendar

Please note that this calendar does not contain any of our special events or specific class events. You will find that information in your child's monthly calendar and newsletter that are sent home.

August 28, 2024 Parent Orientation at 6:30 pm (Adults Only)

August 29, 2024 Meet Your Teacher from 10 AM – 12 PM

***We will begin our school year with a gradual introduction to school.
For the first week of school, our hours will be 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM.***

September 3 M-Th, and M-F Students

September 4 First day for M/W, W/F, and MWF Students

Week of September 9-13 School hours from 9:30 AM– 1:00 PM

October 10 - 14 Fall Break: NO SCHOOL

October 23 - 24 Early Release at 12:00 PM

November 5 Presidential Election: NO SCHOOL

November 25 - 29 Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL

December 19 - January 5 Winter Break: NO SCHOOL

January 6, 2025 M/W, MWF, M-Th, and M-F Students return

January 8 W/F Students Return

January 20 MLK Jr. Day: NO SCHOOL

February 13 - 17

GCPS Teacher/Student Holiday: NO SCHOOL

March 5 - 6

Early Release at 12:00 PM

April 7 - 11

Spring Break: NO SCHOOL

May 14

Last day of school for **all** children