

*PALMA CEIA  
PRESBYTERIAN  
PRESCHOOL*

HOURS OF OPERATION:

8:30 – 12:30, Monday-Friday Open approximately 10 months a year, with summer closing and holidays generally scheduled according to the Hillsborough County School Calendar. The Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool calendar for the current year is available on the website.

PRESCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Nancy Little, Director

Doreen Altieri, Assistant Director

Hillsborough County Childcare License #CTA-430547

# *Awards given to the Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool*

## National Awards

Exceptional Parent Magazine's National Best Mainstreamed Preschool: 1990

National Early Childhood Director of the Year Award: Nancy Little, Scholastic, 2000

Congregational Award for Excellence in an Early Childhood Program: Sarah Hill Brown Award, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. 2000

## Local Awards

Handprint Award, Nancy Little: St. John's Presbyterian Learning Center, Tampa, for advocacy on behalf of children: 2001

Community Partner Award: Nancy Little, University of South Florida, Dept. of Child and Family Studies, 2005

# Learning in the Shadow of the Steeple

## Mission Statement

*The Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool supports the learning, social, relational and spiritual needs of children in a part-day Christian fully inclusive early childhood program. Typically developing children, their developmentally challenged peers, and families are supported with individualized assessment and learning through play. Employing the highest standards of quality and best practices in early childhood education, Palma Ceia seeks to model a compassionate, joyful and playful learning community for all enrolled children.*

The Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool is an early childhood program of national distinction enfolded into the life and mission of the Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church. The preschool enacts the love of God for children in two particular ways. First, the children are regarded as competent learners and innately precious. With respect for the children, we employ evidence based “best practices” from the professional field of early childhood education which most reflect Christian values. Very young children are nested most importantly in the lives of their families and the preschool seeks to assist families as they nurture their children. Preschool provides an important way for families to make lifelong connections. Second, the preschool includes those children with special need for support. Whether a child needs speech therapy, classroom accommodation, or a special support plan, all children are supported by staff that are professionally prepared for this task. All children are fully included in the life of the school. The preschool was founded in 1979 by director Nancy Little as a school for children with special needs, and was nationally recognized as the best model of its kind. We continue to view inclusiveness as integral to our overall mission, not only in service to distinctive needs, but as a way of enacting God’s love for all people. Both typically developing and challenged children learn from each other.

As children have the opportunity to learn to trust the first people outside the intimate family circle, the preschool hopes to model a sort of “holy attachment”. Where children learn to trust their teachers, they can begin to learn the self regulatory, social and academic skills that will support future success in formal schooling. **Love prepares the heart and the mind for learning.**

The whole school operates under an **integrated school wide curriculum**, in which all the elements of the Palma Ceia experience are brought together in a unified whole. Under our integrated curriculum, the entire school community experiences concurrently some of the same music, fine art, worship liturgy, Godly Play stories and literacy experiences including cultural understandings. The interests of the children flow from these exposures, and their interests and family cultures are respected and incorporated into lesson planning.

One influence on our community is the inspiration of the Reggio Emilia, Italy schools. Called the finest example of early childhood education in the world, the Reggio Emilia influence is seen at Palma Ceia in the primacy of child initiated art, the beauty of the classrooms, the use of natural elements, the visual documentation of the children’s learning, and respect for the child as a

competent learner. Art is one of the earliest ways that young children represent their world, and their art speaks a language all its own. Attentive teachers can interpret these early attempts and support the children as they represent their understandings of the world. At Palma Ceia, we have a collection of fine art teaching prints. We use these with the children as we teach about the world, its language, math, geography, colors, and attributes. We use our sacred art prints to support worship and exposure to the core teachings and celebrations of the Christian faith.

Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool is a worshipping community. We are led in worship on Mondays at 9:30 by our Senior Pastor, Dr. John T. DeBevoise. Gathering in our lovely sanctuary, we worship in a way that incorporates traditional elements of prayer, hymns, a sacred story and a benediction, and which honors God's creation by its appropriateness to the very young. Families are always welcome. Additionally, as a part of our curriculum, we use a Montessori based worship guide called Godly Play. Using beautiful hand made materials, Bible stories are told using parable, sacred story, liturgical action, and silence. Through Godly Play we are linked to the Christian education curriculum of the local and universal church. The children love both of these expressions of faith.

Our preschool is also a learning community for adults. Teachers are encouraged and supported to learn continuously, keeping pace with the rapidly changing world. The preschool collaborates with the University of South Florida in the areas of social and emotional competency, behavioral support, and the inclusion of children with special needs. Our school wide rules governing not only children, but parents and teachers, are one example of our work together. Our staff has contributed board service, and has presented nationally and published in professional journals with our friends at U.S.F. as well as on our own and with Nova University. Teachers each have different areas of excellence in which they pursue deeper education. Curricular materials, including written materials, adult teaching modules and DVDs, have been produced here at Palma Ceia showcasing our staff's interactions with children. They are currently in use in over 50,000 school districts. Students have written two master's theses and one doctoral dissertation on aspects of our school. As a result of this collaboration, in 2005, our director received the Community Partner Award from the DeLaParte Institute at U.S.F. We have a growing relationship with the University of Tampa.

Young children are most importantly a part of families. Families at Palma Ceia are respected and encouraged to participate in the life of the school. Almost all families volunteer their gifts and talents in one way or another, enriching every aspect of our school. Some of the ways families contribute are through art, music, writing, classroom presence, photography, foreign language, cultural sharing, governance, building maintenance, staff nurture, financial contributions, and prayer.

Music is now an intentional and beloved part of every day at Palma Ceia. We sing in worship. Teachers sing and play a variety of music from every genre in their classrooms, and we are fortunate to have regular music performance. The children have recently heard violin, guitar, cello, voice, organ and piano performances by both amateur and professional musicians.

We have participated as our church supported the development of a preschool in Uganda. We exchange materials, information, and articles of material culture with our friends there, and thank them for their influence on our school.

Academics are important at the preschool. We believe in the preparation of young children for more formal schooling. We are knowledgeable about developmental norms and educational standards. Our learning goals are the Florida Early Learning Standards, which may be found on our website, and are available in hard copy in our preschool. We have instituted a robust assessment of child progress. Yet we, with the American Academy of Pediatrics, affirm the value of play in the lives of children. Play is a child's work. Through play based activities, our children develop knowledge and skills that will help them succeed in academic life. Through deep and loving attachment with their teachers, in the shadow of the steeple, they take first steps toward independence. With respect for their unique family cultures, they take their places in a group for the first time. Within this group, they participate with the adults in building a beloved community filled with music, art, play, and friends and build lifetime memories. The Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church welcomes you to participate in the building of such a community.

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## GENERAL POLICIES

The preschool staff and committee intend for our daily operations to reflect our care and concern for each child and family. Parents are encouraged to visit our classrooms at any time, by contacting an administrator for guidance in doing so. There are parent volunteer opportunities both formal and informal throughout the year, and the preschool enjoys a high level of parent involvement. You will have an opportunity to sign up for these opportunities, and if you have talents we may not know about, we would welcome an offer. Parent engagement greatly enriches our program. At least once a year you will be asked to evaluate the program, in writing. Two conference days are available for individual conferences, but others can be scheduled with very little notice, by asking the teacher or an administrator.

Staff have been trained to follow our program policies, and we have found that adherence to them is critical to the health, safety, and effective administration of our program. Teaching staff do not have the authority to change policies due to family input, or to selectively adhere to policies.

At Palma Ceia Presbyterian, the partnership between families and the school is paramount. Accomplishment of our mission can only be based upon the positive and constructive cooperation of both parties. If a situation arises in which the Director concludes that actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive working relationship impossible, or that such a situation interferes with the needs of other students, administrators, teachers, or other parents, thus impeding the ability of PCPC to accomplish its mission, the school reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment. Both parents and all alternate caregivers will be asked to sign an agreement indicating support of these policies. Any concerns may be relayed to the Director in writing.

Continued enrollment at PCPC is contingent on the staff's agreement that enrollment is productive for both the child and the group as a whole. Staff may request, and parents must provide and release assessments and evaluations of their children as needed to insure our ability to make this determination and to provide or refer to appropriate services. If enrollment in another community agency seems more appropriate, staff will assist families in transition.

A current preschool directory including names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses will be distributed during the first week of school. **If you would like to withhold any of your contact information from the directory, please opt out by August 14<sup>th</sup>, using the form provided or duplicates available from Pia.**

While this handbook is intended to cover many of the circumstances surrounding the operation of the school, it must be understood that it cannot cover all possibilities or situations arising during the school's operations. Discretion regarding operation must finally rest on the staff, committee, and the church which have final responsibility for the school. There will be changing factors which will determine whether practices are

continued or altered, therefore, while everything in this book is assumed to be true and correct at the time of this writing, no guarantee and no promise is made as to its' future application. 8/11

## **Closing of School**

If by 7 AM, the Director has determined that the preschool cannot be sufficiently staffed in accordance with Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing standards, the preschool will be closed for that day. A sign will be posted on the main entry door to the school to indicate the closure.

## **Orientation Procedures**

Staff work with parents in a very individualized way to help children become acclimated to the program. Families may come on a tour, during which policies, philosophy, and daily program are discussed. Families with children on the waiting list should access the website and read the posted handbook before scheduling a tour. This will allow them to familiarize themselves with preschool policies. Families should come on a tour before admissions begins in February. If a space is offered, families will then have the information needed to make a timely decision. Tours are generally scheduled on a monthly basis and dates are posted on the website. To reserve a space on a tour, please contact Pia Martin at [preschool@palmaceia.org](mailto:preschool@palmaceia.org). Family drop-in days are held for children and parents before school starts. Staff spends special time forming a close relationship with the child, and extra staff may help out in the classroom as needed, so that one person can be the "point" person for that child. Attachment is important, and a church preschool has a special responsibility to model holy attachment. Working with families, for example, we may decide on a shorter day for a child for awhile, and a child may need to work up to a full day. We often call families on the first few days to give a status report, and they are welcome to call us. Children who are sad are held, comforted, and made to feel that their emotional needs are understood and accepted. Soon enough, we will find things in the classroom that interest them, and they will make friends. If any child is not making a good adjustment, you can be sure that you will be notified, so that we can discuss it, and make plans to support your child.

## **Communication With Parents**

The following are some of the ways staff and parents may communicate at PCPC:

- \*Parent orientation by clergy and preschool administration.
- \*Family interest survey.
- \*Request for and use of family pictures, homes, pets etc.
- \*Regular school wide electronic newsletter.
- \*Parent handbook.
- \*Pre-conference issue surveys.

- \*Parent-teacher conferences scheduled twice a year.
- \*Conferences scheduled at the request of families.
- \*Teacher availability at drop-off and pick-up to **briefly** exchange information.
- \*Early Learning Plans for supported children.
- \*Developmental screening for all children, done by parents and staff, and results discussed at the first and final conferences.
- \*Written communication on topics or changes related to preschool.
- \*Written communication to families on topics related to child development.
- \*Daily communication boards outside of all classes.
- \*Annual parent evaluation of program.
- \*Daily schedules posted in the classrooms and on doors.
- \*Calendars on door of classroom.
- \*Duplicates of correspondence available in hall for those who have misplaced theirs.
- \*Administrator availability at drop-off.
- \*Articles in church newsletter and speaking engagements at church events.
- \*Multiple parent involvement opportunities.
- \*Support for family and religious culture.
- \*Encouragement of parents to volunteer and observe child's classroom.
- \*Display of children's work in hall gallery.
- \*Parent informational events.
- \*Invited parent participation on preschool committee.
- \*Director's chats.
- \*Reports of accidental injuries.
- \*Email notes from administrators and staff.

**Many notifications are handled through email, so checking that daily is paramount. Important communication is updated regularly on our website.**

Church policy requires that all physical space in the preschool, including bulletin boards, walls and countertops are to be used only for the bulletins and notices relative to activities of Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church and which have been cleared with the program staff. Examples of requests to post information that are not permitted include but are not limited to: advertisements for businesses, solicitation for participation or contributions for other organizations, schedules or invitations for various community programs, and advertisements for child care.

Q: How does PCPC Preschool prepare children for school?

A: In all that we do, we have identified academic, social, emotional, and spiritual goals for the children. Lesson plans are prepared with all these goals in mind, and are individualized for the level of each child. Children who have higher ability levels in some areas are encouraged to move ahead. Florida Early Learning Goals are embedded in teaching strategies which include play, discovery, learning, and direct instruction. Teachers are aware of what young children should know at each stage, and create lessons which will encourage children to reach the next level. PCPC Preschool utilizes

a web based curriculum and assessment called “PreschoolFirst” in order to track and report on children’s progress. PCPC also employs “Emergent Curriculum” which builds curriculum on the interest of students. PCPC is a school inspired by the internationally famous Reggio Emilia Schools in Italy.

## **Church Governance and Christian Education**

The preschool is an integral part of the mission and ministry of the Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church. Oversight of the preschool is by sessional committee which governs its policy and direction. Decisions concerning its operation are at the discretion of the director. The preschool derives its support from the tuition paid by parents, estimated to cover about 1/3 of the costs, and in kind support of the church. The Committee hopes this outreach can continue to benefit both the children we serve and the community at large, serving as a model of a compassionate church school community.

Worship and faith formation are integral parts of our curriculum, and we have two regular worship expressions. Our senior pastor, The Reverend Dr. John DeBevoise, or his designate will lead chapel worship in our sanctuary each Monday. Dr. DeBevoise tells a story, prays and sings with the children.

Throughout our week children participate in Godly Play, a beautiful Montessori worship experience led by our staff.

Children of other faiths are welcomed and supported and demonstrations of the elements or stories of their faith are welcomed.

## **Daily Procedures**

### **1. Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

According to law, children must be signed in upon arrival and signed out upon dismissal by their teachers. Upon arrival and sign-in, parents must separate at the gate entrance to the classroom. This means that the classroom teacher assumes responsibility for the child and parents depart at that time.

Arrival time for children will be from 8:30 until 8:50. There will be a grace period from 8:50 until 9:00. After 9:00 scheduled school activities will begin and children will not be able to attend school on that day if they have not arrived by 9:00.

#### **Arrival Procedures:**

8:30-8:50: Please walk your little ones back to their classroom doors, sign them in, and drop off at the door, saying goodbye to your child so that it is clear to all that the teacher

is taking over from there. We will take your child into our loving arms and make them feel at home. Parents should, unless signed up to volunteer, move out of the hallways so the children can get settled. When they can see you, parting is harder.

Grace period 8:50-9:00: The same as above, as the children inside are winding up and preparing for the next activity.

After 9:00: Children will not be accepted into the program that day. Entry doors will be locked for security. Please do not ask the administrative assistant to bend the rule.

### **Dismissal Procedures: 12:00 -12:30:**

Parents of **three year olds** pick up children at their playground gate at the front of the church.

Parents of **two year olds** pick up children at their classroom door, using, if desired, the door by the chapel which may make their entry and exit faster, cutting down on hall traffic. That door will be open at 12:00.

Parents of **one year olds** pick up their children at their classroom door.

Parents of **four year olds** pick up their children at the north playground gate.

No child will be released to a person not authorized by their parent to pick the child up. Please notify the staff, preferably in writing, if your child is to be picked up by another person. If the person who comes for your child is not well known to us, we will ask for a driver's license. If identification is not conclusive, we will not release your child.

Occasionally, parents will ask us to deny the other parent access to a child. We can do this only if we have a court order to that effect. Otherwise, we cannot legally keep a child from a parent. **PCPC preschool will not serve as a custody exchange site for any enrolled child.**

All children are to be picked up by 12:30 P.M. School is over at that time and staff has other obligations. If an emergency keeps you from picking up your child on time, please call and explain provisions made for your child. At 12:30, you will be called, as well as any emergency numbers you have given us. Late charges are as follows: \$20.00 for every 5 minutes over 12:35 p.m. Please do not ask if late charges apply to you. If you are late, they do apply. If children are not picked up after a reasonable time, and staff must go, the Department of Children and Family Services or the police department will be called.

Arrival and dismissal are not times when parents and teachers can have a conference. The reason for this is that the teacher is still required to provide sight and sound supervision for all the children in her care. She cannot do that while paying extended attention to a verbal exchange. A **brief** exchange of information is appropriate, but please respect the teacher's need for ongoing supervision of the class. Problem solving is best left to a conference, which can be scheduled with very little notice, so that classroom coverage can be arranged.

If you hope to pick your child up before 12:00, remember, our building will be locked and secured at that time. The Administrative Assistant has other responsibilities and will not always be at her desk. So, please let us know if you need to pick up your child early, and we will try to accommodate you. Emails and messages left close to pick up time may not be received.

When parking is impossible due to an unpredicted storm or flooding, unexpected use of our parking lot, etc., we will fly a flag at the exit door from Fellowship Hall, facing Plant High School. That way, if we don't have time to notify parents, you can check and see that the flag is out, and we will be able to safely dismiss your children to you from inside the Fellowship Hall as you pull up in a line.

Parking is limited, and dropping off children quickly will allow others to use the space. We know that parking is a challenge, but we have no way of changing the available parking and law enforcement may issue tickets to those parked illegally. Parking signs on the streets surrounding the church are enforced. During the first week of school, staff will be available to assist you. When we have the information in advance, we will try to warn you of upcoming events impacting parking via email. Parents are responsible for the careful supervision of children while at the church. Please do not permit children to walk in the parking lot without holding hands. Because we are right next to Plant High School, and because there are many church and community activities here during the day, there can be a lot of traffic. Not all drivers in the vicinity use appropriate speed or safety, and children can be difficult to see. The church and school continue to try a variety of strategies, but caution is merited.

We have fewer than fifty parking spaces, three of which are reserved for handicapped parking and six of which are reserved for Preschool pick-up and drop-off in the mornings. This leaves about 35 spaces for the Preschool and Church staff which on an average day can total 30. We must ask you not to park in areas that are not designated as parking spaces (i.e. next to the flowerbeds, in the entry ways, etc) since this can further restrict flow and presents additional dangers for the children.

We will not allow anyone under 18 to drop off or pick up a child. Supervision must go from parent or other adult designate to the teacher. Children must be able to be seen and heard at all times by the responsible adult.

## **2. Separation Issues**

Often a child cries and clings when a parent or caregiver says goodbye. This is normal, and your child is demonstrating the strong bond between the two of you. Crying at the moment of separation does not indicate poor adjustment or a dislike of school, and may come and go. If your child is unhappy at school, we will tell you, and work together to strategize how to help. At PCPC Preschool, concern for the emotional well being of our children is paramount. During adjustment, we will work with you on a plan to best support your child as he or she begins school. We may recommend shorter days to start with. After your child has adjusted, if he or she cries or balks at separation, the best

thing you can do is to calmly express positive expectations, such as “you will find some fun things to do”. Our experienced teachers will take your child, acknowledge his feelings, direct his attention to something interesting, and then it will be time to say goodbye, tell your child when you will pick him up, i.e. “Mommy will see you after snack”, and turn and leave. We will let your child know we see that he feels sad, we are sorry, but that Mommy or Daddy always comes back. We will acknowledge his or her feelings and comfort your child. A ritual is valuable, but prolonged or changing ritual can be hard on children. Most often, children will settle down and become engaged very quickly, but if not, you can be sure that we will let you know. You are always welcome to call us during the morning for an update.

During arrival, teachers are trained to do a cursory health check. If your child has not slept well, if she has had a “boo-boo”, please tell the teacher briefly about it. A child who is ill under our policies may not be received. For those policies, please see the section: **Health, Safety and Nutrition**. Teachers are required to follow program policies concerning health and exclusion from preschool. Please do not attempt to bring a child who is ill. If you need clarification, call before bringing the child to school and check.

### **3. Confidentiality**

Children’s diagnoses and conditions are confidential. This includes your observations while volunteering at preschool. Please be sensitive about discussing these in front of the children and their parents. We are open with the children about things they notice, giving them sensitive words to use. We may say: “You’re right, that is harder for her”. Or, “He needs that wheelchair to get from place to place.” No confidential information will be released without a signed consent form, or under legally defined conditions.

### **4. Clothing**

Children should be dressed in comfortable play clothes, which are free of complicated fastenings, and comfortable, **closed toed**, rubber soled shoes, which allow for running, jumping, climbing and all physical activities. Injuries and accidents such as stubbed toes and twisted ankles can occur if children wear sandals. Please do not send children to preschool dressed in distracting or inappropriate clothing or accessories. Examples include but are not limited to: cheerleader and football player uniforms, pajamas, various costumes, tutus or dance costumes, hats or caps, watches, jewelry, boots, umbrellas, sunglasses and unneeded hair accessories.

Messy activities are part of any good child development program, and clothes will at some point, probably become soiled. We will try to minimize this by using smocks, but you should know that it will sometimes occur. Getting dirty is a sign that your child has been engaged in some sensory experiences, which are part of a high quality program. Please send your child to school in clothing that allows for experimentation with messy materials.

Children will need a complete change of clothing in a zip lock bag, labeled with their name, to be left in the classroom in case of spills, and during toilet learning, many changes are needed. Please keep weather changes in mind and supply clothes appropriate for changing weather, as well as growing children and sizes. If you forget, we will have extras on hand. If your child comes home in “extra clothes”, please remember to wash and return them to school as soon as you can.

## 5. Conferences

Conferences are scheduled twice a year, but your concerns can always be addressed very quickly. We can best do that on site, where we have records and calendars to consult. Please do not call staff at home or if this is the only way to talk, please set a phone date in advance so that the teacher can arrange for her own family needs to be covered. Also, some teachers are willing to email with parents. To contact any staff member, you may email the preschool at [preschool@palmaceia.org](mailto:preschool@palmaceia.org). Families should maintain an awareness of their requests for staff time.

## 6. Toys and Other Items from Home

Toys and other items from home are not allowed. Please do not allow the children to bring toys even into the hall. Once the children enter by either entry door into our program, (double glass doors in the front, glass door in the courtyard) they should be both finished with breakfast, and should not be carrying any items from home into our hallways or classrooms. They may **not** briefly show them to their friends or to their teacher. Please do not ask the teacher to “be the bad guy” and return a toy to the parent at arrival. This sets a negative tone for the day. Our experience with toys at school has been that it encourages jealousy, “turfism”, and “one upmanship”. It has even been dangerous. We are encouraging community at school, and are blessed by the diverse and rich inventory of toys and educational materials that we have. If your toddler has attachment or security needs that are met by a “lovey” of some type, please talk with the staff about how to handle this together. Children in the three and four year old classes should not bring these at all.

**Please mark all items with your child’s name.**

## 7. Diapers

Diapers are sent by parents for their child. Please label with your child’s name. Toddlers may bring a small diaper bag of the size that will fit in their cubby. **No backpack is needed or allowed for threes or fours.** Please be sure to label everything with your child’s name. When you are ready to begin helping your child potty train, please contact the teacher **ahead of time**, to set up a plan that will work for both child and classroom. The teacher should know **ahead of time** when children are going to start wearing “big girl” or “big boy” pants. As it is difficult for children to distinguish the difference between

diapers and “pull-ups”, we ask that your child remain in diapers until potty training with underwear is initiated.

## **8. Birthdays and Other Holidays**

Birthdays are a wonderful part of childhood culture. The preschool staff will plan a small celebration to make each child feel special, and to focus on how precious his or her life is to us, as we know it is to you. This celebration will include a rousing chorus of Happy Birthday and apple juice popsicles for the class on the day the birthday is celebrated. *No food including cake, cookies or any food items, goodie bags, or decorations, may be brought from home.* The children **may not** distribute birthday or other invitations at school. We strongly suggest mailing birthday invitations. Children are very astute at recognizing them, and talk about them at school. If you are limiting the number of invitations, please handle the entire matter outside of school. Please consider the possibility that birthday parties may be an opportunity to participate in our preschool mission of reflecting God’s love for all children.

On the child’s birthday, parents are invited, as part of the celebration, to purchase a favorite book to be placed in the preschool library in their child’s name, and to read that book to the class.

It wouldn’t hurt to remind busy teachers the day before! No goodie bags, favors, or other items from home are allowed for birthdays or other holidays.

## **9. Volunteering in the Classrooms**

Parents at Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool are true partners in the health and vitality of our school. All parents are welcome to volunteer and visit at the preschool. In the past few years, we have had over 90% volunteer participation by parents, in substituting, in governance, in staff nurture, preparation of materials and in loving support of all kinds. Each year, we have a parent volunteer coordinator. This year it is co-chaired by Allison Kendall and Courtney Hoening. You will receive a mailing with a listing of the many opportunities to serve at our school, and if you have a hidden talent you wish to share that we haven’t thought of, then please say so!

The opportunity to serve as a substitute is one way parent volunteers can assist our program. In order to do this and to be counted into the ratios, parents must be screened, including fingerprinting. If you would like to be included in this way, you can contact the administrative assistant for directions. To volunteer or visit, please let the director or assistant director know what day you would like to come in, and they will put you on the schedule. You will be assigned to the classroom where you are most needed, or help with any tasks that need completion as directed by the teaching staff. Staff reserves the right to assign visitors to classrooms so as to manage the effective operation of the whole school.

**Palma Ceia Presbyterian is committed to administering all educational programs and activities, and hiring, without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, or handicapping condition.**

License #CTA430547

## Health, Safety, and Nutrition

At PCPC Preschool, we take seriously the health, safety and nutrition of our children and staff. There has been a growing awareness of the ways in which many infectious illnesses are spread. The close contact of young children, especially of those who are not potty trained, can lead to the spread of bacteria and viruses from one to another. It is our intention to run the safest, most sanitary and healthy preschool possible. We believe our families want those practices to continue and so our policies reflect those community standards. To do that, we must abide by all national and local health standards, as well as set policies which support that goal. By following our policies, you join with us in accomplishing our goal.

PCPC preschool requires, for all enrolled children, a current health examination form (DH 3040), and immunization certificate (DH 680), with proof of immunizations as specified by the American Academy of Pediatrics' published guidelines and immunization schedules. Children with a religious exemption certificate in lieu of DH 680 will not be enrolled.

### At the preschool, we adhere to the following standards:

- \* The preschool is disinfected daily. Bathrooms and tables are cleaned with a CDC specified bleach solution, and is cleaned after usage as well.
- \* Disposable paper products are used for snack, water, and drying hands.
- \* Staff is trained in and follows protocol for safe and sanitary diaper changing and hand washing. Hand washing is the best way to ensure a healthy program. Ongoing supervision makes sure they follow standards set by licensing, and best practice standards. Staff will wash their hands upon entering the building each morning.
- \* When any of our children (to our knowledge) have been exposed to any recommended reportable communicable disease, notices will be distributed to parents with information about what to expect, incubation, symptoms, and exclusion guidelines.
- \* Appropriate health records are maintained for staff and children.
- \* Mouthed toys are disinfected daily, others as needed.
- \* Toys are constantly checked for small parts that may break off, such as eyes and noses on stuffed animals, buttons or shoes. Please help us keep on top of chokeable items.
- \* Staff has required training in First Aid and CPR and AED.
- \* Fire drills are held once a month.

- \* Health records are checked once a month.
- \* One recent study showed that one source of infectious agents in the preschool is germs from parents and children as they come in. Washing your child's hands, and yours, before they come would help us keep the preschool healthy.
- \* Pest control is handled on a monthly basis, by a licensed pest control operator when the children are not here.
- \* Any hazardous materials are locked up.
- \* Classroom materials are laundered as needed.
- \* Child/staff ratios are maintained for the children's health and safety.

Hillsborough County Guidelines			NAEYC Guidelines			Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool Guidelines		
Age of Children	Group Size	Ratio	Age of Children	Group Size	Ratio	Age of Children	Group Size	Ratio
1 Year		1:6	12-28 Months	6	1:3	1 Year	8-9	1:4 or 5
2 Years		1:11		8	1:4	2 Years		1:6 or 7
3 Years		1:15		10	2:4	3 Years		1:7
4 Years		1:20		12	2:4	4 Years		1:9
5 Years and older		1:25	21-36 Months	8	1:4			
				10	1:5			
				12	1:6			
			30-48 Months	12	1:6			
				14	1:7			
				16	1:8			
				18	1:9			
			4 & 5 Years	16	1:8			
				18	1:9			
				20	1:10			

## 1. Health and Registration Forms

**Before your child's first day of school** all medical and registration forms, including both health forms as described above must be **complete**, up to date and on file at the preschool. Parents should make a note of the date their child's health card expires, and note that on their calendars so that they can make another appointment. These records must be on a specific Florida form available at most physicians' offices and at the

county health department. Please be aware that we have our own legal requirements, and sometimes must expire a health form before your Doctor does, requiring another visit. As a courtesy, we will try to let you know the date of expiration and after that date by law, your child will no longer be allowed in school. **All student registration information for the 2011-12 school year will have a due date of August 1, with a late fee of \$50.00 charged after August 10.**

Please advise the staff of any allergies, physical difficulties, or health related information which may be important to know in an emergency or may cause problems in your child's daily activities. Staff will work with you to develop a support plan for your child.

In case of an emergency, the parent/physician will be notified. Please be absolutely sure that we have your current contact information. It is the parent's responsibility to maintain this information in an up-to-date manner. Every year we attempt to reach parents who have new numbers and have not told us. This could be very dangerous so please remember to notify us when you have changes.

## **2. Medication**

Medication will not be dispensed, as this is a part day program, unless it is prescribed medicine necessary for a life threatening condition. If this is the case, such as an inhaler for asthma, or an EpiPen the medication must be given directly to an administrator, not a teacher for storage or refrigeration. We will be able to dispense medicine under the following conditions:

**\* Medication must be delivered to school in the container in which it was purchased. It must be prescribed by a Doctor. All medications will be located in the assistant director's office, or in a safe location close to the child.**

\* The label must indicate the child's name, the name of the medication, the physician's name, the dosage, and the frequency of dosage.

\* A separate supply of medication must be kept at school. Medication cannot be transported back and forth daily.

\* If medication requires equipment for administration, (measuring spoon, dropper) the parent is responsible for supplying them. Please mark with the child's name.

\* The parent or caregiver must deliver the medicine. Under no circumstances may it be left in the child's backpack or bag.

\* Parents must fill out a form from Hillsborough County childcare licensing.

\* Medicine cannot be mixed with any food.

\* No topical medication or treatment, such as diaper rash cream, disinfectant, or sunscreen can be applied by our staff or left at school.

### **3. Minor Accidents**

Because of their age, size, and developing coordination, active children tumble about frequently. If your child receives a bump that leaves a mark, a scrape, scratch or bump, you will be notified in writing and you or your designated caregiver will be asked to sign an accident report. As a courtesy, particularly in the case of a babysitter, we may follow with a phone call. Please let your alternate caregivers know that you wish to get any such information that was reported to them by the school.

If we observe any health related change in your child, we will discuss it with you. There may be an instance where a tumbling child who looks fine at the time may later bruise. Or, if a child does not cry, or tell the teacher, the teacher may be unaware that the child has been hurt. If you are at home and wondering, please feel free to call us at home. We do not want you to worry. We will always tell you if we think a child has been hurt, but sometimes it is hard to tell if physical activity is fun or causes an unseen hurt.

If your child is hurt and we think it is not an emergency, but might be significant, as in a bumped tooth, possible need for stitches, etc. we will get in touch with you so that you and your physician, if desired, can decide.

If you are concerned for your child, that he or she may have been hurt or need information regarding a serious concern, you may call Nancy Little at home, 251-0376 or Doreen Altieri, 960-4205. We ask that you reserve these calls for matters of a serious nature.

### **4. Emergencies**

In case of more serious accidental injury or illness, we immediately try to contact you, and your emergency contacts. If necessary, we will also call your child's physician, 911, ambulance, or paramedics. Staff is not allowed to transport a child to the emergency room. Parents will be financially responsible for any decisions made before their arrival.

### **5. Illness**

**If your child is not able to fully participate in school activities, or if staff is unable to provide any special care needed without compromising the classroom ratios and activities, children should be cared for at home. If staff feels this is the case, children will not be received, or will be sent home if symptoms of illness appear during the day.**

As a teacher greets a child in the morning, she is also performing a daily health check. If your child has not slept well, has allergies, bites, injuries, is on medication, or has any

other health issues, first thing in the morning is the time to make us aware of them. **To best serve your child, we must know about these.**

In her sole discretion, the director, or her designee, will decide if a symptomatic child may be received or may continue at school.

Following are symptoms for parents to consider when determining whether a child will be able to participate in all school activities and will not require special care from staff. In our experience, the following are examples which prevent children from full participation.

- \* fever
- \* cold with a frequent colored nasal discharge
- \* constant cough
- \* diarrhea
- \* rash
- \* irritability, fussiness, lethargy or generally out of sorts
- \* vomiting
- \* reddened eyes, eye or ear discharge, sore throat, headache, or abdominal pain

We understand that it may be an inconvenience for your child to miss school, but we are committed to running a healthy program. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please notify the school if your child is ill and staying home. We worry! If we don't hear from you for a few days, we will call to check. Children should be well at home for 24 hours (without fever suppressant) before returning to preschool. If your child has been recently ill and you are not sure if he or she can return to school, you should call at 8:30 a.m. and check with an administrator.

There may be circumstances when a physician's note is required for reentry into school, if, in the directors' judgment, such a note would be helpful.

## **6. Nutrition/Allergies**

Snack is served at 10:30.

A menu of snacks is posted on classroom doors. More than one choice is available each day, along with apple juice, served daily

With more children than ever who have dangerous allergies, we have created a policy which makes it extremely unlikely that any child at PCPC will come into contact with anything that can harm them. After all, our first and most important job is to keep your children safe in our care. So, our policy states that there will be **no food allowed from home** into our classrooms or inside our program at all. We will have snack options that we will purchase available at all times that are nut, milk, casein and gluten free. This way all the children can eat together with options available for all. The allergic child need not feel set apart.

We do thank you for understanding our need to be in charge of food for the children in our program. We have done substantial research on the possible outcomes of a more flexible approach, and the consequences can be frightening. Thank you for trusting us with these issues.

## **7. Choking**

Children may choke during meals or playtime because they use their mouths to explore and experiment with unfamiliar objects.

Objects that are smaller than 1 1/4 in. in diameter should not be accessible to preschool children. This includes edible food such as peanuts, popcorn, hotdog pieces, whole grapes, hard candies, gum, and cough drops or any other food or object which resembles these in size or shape, such as coins or the removable eyes of stuffed animals. Please examine your child's backpack or lovey for small decorative items which may pose a choking risk.

## **8. Severe Weather Safety and Emergency Evacuation Plans**

We live in an area that experiences various forms of severe weather including severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, and tornadoes. In order to protect children, we have a written emergency procedure to address each kind of weather emergency. Drills are held to test these procedures.

PCPC Preschool will be closed if the Hillsborough County schools are closed due to such an occurrence, or if some other circumstance precludes operation. If the public schools are open but we must close, we will post a sign on the front door of the preschool and use any other means of communications available to notify parents.

The National Weather Service usually gives us enough warning when a hurricane is approaching. However, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes can occur rather suddenly. A storm is classified as “severe” when one or more of the following conditions occur: winds 58 MPH or higher, hail 3/4 or more in diameter, or developing tornadoes. A severe thunderstorm or tornado “watch” means that a severe thunderstorm or tornado is possible. A severe thunderstorm or tornado “warning” means that a severe thunderstorm or tornado has been sighted or indicated by radar.

If the National Weather Service gives our area a hurricane or tornado watch, you will immediately need to pick up your child. If a warning is given, hurricane or tornado has been sighted, you should remain at home and we will take care of the children according to our procedures. Be assured that we will take all necessary precautions when dealing with this type of situation. We are prepared and trained for severe weather.

1. We have a battery operated weather band radio in the preschool secretary's office to stay in touch with current weather conditions and emergency instructions.
2. If pick up from preschool front doors is impossible, we will fly our storm flag from the door on Himes Avenue where the road is most likely to be open. If the flag is out, please form a pick up line on Himes by the flag.
3. We have assembled a "survival" kit with first aid supplies, flashlights, extra clothing, and non-perishable foods.
4. We have identified and posted evacuation routes if full evacuation is ordered. The shelter will be identified at the time of the emergency. Our flood evacuation center is: PIERCE MIDDLE SCHOOL 5511 N. Hesperides (north of Hillsborough Ave.)
5. If we had to take the children to an alternate pick up point that would be: Bayshore Presbyterian Church, 2515 Bayshore Blvd. (Access is from Palm Dr.)
6. Attendance and nametags would be taken.
7. We would put into place the disaster plans on file for each emergency.

Local radio and television stations will have weather and evacuation information.

# THERAPIES AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool and the University of South Florida collaborate in an entity called "First Steps Together". Nancy Little, Preschool Director, and Dr. Lise Fox, Professor and Director of the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, University of South Florida are the principal collaborators, along with Rochelle Lentini, M.A. Early Childhood Special Education and Doreen Altieri, M.S.

Through this collaboration PCPC preschool staff have received extensive training in strategies for teaching social-emotional competence, the Teaching Pyramid model, and functional behavior analysis.

PCPC has hosted USF students in research leading up to one Master's Thesis and one Doctoral Dissertation, has served as a site for filming training materials, and has participated in the development of those training materials now used extensively in school districts throughout the country. PCPC staff and USF staff publish together in peer reviewed journals and professional publications, and have presented jointly in the national forum.

This collaboration benefits PCPC whenever evidence based strategies are used to support children both globally in excellent practice and to support children with challenging behavior.

All PCPC children may, at one time or another, participate in activities as part of this collaboration.

We have a contractual arrangement with Dr. LorRainne Jones and Associates, Kid Pro Therapy, for Speech and Language Therapy and for Occupational Therapy. Dr. LorRainne Jones, MACC/SLP, Ph.D., Stephanie Ong, MA, CCC-SLP and Courtney Buscemi, O.T.R.L. collaborates with us on behalf of children, but for ongoing therapies families or insurers pay the fee. Our students are able to be seen by a top quality therapist at school, and her consulting relationship with us allows teamwork on behalf of a child. We are not able to allow other therapists who may be seeing a child enrolled here to practice on our premises at all.

1. Referrals: A therapy referral form is completed by the director or assistant director and forwarded to therapists to initiate the process. A permission slip must be signed.
2. The therapist(s) follow up on referrals by first talking with the parents and then classroom staff. With written parental permission, a screening is completed. If the child does not pass the screening, a comprehensive evaluation is completed with written parent permission. Based on the results of the evaluation, treatment may or may not be recommended. In some cases, monitoring with a reevaluation in 3-6 months is recommended. In others, initiation of therapy is recommended.

3. Fees for therapy are as follows:

Screening: \$20.00

Evaluation: \$150.00

Therapy: \$47.50/30 minute session.

4. Parents and their insurance carriers will be billed directly for evaluations and therapy. If the payer of last resort is Medicaid or Part C, they will be billed in accordance with their billing policies and procedures. Questions or problems regarding therapy or billing should be directed to Dr. LorRainne Jones at 964-8481.

Kid Pro Therapy Services  
16546 Dale Mabry Highway North  
Tampa, FL 33624

5. At PCPC Preschool, therapy may be provided in a variety of places including the classroom downstairs, or upstairs therapy room, or the playground, depending on what is determined to be the best location for meeting the child's therapy goals. In an attempt to integrate as much as possible, PCPC staff will sometimes attend sessions, and family members are welcome.

**If your child is not attending school on a day when therapy is scheduled, please contact KidPro Therapy as soon as possible, so they do not make the trip here if not needed.**

6. Written therapy session summaries will be sent home on a regular basis. These reports will list therapy goals worked on that day and how the child did in therapy. Carryover activities for home may also be listed. Other messages including notification of a therapist's scheduled absence, change in schedule, or comments and questions about your child may also be included. Please be sure to read those reports! Comprehensive reevaluations are completed annually. Generally, we attempt to have these coincide with the Early Learning Plan reviews.

7. As often as possible, therapists will attend ELP meetings at Palma Ceia. We will make every effort to attend off-site meetings or staffings for your child. However, if we have to cancel treatment sessions with other children and are unable to reschedule those, we will have to charge for our time.

## ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Application for admission may be made at any time by completing a wait list form. This form is available in the church office, preschool office, or may be downloaded via the Internet from our website. A \$25 nonrefundable application fee must accompany the submission of this form. A child is placed in the pool of applicants when the form and fee are received. Children are accepted for admission with considerations noted by the Admissions Committee for the following: (alphabetically listed) children of administrators, pastors, and staff, children of church members, children in special need of support, and siblings of PCPC students. The Director, together with the Admissions Committee, oversees and maintains sole authority for the admissions process. Classrooms are composed with discernment to ensure balance with respect to the following factors: gender, children in special need of support and typical children, optimal birth date ranges and other considerations. Application should be made with a waiting period in mind. Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee entry.

Families should be aware that first choice of days may not be available.

The preschool serves those who are 1 on or before September 1, through those who are 4 on or before September 1. Those children who are 5 by September 1 are not eligible for entrance in that year, except that exceptions may be made for the developmental placement of children in need of special support.

Children are placed in classrooms by the following table:

**One**-year-old class: born on or before Sept. 1, 2010

**Two**-year-old class: born on or before Sept. 1, 2009

**Three**-year-old class: born on or before Sept. 1, 2008

**Four**-year-old class: born on or before Sept. 1, 2007

The minimum number of days a child may be enrolled at PCPC is two days a week. Students are placed in a class according to the dates above. Families will be able to choose only a Monday/Wednesday/Friday, Tuesday/Thursday, or a five-day schedule. The staff at PCPC Preschool believes in a high degree of continuity, yet we must be flexible to meet the many demands of running such a specialized school. To this end, we must, in our sole discretion, decide the makeup of classes. PCPC Preschool does not honor requests from parents for a teacher or classroom.

A non-refundable \$100.00 per child registration fee is due annually upon submission of the Enrollment Request Form. This fee is paid first by registered students in the spring, and then by new students, to guarantee a space for the next year.

In addition, with the Enrollment Agreement each family must pay a non-refundable \$400.00 per child tuition deposit, which will be credited toward tuition in the final months of the school year (March, April, May) for which the child is registering. Enrollment for the 4K class may be handled differently with respect to the time of enrollment and the amount of deposit required. Information about that would be made available in writing to parents at the time of enrollment. If the child withdraws from the program at any time subsequent to submission of the Enrollment Agreement, the \$500.00 will not be refunded.

PCPC Preschool's Enrollment Agreement is made for the full academic year. Both parents/guardians are responsible for the entire tuition, based on the assigned class schedule, and other fees as specified in the parent handbook for the full academic year. Full payment of the entire annual tuition and fees is required even if the child withdraws from the school subsequent to submission of the Enrollment Agreement. However, if a child must withdraw subsequent to submission of the Enrollment Agreement, the family will be relieved of its financial obligations to the extent the preschool is able to replace the child with another who assumes the leaving family's financial obligations. Every effort will be made by the preschool to find a replacement for the withdrawing child.

If parents determine a need to make a change in the enrollment agreement subsequent to the submission of the signed agreement, they may submit a request for an amended enrollment agreement. Forms for this purpose are available from the preschool administrative assistant and are accepted on or after September 1<sup>st</sup>. Submission of this form cannot provide any assurance or guarantee that your requested changes will be accommodated. A family may submit one request per child per enrollment year. A nonrefundable administrative fee of \$25 per child must accompany this form. This fee is nonrefundable regardless of whether or not the preschool is able to grant your request. Your request expires at the end of the current enrollment year. An administrator will notify you if your request is approved.

If a child is sick, the family is still required to pay for that day.

Children are enrolled for set days. The preschool cannot provide random additional days (drop-ins) for convenience. Our classes are fully enrolled each day of the week, and to allow drop-ins would compromise our high quality child/staff ratios.

Referral of a child in special need of support may be made by a parent, physician, therapist, community agency, or our school may determine that a child has need of special support. Placement and classification is at our sole discretion and is decided on the basis of what services most support the child. Families will be asked, and must provide, all diagnostic reports so that sound educational planning can take place.

\*\* Approved by PCPC Session 2/8/05

## Tuition and Fees

### PRESCHOOL FEE STRUCTURE

Preschool tuition is calculated annually and then is divided into **10 equal payments**. It is due according to the monthly schedule below. Monthly tuition includes: tuition, snack fee, and arts and crafts fees.

2 Day - Tues/Thurs students =.....\$2,330.00.....(\$233.00 per month)  
 3 Day - Mon/Wed/Fri students =...\$3,500.00.....(\$350.00 per month)  
 5 Day - M/T/W/Th/F students =... \$5,790.00.....(\$579.00 per month)

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>DUE DATE</b>	<b>\$15.00 LATE FEE ADDED</b>
August 11	Before August 24 <sup>th</sup>	August 26 <sup>th</sup>
September 11	September 1 <sup>st</sup>	September 10 <sup>th</sup>
October 11	October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	October 12 <sup>th</sup>
November 11	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	November 10 <sup>th</sup>
December 11	December 1 <sup>st</sup>	December 10 <sup>th</sup>
January 12	January 2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 11 <sup>th</sup>
February 12	February 1 <sup>st</sup>	February 10 <sup>th</sup>
March 12	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	March 10 <sup>th</sup>
April 12	April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	April 11 <sup>th</sup>
May 12	May 1 <sup>st</sup>	May 10 <sup>th</sup>

All payments should be brought to the school or mailed to the church office. NO cash will be accepted by the preschool.

The mailing address is:

Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool  
 3501 W. San Jose Street  
 Tampa, FL 33629 Please mark attention: preschool.

**Tuition Assistance** may be provided by the preschool to those children with special need for support who are unable to afford our services otherwise. Parents may speak to the director and she will gladly discuss this. Offers of assistance are at the discretion and judgment of the director and preschool committee, and are based upon financial need. Parents must be willing to make their financial records available. Funds for these

scholarships come from the Charles Greenwood Scholarship Fund and the Martha Clark Scholarship Fund, and gifts from those in the church and community who love children. Applications are available from an administrator.

The preschool has monthly requirements to meet; therefore, monthly charges are consistent, regardless of absences or illness. Parents should not expect a courtesy statement. The director has been instructed by the committee to notify parents of termination of services if tuition is not paid in a timely manner.

## **DISCIPLINE, CHILD GUIDANCE & SELF REGULATION**

Hillsborough County Ordinance 86-35, Section 2.6, "Child Discipline" requires that parents are notified in writing of the disciplinary practices used by child care facilities. PCPC supports this law, and submits the following:

### **Positive Behavior Support**

One of the central developmental tasks of early childhood is to develop self regulation. This ability is one of the most important factors in later school success. At Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church Preschool, the emphasis is on building a kind and ethical school community which derives from Christian values; a beloved community. Discipline is taught in conjunction with respect for the child's developing sense of self. Guidelines are created using specific knowledge of child development, which informs our practices with appropriate expectations for each age.

Teaching strategies are used that have an evidence basis in teaching young children social and emotional competence.

In particular, we use a strategy called Positive Behavior Support, which allows us to understand why a child has challenging behavior, and to teach the child new skills to replace that behavior.

We abstain from corporal punishment or humiliating, frightening, or shame based disciplinary techniques. Food or beverages are never withheld as a disciplinary device. "Time out" is rarely used, although children may be separated for safety.

Staff uses only positive methods of guidance, including natural and logical consequences, redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement of cooperative behavior in place of competition, comparison, or criticism.

Consistent, school wide rules are developed within the school community and can be applied not only to the children's actions, but are a source to guide the actions of staff and parents.

The following are our school wide rules:

**Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other. Ephesians 4:32.**

**Gentle hands.**

**Listening ears.**

**Use words that help.**

**Everybody plays.**

## **Safety Net Procedures Used In Our Program**

Some guidance about the development of safety net procedures:

1. *If a child is in danger of harming himself or others, we must first be concerned about safety.*
2. *We might hold a child or remove a child from the situation to keep children safe.*
3. *Safety net procedures should be planned for children who have a history of dangerous outbursts.*
4. *Safety net procedures are developed in collaboration with a team as part of the planning for behavior support.*

The behaviors of concern would be those which are dangerous to self or others. Physical assistance may also be used to move children from place to place when they are not responsive to verbal or pictorial directions, and the teacher must move with the class to preserve ratios.

**First Response Strategies** (De-Escalation Procedures) are as follows:

- **Verbal** – direction about what to do (e.g., “put the sand in the box); direction about appropriate behavior (e.g., “ask for a turn”); direction to deescalate (take a deep breath); validate emotion (“it looks like you are very angry”).

- **Physical** – moving the child, blocking the child, interrupting aggressive action with physical guidance, guiding child to correct action.
- **Environmental** – removing materials from area, removing children from proximity of the child having challenging behavior, putting a barrier between child and others.
- **Distinction between physical interventions and physical control. Physical interventions that are effectively used are to prompt, redirect, temporarily restrict movement (e.g., hand on shoulder, block, or physically moving a child). Physical control describes holding or restraining.**
- **Effective options is de-escalation does not work immediately:**
  - Remove child
  - Block child
  - Remove demand
  - Move child to safe place to de-escalate

Physical control is an intervention of last resort to prevent harm to the child or others, when there is dangerous or escalating behavior and first response strategies fail.

### **LEAD – A method of providing physical control.**

Techniques are implemented calmly, with empathy and support.

- **Label** (“You are feeling very angry, you wanted the train. You want to hurt Peter”).
- **Envelop** – “I need to help you be safe” (approach, stabilize, contain).
- **Assist** – “I’ll let you go when your body is quiet”. “I’ll know you are ready for me to let go when your hands are quiet. Use gentle hands and feet”.
- **Debrief and Direct** – Debrief and support the child back to the group “Let’s talk about what happened”. “What can you do if that happens again?”

We will complete an incident report with information pertinent to the incident, notify the family and meet to review plan.

Staff will communicate and strategize with parents concerning behavioral issues and their possible cause, considering all of the factors that impact a child and family. If needed, functional behavioral assessment may be done. Working together, a plan will be developed to support the child’s needs for behavioral intervention. We will use community resources and collaborate with other experts to develop strategies for support. With encouragement and mutual problem solving, most behavioral and developmental issues can be resolved. If further problems endanger the safety of the other children or staff, or the future of the program, a parent may be required to withdraw the child.

Version date: June 2011

