

**First Presbyterian Church
Early Childhood Program**

**Parent's Handbook
2025-2026**

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First Presbyterian Church Early Childhood Program

Welcome! We are excited to have you as part of the family. At **First Presbyterian Church – Early Childhood Program (a.k.a. FPCECP and center)** every child is important. Our program is academically rich and designed to promote your child’s growth and development. Thank you for choosing FPCECP for your child.

Welcome back to all the families that have previously attended our program! It is great to see so many returning students growing through our program each year.

To all the new students and parents, we are delighted to have you and are looking forward to helping your little one grow with us.

We know it can be difficult for some children in a new environment, especially for those who have never been in any type of care before but be assured that our staff is prepared to handle this and with your help we can make the transition as smooth as possible. We offer an open house before school starts. This is a good way for you to see your child’s classroom and a great opportunity for your child to meet his/her teacher and be a little more at ease and know what to expect on his/her first day. The date will be set closer to the beginning of the school year and will be sent out via Procure.

Separation anxiety is common, and your child may resist being left at FPCECP in the beginning. However, after several days, drop-off becomes easier. We suggest that after you do the necessary signing in and walk your child to class, simply give your child a hug and assure them that you will return for them that afternoon to pick them up, then leave. **Prolonging your departure could cause more anxiety for your child.** We encourage parents to call any time during the day to see how their child is adjusting. If needed, the director will be happy to provide additional suggestions for a smooth and enjoyable transition into the school environment for both you and your child.

This handbook will help you understand our goals and policies as well as what is expected from our staff, students, and parents. Our guidelines are all designed to make sure that each child receives the best developmental growth possible. Please look over the information given, so that you are familiar with our operation and guidelines. Please sign the acknowledgement form and return it to the office for your child’s record.

Also included is a checklist of important things to remember that can help you and your child start the upcoming year as well as a few changes to the Parent’s Handbook. We are looking forward to another great year and we are so pleased you are with us!

Best wishes,
Heather McDonald, Director

Helpful Tips/Information

- ✓ Doors open at 8:55 for drop off, no earlier.
- ✓ You must have your child's immunization records and paperwork all filled out and turned in before he/she is admitted into the classroom.
- ✓ **Label all your child's items. This is state required. **Not having items labeled will result in the teacher using a permanent marker to label items.** This is for your child's safety.
- ✓ We use Procare for most communications for the program. This can be utilized through the app or through the desktop. This is our main communication tool. We use it to sign your child in and out of school, as well as important updates. If we have an unexpected closer due to the weather, it will be sent out via Procare.
- ✓ **Please do not dress your child in overalls or jumpers requiring the entire garment to be removed during diaper change or bathroom break.**
- ✓ **CHILDREN ENTERING EARLY PRE-K AND UP MUST BE POTTY TRAINED.**
- ✓ **Items to bring for your child:**
 - Full sized backpack with his/her name
 - Non-spill water cup or bottle with child's name on it
 - Change of clothes
 - Diapers or pull-ups (the pull apart Velcro pull-ups work best for the classroom setting)
 - Wipes
 - Diaper cream
 - Nap mat for Little Monkeys and Wise Owl classes only
 - Lunch on Tuesday and Thursday
 - Jacket or sweater if the weather calls for it
 - Proper shoes – children go outside when the weather permits
- ✓ **Forms that may be needed depending on the child's age and needs:**
 - Permission to give medications (if your child takes medication)
 - Food allergy form (if your child has food allergies)
 - Hearing and vision screening (if your child is 4 years old as of September 1)
 - Insect repellent or sunscreen form (for when children go out to play)

- ✓ Please do not bring toys for your child or allow them to walk into the classroom with toys. They will be taken away and put in the child's backpack. This prevents them from getting lost. If we allow one child to bring a toy, we have to allow all of them.
- ✓ When you drop off your child, please do not linger, this prolongs your child's adjustment period.
- ✓ If your child has a fever, he/she must be fever free 24 hours before returning to school; this also applies to vomiting and diarrhea. Other illnesses may require a doctor's release before returning. See the handbook for details.
- ✓ Parents are asked to sign up to bring snacks for class. When a class is running low, a note may be sent home.
- ✓ Payments later than the 10th of every month will accrue a \$25 late fee.

Please see changes made to the 2025-2026 school year Parent's Handbook.

Throughout the handbook, First Presbyterian Church Early Childhood Program has been replaced with FPCECP or center.

Page 9 Under Hearing and Vision Screening

- Rewording from: The school will offer hearing and vision screening for children 4 years and older. Parents may choose whether to use the school service. FPCECP is required to report hearing and vision information on all four-year-olds, the information can be sent to the school from the child's doctor.
- To read as follows: All children 4 years old by September 1st of the current school year are required by the State Minimum Standards to have vision and hearing screening. We ask that you have the screening done at your pediatrician's office and bring a copy of the results to us for our files. The school will offer hearing and vision screening for children four years and older for a fee. Parents may choose whether to use the school service or to use their pediatrician.

Page 12 Regarding safe sleep practices for infants

- Under the age of 12 months, the center does not allow wedges, infant positioners, blankets, toys or any other restrictive devices.
- Sleep sacks have been added to this list as stated in the State required standard procedures.

Page 15 Regarding #7 Suspension

- Rewording from: Three written behavioral reports within a 9-week period constitute the child being suspended from the childcare program for one week.
- To read as follows: Three written behavioral reports within a 6-week period constitute the child being suspended from the childcare program for one week.

First Presbyterian Church – Early Childhood Program (FPCECP) Parent’s Handbook

Mission Statement

FPCECP recognizes the individual needs and differences of each child. The mission and purpose of the program is to promote a Christian education which will emphasize God’s love and love of others; to provide a nurturing environment in which a developmentally appropriate curriculum will provide for physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth through an integrated approach; and to prepare an environment where children will learn through active exploration of materials and through interactions with other children and adults.

Statement of Services

FPCECP is a 9-month program that offers classes for children aged 3 months to 5 years. We offer small class sizes and children are grouped according to their ages. **Children entering the 3-year-old Early Pre-K class are required to be potty trained.** Enrollment is presumed to be for the entire school year. A child may be enrolled in a program that meets two, three or five days a week. Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes meet from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and Tuesday/Thursday classes meet from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Our school year typically begins in September and finishes in May. The school generally follows the holidays taken each year by Pasadena Independent School District.

State Licensing

We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with the state licensing regulations, in order to ensure a quality environment for your children. FPCECP complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facilities, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios. Parents are welcome to view the minimum standards and the annual report any time with the director. The information is also available online on the Texas Health and Human Services website.

Admission Requirements

Enrollment in our program is open to all families in our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex or national origin. Only the child(ren)’s parent or legal guardian may enroll a child(ren) (Proof of custody may be required). **All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend FPCECP.** All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell, and work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to FPCECP upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. FPCECP must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)’s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this Parent’s Handbook or otherwise be subjected to dismissal from program.

Paperwork, Forms, and Annual Renewal

We are required by the state to have current and updated information on each child in our center. This is also for your safety. As mentioned above, **we require all forms to be filled out on each child prior to their initial attendance at FPCECP.** Also, each year in August, we will have you renew and refresh all your paperwork and all forms. This process is done through Procure software application.

Drop-Off

Parents must accompany their child(ren) into the FPCECP area every morning and sign in their child(ren) immediately after dropping their child(ren) off in the appropriate room(s). Children will not be permitted in the building prior to opening hours. The children are not allowed to come into the FPCECP area alone or to sign themselves in or out. We require that all children have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual conditions or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. If any of these things are determined, the child must go home immediately. **The school doors will be unlocked at 8:55 a.m. each morning.**

Pick-Up

All children must be picked up and signed out by an adult and/or person approved by the parent and the FPCECP. Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick up the child must be listed on the Pick-up Permission form or be approved in writing by a parent. In an emergency, parents may call the center and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto FPCECP property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem. Anyone not recognized by sight will be asked for a picture ID. In the event anyone out of the ordinary is to pick up the child, please alert the office prior to that time. This is in addition to them being on the Pick-up Permission form or approval as stated above. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office and update this form whenever necessary. This form must be updated annually. Every minute past dismissal that you have not picked up your child, you are considered late, but after 10 minutes you will start receiving a fine, unless this occurs frequently and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

****LATE PICK UPS will result in a late fee of \$25.00 Picking up your child late is considered 10 minutes past the scheduled dismissal. If you are late picking up your child, there will be a one-time initial warning given. After that, you will be charged \$25.00 per child each day you are late.**

Emergency Medical Consent Form

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance or your child's doctor or dentist if he/she needs emergency care. Please list your child's doctor, dentist and the hospital you would prefer. Also, please list phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency numbers of contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts be listed on your Pick-up Permission form. If your child has any allergies or is on any medications, please include this information on the form as well as filling out one of the food or

non-food allergy forms. All these forms must be re-done annually. Immunization cards need to be presented on or before the first day the child attends the center. A photocopy of these will be kept on file. When your child receives additional immunizations, you are required to bring your immunization card back in for us to take a current photocopy of it so that we can up-date your file. Whenever any information on this card changes, it is your responsibility to notify us and up-date or re-do this form.

Information Change

Parents are to notify the center of any change in home or work phone numbers and addresses. This is for your safety so that we reach you in an emergency. It is required that any changes to phone numbers, places of employment, residence or pick-up information be turned into the office immediately. Please give the director written notice of the change as soon as possible.

Immunization Requirements

All children enrolled must have their immunization records up-to-date or provide an exemption affidavit. The child's immunization record must be provided by the parent, and all information must be current. The parent shall also provide proof of this with a form signed by a health care provider. This form will state that the child has received all current, age-appropriate immunizations. Parents wishing to take a religious exemption must contact the office to find out the proper procedure for providing an affidavit of such religious opposition. If FPCECP is penalized or fined for non-compliance of immunization cards due to a parent's neglect, that fine will be passed on to the client responsible including an additional \$50 administration fee. Employees of FCPECP are not required to have annual immunizations. The Board of Directors does encourage each employee to discuss immunizations with his/her personal doctor.

Medication

All medication to be given to children must be in the original bottle with the instructions clearly printed on it as provided by the doctor's prescription or by the pharmaceutical company. All medicine, including scripted and unscripted medications, must be in an up-to-date bottle and not be outdated or past-dated. All prescription medications must have that child's name on the label. All non-prescription medicine must have a permanent sticker with the child's name and the date the medication was left at the center. **A "Permission to give Medication" form needs to be filled out prior to the administration of any medication.** All medicines must be personally handed to the teacher in charge at the time of arrival along with the "Permission to give Medication" form completed. FPCECP reserves the right not to give medicines if the dosage is questionable or not according to the label. FPCECP reserves the right to request a doctor's consent via hand written prescription for any non-prescription medications.

Allergies

We must be aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. **If your child has any known food allergies, you will need to fill out an "Allergy/Food Exemption Medical Statement"** which may be picked up from the office. This allows us to alert all our staff to be on guard about his/her

allergies. The Allergy/Food Exemption Medical Statement must be turned into our office as soon as this allergy has been identified and must be updated annually. We also need to be aware of any non-food allergies that can affect your child. If your child has any non-food allergies you will need to fill out a “Non-Food Allergy Medical Statement” which may be picked up from the office and must be returned to the director as soon as this allergy has been identified. This form must be updated annually. You will also need to fill out an “Authorization to give Medication” form if your child requires an Epi-pen or other emergency treatment.

Illness and Continued Health

Guidelines for illnesses are for the welfare of all our children. To provide a safe and healthy environment, we rely on our parents to monitor their children. A child that is ill or has a temperature of 100° or above should be kept at home. All children must have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior, as stated in the Drop-Off section above. A child that is too ill to remain in the center shall be supervised and cared for until the child can be picked up and cared for elsewhere. The child will be sent home if he/she is running a temperature of over 100°, if he/she is vomiting or has diarrhea, or if it is suspected that he/she has a contagious disease. If a child needs to be sent home and their parents are unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts listed on the Pick-up Permission form. The center reserves the right to request the child to see a physician or have a physician’s note prior to returning.

Accident Reports

Safety is a top priority of FPCECP. Yet, there are times when a child will have an accident/incident between your child and another child. If the accident/incident requires “more than a hug and a kiss”, our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. A copy of this accident report, signed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident, will be provided to you and a copy filed with the director’s office. We ask that you sign the copy provided to you and return it to the director’s office to confirm that you were notified of your child’s injury. This system is aimed at ensuring communication at all levels and can be a good way to be certain little things are not forgotten in a hasty departure. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child’s privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. It not only puts our staff in an awkward situation but could cause confrontation between our families. We will handle any and all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate way.

Hearing and Vision Screening

All children 4 years old by September 1st of the current school year are required by the State Minimum Standards to have vision and hearing screening. We ask that you have the screening done at your pediatrician’s office and bring a copy of the results to us for our files. The school will offer hearing and vision screening for children four years and older for a fee. Parents may choose whether to use the school service or to use their pediatrician.

Fire Drills

We will begin early in the school year to instruct the children in the correct procedures for fire emergencies. Fire Drill procedures will be explained and practiced a number of times during the school year.

Emergency and Bad Weather Days

Classes are subject to cancellation due to bad weather or hazardous conditions. Every effort will be made by teachers to phone parents to notify them of such cancellations. The school uses Procure to send text messages notifying you of any cancellations.

Discipline

At FPCECP the staff are trained in using positive reinforcement as a means of discipline. Our goal is to find solutions and to provide the very best environment for your child. We have a detailed discipline policy including an early intervention system which we call our Behavior Intervention Policy. These policies begin on page 16,

Safety

When the orange cones are in place connecting the playground to the program entrance, please do not drive over them. The children cross there to enter into and exit out of the building. We ask that you be aware of your speed in the church parking lot. Please help us keep your child safe!

Toys

FPCECP has a wide variety of toys, games, and other resources to offer children. Personal toys are not permitted in the center, as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show-and-tell or sleep-toys which should be labeled with the child's name. Please do not bring toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction. FPCECP is not responsible for stolen, lost or broken toys or clothing.

Clothing

We encourage the children to dress for play and comfort as the seasons change. Because our program is based on play and exploration, your child WILL get dirty! Children will go outside, weather permitting. Please make sure your child has shoes or appropriate footwear for his/her age. **It is required that you bring one set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or an accident.** We have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in center clothes, please wash the clothes and return them within one week. **It is strongly suggested that all clothing brought or worn have the child's name on it.**

Diapers

Please provide diapers, wipes, and diaper ointment (if needed) for your non-potty-trained children. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name. You can bring a package of diapers to leave at the center. You will be notified when your child is running low on diapers.

Supplies

Each child will be provided with all the instructional supplies necessary here at FPCECP. Additional personal items may be required for each class. Please see your child's teacher for a complete list.

Snacks

Snacks will be served to children at mid-morning each class day. In most cases, teachers will provide a sign-up list for parents to furnish appetizing snacks. Water will be offered several times throughout the day and always after playing outside. All children will be encouraged to try the snack items each day but will not be forced to eat anything they do not like. The children will say "Grace" before snack and lunch times.

Insect Repellent and Sunscreen

The center will not apply any insect repellent or sunscreen to your child without your written consent. If there is an activity outside or conditions where these products need to be used, **we must have a signed permission slip** on file for each child. We will use the products provided by the parent or guardian.

Curriculum

Children learn by doing. They learn through play, experimentation, exploration, and testing. Learning should be a joyful, natural experience. We have chosen a curriculum based on the developmental needs of the children in each class, which fosters individual growth through opportunities for exploration.

Physical Activity

All our classes will participate in some type of physical activity each day. It will be outside unstructured play when the weather allows or indoor activities in the church fellowship hall. The school will follow recommended weather guidelines such as, heat index, warnings, and insect warnings. All classes will also engage in some form of structured physical activity, such as music. The activities generally last about 15 to 20 minutes.

Our Staff

At FPCECP we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly qualified staff is an integral part of providing this environment. Our current staff has had:

- a detailed interview and screening process;
- approval by the state of Texas through a background analysis that cross references state and federal criminal records, as well as child abuse reporting records to insure that each employee has a background that is clear; and
- CPR and first aid training as required by the state of Texas.

We firmly believe in training and continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to work in an early education setting.

Staff and Client Relationships

FPCECP considers it inappropriate for parents and clients to solicit our staff to work for them either in their business or homes. We are not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock or no longer employed by FPCECP.

Communication and Parent Participation

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and our staff. Open and frequent communication will help your child have a positive early learning experience. The director's office is always open during business hours for parents to come and review or discuss questions/concerns about policies and procedures. Parents are welcome to visit the center during the hours of operation. We ask that you check in at the director's office first. Parents wanting to participate in the operation or activities will need to contact the director for further instruction. The program must remain a safe environment for the children and staff. The director will ensure the proper procedures are covered for each activity. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child's day and overall development through written means, including:

- monthly parent newsletters to keep you informed as to the overall program
- Procare app
- parent bulletin board – updated with current information about FPCECP
- daily written communication in the form of “Daily Report” forms, “Incident/ouch” forms, and classroom memos will be placed in the child's “cubby” from time to time

The school will provide each child with a folder for communication as well. The folder will include children's papers as well as any information from the school office. Most information and contact will be through Procure, but for monthly calendars and certain other forms please check your child's folder daily!

Children's Birthdays

Birthdays are special days for children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at FPCECP, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. We will only distribute birthday invitations for a private birthday party for your child if all the children in the class are included. Children are unable to understand why some are invited and others are not. We appreciate your understanding regarding this matter.

Holidays and Special Celebrations

We will celebrate holidays and other special days during the year. Parties will be held for costume day (October), Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. Specifics about party days or other celebrations will be given as the particular day approaches by the teacher.

Intruders

The safety of children is our first concern. The doors at the entrance for the Early Childhood Program will be locked at approximately 9:30 a.m. and will remain locked until the appropriate pick-up time. Parents can ring the bell located to the right of the door for special assistance.

Food for Infants and Crawlers

Parents must provide food/ formula/ liquid milk for children in the infant and crawler rooms. The infant and crawler rooms are equipped with refrigerators. All bottles are required to have a sticker with the child's name and the date the bottle was made. Please be certain to inform staff in the classroom of the type of formula your child is using, and any other facts regarding diet. Do not bring open baby food jars, Licensing requirements restrict us from serving prepared baby food from previously opened jars. Any unused baby food will be sent home or thrown away. Parents have a right to come and breastfeed their child during school hours. There is a rocking chair in the classroom for their convenience. Breast milk must be handled in a manner consistent with universal precautions. Please clearly identify all bottles and cups with your child's name and labeled breastmilk.

Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Our staff follows the safe sleep practices as outlined by the state licensing agency. This policy includes the following:

- Sleeping on back for every sleep. To reduce the risk of SIDS, infants should sleep on their backs until the age of 12 months.
- We can offer a pacifier but no strings or cords attachments.
- Babies will be placed on a firm sleep surface and will be one infant per crib. The center does not allow wedges, infant positioners, blankets, toys or any other restrictive devices, including a sleep sack.
- FPCECP does not allow smoking in the infant room or any place inside the building.
- Babies will be allowed tummy time daily with supervised staff to help strengthen their muscles.
- **Any infant who cannot sleep in the above-mentioned manner must have an infant sleep exception form filled out and signed by his/her doctor.**

Portraits and Pictures

We offer school pictures two times a year, in the fall and spring. The fall photos usually include one sitting per child and should be delivered in time for use as holiday gifts. The spring portraits include one sitting and a complete class portrait. The portraits are completely optional and only offered as a service to you. In addition, we may take pictures of the children playing for use on their cubbies, for use with a project or for promotional use. In Procure there is a place giving us permission to take your child's picture and include them in publicity on the website and social media.

Monthly Tuition and Registration Fees and Policies

It is our philosophy that clients are paying for the spot their child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but rather on a set monthly fee that is due regardless of the attendance habits of the

child who has the spot. A child will not be considered officially enrolled until the registration fee is paid in full. This amount is due before school begins in September and again in January. **Registration fees are non-refundable.** Monthly statements will be given at the beginning of every month. The tuition is due by the 10th of every month. Payment received after the 10th will be assessed with an additional \$25.00 late fee. An additional fee of \$10.00 will be added for each week when the payment is late. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for all returned checks. For your convenience, the tuition may be paid by semester or monthly.

Receipts and Statements

Receipts are available upon request. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes are available upon request for all accounts with a zero balance.

Child Abuse Reporting Policy

The state of Texas requires that FPCECP and all members of childcare institutions be on the lookout for, and report to the state and appropriate authorities any and all suspected cases of abuse to a child.

At FPCECP our center and staff are mandatory reporters of child abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the Child Protective Services for investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of possible child abuse or endangerment. If a parent is in need of assistance for their child, the office will assist them in getting the proper information to help report the abuse.

The following steps are to be taken if a staff member is suspected of child abuse:

- A staff member who has a situation or investigation pending should immediately notify the director or most senior leadership staff member in the building.
- The person who suspects abuse should bring it to the attention of the director or most senior leadership staff member in the building.
- The supervisor will check on the complaint and if they agree that there may be abuse, the supervisor will report the incident to Child Protective Services and our state licensing authority.
- We will then follow their advice regarding whether or not to suspend the staff member.

If a staff member is founded in a case of child abuse, we will take the following steps:

- We will allow the staff member to appeal the decision.
- The director or an appointed member of the leadership staff will meet with the individual to go over the incident and form an opinion as to its validity and/or consequences to the FPCECP and the individual.
- Based on the advice of our licensing agent, we will either suspend the staff member or allow them to continue their job until the appeal is completed.
- The staff member will meet with the director or an assigned member of the leadership staff during this time and steps will be taken to ensure that there won't be any problems.

If after the appeal the decision is still founded, we will take one of the following steps based on the advice of our licensing agent:

- The staff member will be terminated from their position at FPCECP, or
- We will inform the parents that we have a staff member who has a founded child abuse on record. We will also let the parents know what the charge was.

Insurance Requirements

FPCECP complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by an independent agent. For more information concerning policies and liability see the management.

Additions and Changes FPCECP reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. The center will make all changes and additions available at the time these changes are made. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system at the time they are made effective.

FPCECP Discipline Policy

We believe that children need limits to feel secure about themselves and their environment. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. The basis for our Discipline Policy is an organized classroom and prepared staff members. At FPCECP we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and the child. We also believe that if an interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, then discipline problems are at a minimum. If inappropriate behavior does occur, we begin with a positive approach.

According to *Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers* from Texas Health and Human Services, Subchapter L, discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child,
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding,
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control; and
4. A positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:
 - a. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior,
 - b. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements,
 - c. Redirecting behavior using positive statements, and
 - d. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

The following is considered unacceptable behavior:

- Running in the classroom
- Leaving the area or group without permission
- Becoming disruptive
- Removing shoes or other articles of clothing
- Throwing toys, rocks, sand
- Using toys and materials inappropriately
- Aggressive behavior
- Abusive, or inappropriate language
- Arguing with team members or other children
- Lack of Cooperation
- Behavior determined by the director to be unacceptable
- Hurting themselves or others, such as hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, and pulling hair

The teacher has these prime responsibilities when dealing with inappropriate behavior:

1. Redirection - Encourage child's good behavior and/or redirect his or her activity.
2. "Time out" or "think time" within their area
 - a. If a problem still exists, the child is then removed from the situation.

- b. One minute per year of age, no more than three minutes after the child has regained control or composure.
 - c. “Time out” or “think time” shall be defined as an area away from the group or activity yet within their area.
 - d. The child will be allowed to return to the group as soon as possible.
 - e. The teacher will not only decide if the child is ready to return, but will encourage him/her to be ready.
 - f. If redirection and “time out”/”think time” periods are not sufficient, staff members intervene as soon as possible to prevent physical or emotional injury.
 - g. The teacher will try to help the child identify his/her unacceptable behavior and possible alternatives.
3. “Time out” or “think time” away from the group
 - a. If the child continues in the inappropriate behavior
 - b. And/or the “time out”/”think time” with-in the area becomes either inappropriate or ineffective
 4. Behavior Report
 - a. If the child’s behavior continues to be inappropriate
 - b. OR the severity denotes an un-resolved problem.
 5. Behavior Intervention Meeting
 - a. If the child’s behavior continues to be inappropriate, a behavior intervention meeting may take place
 - b. Those in attendance will be the parents, the child’s lead teacher, and a member of the leadership team
 - c. This may be called by any of the individuals listed above.
 6. Sending a child home
 - a. When the child becomes out of control
 - b. And/or when the child fails to respond to the measures taken by the FPCECP team
 - c. This is at the discretion of the most senior leadership team member present
 7. Suspension
 - a. Three written behavioral reports within a six week period constitute the child’s being suspended from the child care program for one week.
 - b. Behavior Intervention Meeting - During this time the parent or guardian, the lead teacher and a member of the leadership team will meet in an attempt to determine if the child is capable of drastically changing his/her behavior to allow re-entry into the program. This is the mandatory behavior intervention meeting described in the Behavior Intervention Policy.
 - c. Fees will still be paid for this week to retain the child’s space in the FPCECP program.
 - d. If the child does continue in the program and does receive a fourth behavioral report within a 30 day period, termination of services may occur.
 8. Termination of services
 - a. When the severity of a problem is great enough that it could endanger the safety of the child(ren)’s welfare
 - b. Termination may be effective immediately after consulting the most senior leadership team member present
 - c. The parent or guardian will be notified.
 - d. The center considers this to be a drastic measure and would not resort to such unless the child’s behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or

well-being of one or more of the other children or team members and, that threat cannot be eliminated.

In addition to the above, the center will use three methods to track behavior and communicate with parents.

1. Daily Reports – a parent/center communication format that does not count as a written behavior report. If the teacher deems necessary, a copy will be kept on file.
2. Observation Form – an inner center documentation of observed inappropriate or challenging behavior. These may be filled out at any time by any center team member and are used solely to track behavior patterns. These are to be turned in daily to the lead teacher over the student and then to the leadership team for filing.
3. The “Behavior” Report – These are the “Incident Forms” and are duplicate. The original is filed in the child’s file and the copy is given to the parent. These are pre-approved by a leadership team member. Each “Behavior” Report counts as one of the three that would result in suspension.

FPCECP expects parental involvement and cooperation in all aspects of discipline. Failure to comply can warrant termination. We reserve the right to discontinue work with any child/parent whose needs we cannot meet. The key to effective discipline is consistency. We try to be as consistent as possible in all areas. We provide the child with a warm and loving atmosphere in which to grow and learn.

FPCECP Behavior Intervention Policy

At FPCECP, our vision is to provide the best education for the most children possible. We strive to help every child be successful and to achieve their highest potential. We implement the **Behavior Intervention Policy** when needed to ensure this happens. We take the safety of your children very seriously here.

The basis for our discipline policy is an organized classroom and prepared staff members. At FPCECP we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and the child. We also believe that if an interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, then discipline problems are at a minimum. If inappropriate behavior does occur, we begin with a positive approach.

A behavior intervention meeting may be called in three different manners:

1. The primary teacher or a member of the leadership team may call for a behavior intervention meeting at any time prior to the third disciplinary action as they deem necessary.
2. Either parent may call for a behavior intervention meeting at any time prior to the third disciplinary action as they deem necessary.
3. A behavior intervention meeting is mandatory after the third discipline note.

Under the first two scenarios, our first goal will be to determine and identify the behavioral difficulties that the child is having. The child's primary teacher will document the circumstances surrounding the behavior and the current actions that are being taken to correct this. Parents will then be asked to provide information concerning any changes in the home and will give input if they have noticed this behavior and what actions they are currently taking to correct it. A plan of action will then be discussed and agreed upon by all members present. If problems continue, an additional intervention will be scheduled.

The approach will vary slightly in the case that a mandatory behavior intervention meeting has been called after the third discipline note. Our first goal will be to determine if our program is appropriate for the needs of the child. Services will be terminated if it is determined that we cannot meet the child's needs in our program. We will follow the steps listed above if we determine our program is appropriate for the child's special needs.

In addition to the above, the center will use three methods to track behavior and communicate with parents.

1. Daily Reports – a parent/center communication format that does not count as a written behavior report. If the teacher deems it necessary, a copy will be kept on file.
2. Observation Form – an inner center documentation of observed inappropriate or challenging behavior. These may be filled out at any time by any center team member and are used solely to track behavior patterns. These are to be turned in daily to the lead teacher over the student and then to the leadership team for filing.

3. The “Behavior” Report – These are the “Incident Forms” and are duplicate. The original is filed in the child’s file and the copy is given to the parent. These are pre-approved by a leadership team member. Each “Behavior” Report counts as one of the three that would result in suspension.

FPCECP expects parental involvement and cooperation in all aspects of discipline. Failure to comply can warrant termination. We reserve the right to discontinue work with any child/parent whose needs cannot be met.

The Behavior Intervention Policy’s purpose is to establish procedures for the parents, lead teacher, and a member of the leadership team to utilize when planning to meet the needs of the child(ren) with unacceptable or inappropriate behavior. A parent, the child’s lead teacher and a member of the leadership team will be in attendance at a behavior intervention meeting and agree in advance on time and date.

FPCPC Biting Policy

Biting is a common and developmentally appropriate behavior in young children, especially from 9-30 months. Generally, children over the age of 3 have developed more appropriate ways to communicate. Experts in the field of child development report that biting occurs chiefly as a result of a child's inability to communicate. Children may become upset by a new experience and may bite as a response. While biting during the toddler years is developmentally appropriate, it is upsetting to parents and caregivers when it occurs, the goal of our policy is to replace the child's undesirable behavior with more effective way of communication and to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our program. The following is a plan of our pre-emptive strategies:

- For infants and toddlers, positive teething activities will be provided to comfort and soothe their gums.
- When children bite out of frustration or anger, behavior will be redirected to some other activity and/or will be shown an alternate way to communicate what they want. We will encourage the use of language to express wants and needs.
- Parents will be notified if their child is bitten at school. However, in order to protect the privacy of all our families, parents will not be informed of the biter.
- If a child bites frequently, staff will utilize a more intensive approach which involves carefully observing the child to determine precipitating events and maintaining a log to help track the behavior. Conferences with parents may also be utilized to discuss the child's actions at home, search for outside resources, etc.
- Biting incidents will be communicated to the parents of the biter to ensure staff and parents are working together to understand and prevent this behavior.

In order to ensure the safety of all children, if all attempts to stop chronic biting fail, we reserve the right to remove the biting child from the program.

FPCECP First Aid/Medications Policy

FPCECP daily designates someone to be the “First Aid/Meds” staff person. The designated person will always be reachable by phone or radio. This person will be responsible for any injuries or illnesses, administering medications and keeping the first aid room in order and well stocked. This person will take the following steps to ensure the health and welfare of all children in our care.

Sending a child home

When it has been determined that a child must go home, the procedures are as follows:

1. Notify the parent.
2. If the parents are unable to be reached, proceed by contacting someone on the emergency pick up list.

Sick child

1. Assess the child. Question him/her as to where the problem is located.
2. Take the child’s temperature.
3. The child must be sent home with a temperature of 100°F. or higher.
4. A judgement call may be made if evidence of an illness is present but is not accompanied by a high temperature.

Injury with blood

1. Take precautions by first applying a protective barrier between you and the wound, i.e. rubber gloves, zip lock bag, etc.
2. Assess the area to determine whether the wound will require stitches, or a bandage.
3. If stitches are required, first notify the on-site supervisor and then the child’s parents. Clean only the area around the wound.
4. If stitches are not required, thoroughly clean and disinfect the wound using hydrogen peroxide.
5. All contaminated materials (gloves, blood soaked paper or cloth) shall be disposed of by being sealed in a plastic bag and thrown in the waste container for diapers. This container is to be emptied into a waste receptacle outside the building as needed or at least twice every 24 hours. Contaminated clothing that is to be sent home must be double sealed in a plastic bag and then put in the container for soiled clothing.

Injury without blood/head injury

1. Assess the area to locate any abnormal bumps or bruises.
2. Apply an icepack to the injured area.
3. If the head injury is suspected to be more severe, notify the child’s parent and alert a teacher to watch for fixed, glassy, or dilated pupils for 30 minutes following the injury.

Broken bones

1. If a broken bone is suspected, assess the area to locate any swelling or abnormality of the bone structure. Do not force movement.
2. Apply an icepack to the injured area.

3. If further assessment causes suspicion that a bone may be broken, contact the child's parent as soon as possible.

Bite marks

1. Assess the child to locate the area of the bite.
2. Disinfect the area of the bite with hydrogen peroxide.
3. Apply an icepack to the injured area.

In an emergency

1. Contact the on-site supervisor.
2. Instruct a team member to call 911, as well as the child's parents.
3. Attend to the child by following proper first aid or CPR guidelines while awaiting paramedics.

Headlice

1. Confirm with the on-site supervisor that nits or lice are present. Quarantine the child immediately.
2. Follow procedures on sending a child home. Notify the pick-up person that the child must be properly treated before returning.
3. All sheets, blankets, and sleep toys in the affected room must be bagged and washed. Suggest to the parents that they do this as well.
4. A complete headlice check must take place in the affected room, as well as in the rooms of any siblings.
5. The child must be checked before re-entry into the center.
6. It is the parent's responsibility to present the child to a leadership team member or the First Aid/Meds person for inspection. Failure to do so will result in overtime charges to be in effect from the time the child is clocked in until they are picked up by a parent, or the parent has been notified and the child cleared by the appropriate person.

Contagious disease

1. Parents are required to notify the center when a child contracts a contagious disease. These include, but may not be limited to, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, 5th disease, impetigo, measles, scarlet fever, ringworm, etc.
2. In the case that a child contracts a contagious disease, a health alert will be posted on the sign-in counter and by the door of the affected room.
3. This alert will include a brief description of the disease, date that the center was notified, and the date that it was posted.
4. The child may return to the center as stated by the health alert.

Medication

Receiving and storing medication

1. An “Authorization to Give Medication” form, filled out in its entirety, must accompany all medication received by the center
2. All medication must be in its original bottle or container.
3. Medication mixed in a bottle with formula or in any other manner is not to be accepted.
4. All non-prescription medication must be labeled with the child’s first and last name and the date that it was received.
5. Non-prescription medication requiring administration for longer than one week must have a doctor’s note approving the length of use. That note may be good for a maximum of six months.
6. Long term prescription medication must have an “Authorization to Give Medication” form. This form must be updated every 30 days. We must have a doctor’s note for all prescription medications, with the medication not to exceed six months. The prescription bottle may fulfill this requirement, as long as it is current.

Administering medication

When medication is authorized to be administered, five “rights” must always be observed, and are as follows:

1. Right Patient – Question the teacher and child to confirm that you have the correct child.
2. Right Drug and Right Dosage – Compare the medication bottle to the “Authorization to Give Medication” form to confirm proper administration and to insure that the medication has not expired.
3. Right Dosage - Do not exceed the dosage on the bottle unless a doctor’s note is present verifying the dosage amount.
4. Right Time – Refer to the “Authorization to Give Medication” form for the time to be given. Medication may be given one-half hour before or after the stated time.
5. Right Route – When medication is administered, be certain that it is applied to the correct area or given in the correct manner, i.e. eye drops to eye, ear drops to ear.

Disposing of medication

1. When the duration for administration of medication is up, as noted on the “Authorization to Give Medication” form, the empty bottle (after being washed out) should be placed in the child’s backpack.
2. In the case that the medication is not emptied, it should stay in the First Aid room and a note sent to the parents.
3. The note will notify the parents that the unused medication will be discarded if it is not picked up by a designated date. All medication must be discarded through the sewer system.

Recording information

1. All incidents must be recorded on the correct forms as needed, i.e. “Authorization to Give Medication”, “Incident Report”.
2. All information must be specific as to the degree of temperature, cause of injury, location and type, i.e. “ $\frac{3}{4}$ inch cut on right index finger; finger got cut on a toy”. Any injury causing a mark constitutes an incident report. The report will be complete with all the information surrounding the injury. One copy of the report will go to the child’s backpack and the original to the child’s file.

Guidelines - When A Child Can Return

These guidelines are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. These guidelines will be observed unless your child has a doctor's release that specifically re-admits them to the center prior to the guidelines listed.

Fever free - Must be fever free for 24 hours except for an ear infection. In case of an ear infection, the child may return after treatment of antibiotics has started.

Vomit free – Must not have vomited for 24 hours.

Uncontrolled Diarrhea - Defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased watery stool and/or decreased formed consistency that cannot be contained by the diaper or toilet use. The child cannot return until he/she has had normal stools for 24 hours. If a child is on a medication that causes diarrhea, we need a doctor's note for the file (which we can keep for further reference) and if the child is teething, we can allow the child to continue coming to the center at that time (if it is determined this is the cause of the diarrhea).

Conjunctivitis – 24 hours after documented treatment for conjunctivitis has begun.

Mouth sores – Must have a doctor's note stating that the child is non-infectious.

Rash – With any rash accompanied by a fever or behavior change, the child cannot return until they have a doctor's note stating that the illness is not a communicable disease.

Infestations (i.e. head lice, scabies) – Cannot return until 24 hours after appropriate treatment has begun and has to be checked by the First Aid/Meds person before reentering.

Tuberculosis – Must have a doctor's note stating the child is non-infectious.

Impetigo – Cannot return until 48 hours after treatment has begun.

Sore throat – 24 hours after documented treatment has been initiated.

Varicella (chicken pox) – Cannot return until 7 days after the onset of the rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.

Shingles – Child needs to be excluded only if the sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing, until the sores have crusted.

Whooping cough – Cannot return until 5 days of appropriate treatment has been started.

Mumps – Cannot return until 9 days after onset of swelling of glands near the ear.

Hepatitis A - Cannot return until one week after the onset of illness or until after immune serum globulin has been given to the appropriate children and team members in the program as directed by the responsible health department staff.

Measles – Cannot return until 6 days after rash appears.

Rubella – Cannot return until 6 days after rash appears.

Ringworm – Cannot return until 24 hours after starting treatment or a doctor's note saying non-infectious.

FPCECP
Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Policy

State law requires that every employee of a licensed daycare or preschool facility, who in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse or denial of critical care, shall immediately notify Child Protective Services (CPS), which is a branch of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

DFPS 1-800-252-5400 or

Go online to https://www.dfps.texas.gov/child_protection/ Then click red button, Report Abuse.

Pasadena Police Department 713-477-1221 or 911

Our policy is that a staff member shall report the suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or to a local law enforcement agency as prescribed by state law. This is to be done by any means available within 24 hours of the required report. Written documentation shall also be sent to Child Protective Services and any local law enforcement agencies previously notified with 3 days of the initial report and maintain written documentation of a child abuse or neglect report on facility premises for 12 months from the date of the report.

The oral and written reports shall contain the following information or as much thereof as the person making the report can furnish.

1. The names and home address of the child, phone number, year and date.
2. The child's explanation of what happened.
3. The nature and extent of the child's injuries, what the marks looked like and the color of the bruises.
4. The date CPS was called, name of reporter and case worker.
5. Any other information or comments which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury.
6. If the police were called.

Reporting requirements for professionals in the state of Texas

Your Legal Obligation <https://www2.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/cvs/suspectchildabuse.pdf>

“Current law requires that professionals such as teachers, doctors, nurses or child daycare workers must make a verbal report within 48 hours. Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment of up to 180 days and/or a fine of up to \$2,000 (Texas Family Code, Chapter 261). Your report of child abuse or neglect is confidential and immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in “good faith” and “without malice. “Good Faith” means that the person making the report took reasonable steps to learn facts that were readily available and at hand. “Without Malice” means that the person did not intend to injure or violate the rights of another person.”

Gang Free Zone

In Texas, a gang-free zone is a designated area around specific locations, like schools and youth centers, where certain gang-related activities are prohibited and penalties for those activities are increased. The purpose is to deter gang activity in areas where children gather.

Gang-free zones are defined in Texas Penal Code Section 71.028 as locations within 1,000 feet of schools, youth centers, playgrounds, and residential treatment centers, or within 300 feet of shopping malls, movie theaters, public swimming pools, or arcades.

FPCECP is by law a gang free zone. As required, the policy is both included in this handbook and is posted outside the director's office.

Child Care Centers and Preschool Licensing Standards and Procedures

This facility is regulated by Texas Health and Human Services, Child Care Regulation at <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/child-care-regulation>.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission protects children by regulating and educating childcare providers. Child Care Regulation (CCR) responsibilities include:

- Regulating all childcare operations and child-placing agencies to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children in care.
- Permitting and monitoring operations and agencies for compliance with state regulation standards, rules and laws.
- Investigating complaints alleging violations of minimum standards in childcare and residential childcare operations.
- Informing parents and the public about childcare, including how specific childcare and residential childcare operations comply with minimum standards of care.
- Giving childcare providers technical assistance on meeting CCR minimum standards, rules, and laws.

A copy of the state's minimum standards is in the director's office along with FPCECP's most recent inspection report. Parents are welcome to review the documents at any time upon request.

FPCECP Emergency Plans

Fire and bomb threat evacuation procedure

There will be a long continuous blast from the fire alarm. Children will be evacuated according to the diagram posted in each room or as directed by the police. Children younger than 24 months of age, who have limited mobility or who otherwise need assistance, will be placed in the rolling cribs to be evacuated from the building. If the weather is too cold/hot for the children to be outside for an extended period of time, they will go to the designated evacuation site, Turner Elementary School. In the case of an actual fire or bomb threat, teachers will take a head count and keep their children calm, in a contained area, out of the way of emergency vehicles and personnel until the children are released to their parents. In the event the designated evacuation site is unsafe or unavailable, the center will notify the Pasadena Police and notify parents through Procure.

In all drill or evacuation procedures, all staff members in rooms are areas with non-ambulatory or infant children will put all children in a stroller or crib with wheels and wheel them out of the building.

In the event of an evacuation, the director/staff member in charge will ensure the following procedures take place.

1. The teachers in each classroom are responsible for the children under their supervision and should take attendance, accounting for each child by that day's sign-in sheet. Children who are not accounted for are to be reported to the director immediately.
2. The director will bring the Emergency Medical Consent binder/student emergency contact numbers.
3. Once all children and staff are accounted for, everyone will proceed to the designated location, Turner Elementary School. Should the evacuation site be destroyed as well, staff will transport children to the closest designated shelter according to local emergency authorities with their assistance.
4. Upon arrival the supervisor in charge will notify parents via Procure.

Relocation site:

Turner Elementary School

4333 Lilly Street

Pasadena, Texas 77505

713-740-0768

Pasadena Police Department 713-477-1221

Tornado procedure

If there is notification of a tornado warning, the children will be evacuated into the Youth Room, room 12. In the case of an actual tornado, teachers will take a head count and keep their children calm, in the contained area, until it is deemed safe for the children to be released. If there is structural damage to the building and it is deemed unsafe, children will be taken to the designated evacuation site, Turner Elementary School. Communication with parents will be through Procure.

Bad weather and power failure procedures

If Pasadena Independent School District schools are closed for the day due to inclement weather, FPCECP will also close. Parents will also be notified through Procure. If Pasadena I.S.D. dismiss early due to bad weather, parents are required to come as quickly and safely as possible to pick up their children. As ratios allow, staff will be allowed to leave starting with the ones who live furthest away. If the parents cannot pick up the child, staff, including the director, will stay as long as necessary and will provide activities for the children.

In the case of a power failure, staff will notify parents via Procure and ask them to pick up their children as quickly as possible. If evacuation due to power failure is deemed necessary, the children will be taken to the designated evacuation site, Turner Elementary School.

The only exception to this policy will be in the event if flood warnings are issued for southeast Harris County, which include Pasadena, Deer Park and La Porte. Regardless of the decision of Pasadena I.S.D., FPCECP will not have school that day and parents will be notified via Procure.

Chemical events procedure

In the case of a chemical spill or event, FPCECP will follow the directives of local authorities and parents will be notified via Procure.

Intoxicated parent procedure

If an intoxicated parent comes to pick up a child, center staff will try to detain the parent. The on-site supervisor will contact another person on the emergency list and request that they pick up the child. The on-site supervisor will then tell the intoxicated parent of the pickup plan. If the center staff is unable to contact another pickup person, the child must be allowed to leave with the parent. The parent will be informed that the police and Child Protective Services will be called to inform them of the incident.

Intruder procedure

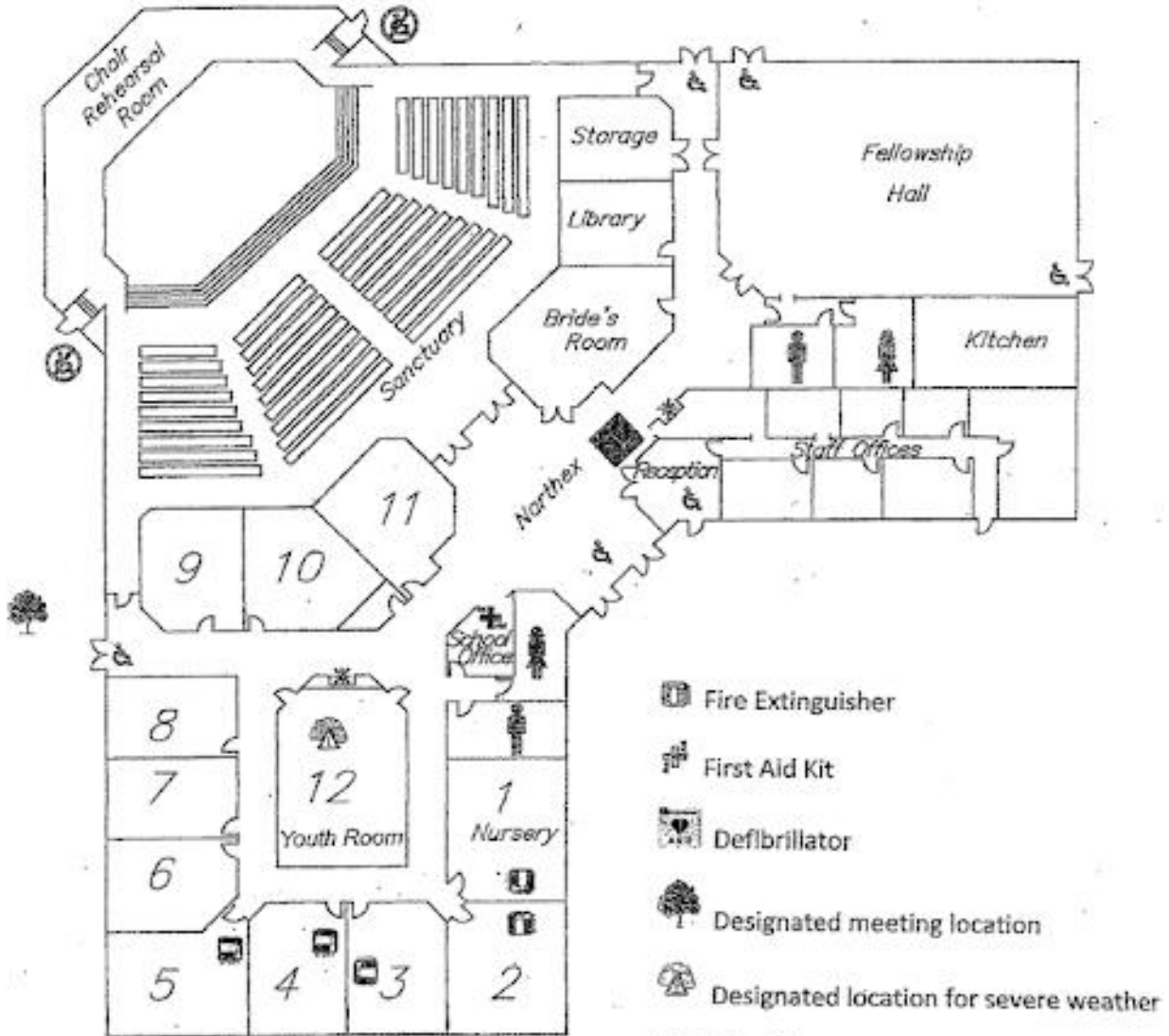
Doors to the center are usually kept locked during school hours. If an unknown individual gains access to the property/building, a staff member will see if they can be of assistance. This staff member shall determine if the individual is an intruder and try to get them to leave the property. During this time, another staff member will alert other staff and contact the police. Doors to classrooms can be locked. Staff members who approach alleged intruders should refrain from putting themselves or other staff members in an endangering situation. If the situation becomes hostile, they should try to escape or do what the individual asks until the authorities arrive. The remainder of the staff will be insuring the safety of the children.

Lost or abducted children procedure

One team member would alert the on-site supervisor for assistance with the search while the other team members stay with the other children. If the child is not found, the center would contact the parent and then the police. Staff would then proceed as directed by the police.

Emergency Evacuation and Relocation Diagram

Early Childhood Program
 First Presbyterian Church
 4647 Preston Avenue
 Pasadena, Texas 77505



Water Fountain

Relocation site:
 Turner Elementary
 4333 Lilly Street
 Pasadena, Texas 77505
 713-740-0768