



“Hands On Learning for The Mind, Body and Spirit”

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Parent Handbook
2018-2019

Table of Contents

Welcome Statement	3
Philosophy and Goals	3
Governance.....	4
Admissions	4
Admission Priorities.....	4
Required Ages for Admission	4
Enrollment Procedures	5
Staff Qualifications	5
Staff/Student Ratios	5
General Calendar.....	6
Program Options.....	6
Program Hours.....	6
Tuition and Fees.....	6
Tuition	6
Late Tuition Payments	7
Fees and Deposits.....	7
Collection of Unpaid Tuition	7
Confidentiality of Records	7
IEP/IFSP Request	7
Daily Routines	7
Opening and Closing.....	7
Sign In and Sign Out Procedures	8
Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up.....	8
Clothing	8
Nutrition/Allergen Policy	8
Choking Hazards	9
Toileting Guidelines	9
Toys and Valuables from Home.....	9

Parent Involvement and Communications	9
Special Activities and Events	10
Program Policies	10
Behavior and Positive Support Policy	10
Extended Day Policies	11
Permission to Photograph, Video or Audio Record Students	11
Staff Babysitting.....	11
Health	11
Length of Time that Common Childhood Diseases are Contagious	12
Colds.....	12
Head Lice.....	13
Medication Policies	13
Allergies and Asthma	14
Emergency Drills	15
First Aid Kits	15
Fire or Threat of Fire	15
Snow and Emergency Closing	15
Policy on Safety and Prevention of Child Abuse	15
Accidents	15
Child Abuse Prevention.....	16
Policy for Handling Persons Who May Pose a Safety Risk.....	16
Custody Disputes.....	16
Policy on Communicating and Parent Concerns	16
Developmental Screening Policy	16
Screen Time Policy	16
Handbook Revisions	16

Welcome Statement

Welcome to St. Peter's Early Childhood Program! We are looking forward to working with your child this year. This handbook outlines our general operating procedures as the Program endeavors to provide a caring and nurturing climate for all of the students enrolled. If you have any questions after reviewing this handbook about our policies and procedures, please discuss them with one of *our Co-Directors, Beth Watt or Sarah Vandersea.*

Philosophy and Goals

The Mission of the program is to provide an environment where children can develop socially, emotionally, and spiritually in a group outside their home. The program provides children with opportunities for growth, fun, and learning in an atmosphere in which each child can learn to love others the way God loves us and to care for and respect God's creation. We are pleased to have you and your family join our community.

The program is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education as an Early Childhood Program. The program is committed to the theory that children learn best through play in an enriching environment. Drawing on the theories of Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky and Maria Montessori as well as the approach of Emilia Reggio, the program is grounded in children's developmental stages, hands on experiential activities in which students explore their materials and their environment. Staff guide children toward greater self-control, independence and self-esteem as they make choices and resolve conflicts in mutually beneficial ways.

To foster a relationship with God, the program conducts a regular chapel service led Rev. Emily Lloyd, Priest in Charge at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. A blessing is said before snack time, and prayer is included in opening and closing routines. Bible stories and religious songs are also used in the classroom, especially around the Christian holidays.

Over the course of the year, the teachers will provide a variety of activities designed to:

1. Encourage self-expression,
2. Provide a caring and respectful social environment,
3. Nurture spiritual awareness,
4. Develop skills in math, science, and literacy,
5. Demonstrate respect for others,
6. Improve large and small motor coordination,
7. Explore a variety of art media,
8. Cultivate music and listening appreciation,
9. Aid the development of self-confidence, and
10. Foster a foundation for a positive self-image.

Governance

St. Peter's Early Childhood Program is a mission of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Poolesville, Maryland. The vestry of St. Peter's is the legal and fiduciary agent for the Early Childhood Program. An Executive Committee consisting of the Co-Directors, the Priest in Charge, and a vestry liaison are responsible for establishing program policies and monitoring day to day activities. A Parent Committee will work with the Co-Directors to help establish a strong community for families and raise funds for program enhancement. The program is a non-profit organization under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

Admissions

St. Peter's Early Childhood Program welcomes all students. The program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or national origin in administration of its education policies, admission policies or other administered programs. Students with special physical, mental, or medical needs are welcome at St. Peter's subject to the ability of the program to provide a safe and effective learning environment for the student. Any important medical information or prior educational evaluations that will enable the program to accurately evaluate its ability to meet the child's needs should be provided by parents when applying. Applications are accepted on a space available priority.

Admission Priorities

When a space is available in a specific age group or for the following program year the priorities for admission are:

1. Children of staff members and Church personnel.
2. Siblings of enrolled students.
3. Children of active members of St. Peter's Episcopal Church.
4. Former Mother's Day Out students.
5. Appropriate age, gender, available start date, and date of application.
6. Final decisions are made by the Director.

Required Ages for Admission

St. Peter's Early Childhood Program is licensed to serve children ages 18 months to 5 years old. Students must be potty trained to enter the three-year-old class. Ages are based on the child's age as of September 1 of the program year. *Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the director.*

Enrollment Procedures

A Parent or guardian¹ interested in enrolling his or her child in St. Peter's Early Childhood Program is encouraged to make an appointment with the Director to tour the facilities and meet with the Director. An enrollment application must be completed and returned to the office along with a non-refundable application fee of \$50.00. Parents will be informed when a space is available or by letter or phone call. ***A deposit of \$350 is required to reserve the space and is due when the agreement is signed and returned*** to the program to guarantee a child's place in the following program year. ***The program holds the deposit while the child is enrolled and will apply it to the last month's tuition if 45 days written notice of withdrawal is given.***

All of the items listed below must be completed and returned to the program two weeks before the year begins or before a child's first day of attendance if joining mid-year:

- ___ Health Inventory (Part I --Parents)-annual
- ___ Health Inventory (Part II--physician)- annual
- ___ Immunization Form-annual
- ___ Lead Testing Certificate
- ___ Emergency Contact Information-annual update or as needed
- ___ Signed Parent Handbook Form Acknowledging the policies and procedures of the program
- ___ Signed Parent/Provider Contract

Staff Qualifications

All staff members meet the educational requirements of the Maryland State Department of Education and the Office of Child Care. The Director and Head Teachers have Bachelor's and/or advanced degrees in Early Childhood Education or a related field. All teachers and aides participate in the Maryland Child Care Credentialing program which requires continuing education in child development and other areas of the early childhood field. Staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR.

Staff/Student Ratios

The program maintains Staff/Student ratios at or below the requirements of the Maryland State Department of Education.

- Two-year-old students: one staff for every six students with a maximum group size of 12
- Three- and four-year-old students: one staff for every 10 students with a maximum group size of 20.

When a program has a mixed age group the lower Staff/Student ratios apply.

¹ Hereafter, the term parent refers to parent, guardian, or other legal representative of the child enrolling in the program.

General Calendar --2018-2019

We follow the Montgomery County Public School's (MCPS) calendar, and have 2 hour delays when MCPS does. When MCPS closes due to inclement weather, we also close.

First Day of School--September 4, 2018

Thanksgiving Holiday--Closed on Thursday, November 22

Christmas Eve through New Year's Day--Closed

Spring Break, --Closed April 16-18, 2019

Last Day of School--June 13, 2019

Program Options

Mother's Day Out for Children 6-23 months, Wednesdays from 9-1.

Early Childhood Program 2-day option The two's program runs Tu/Th from 9-1.

Early Childhood Program for 3s, 4s and 5s. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-1.

Extended Day 3s, 4s and 5s are invited to stay from 1-4 on Tuesdays and Thursdays for more in-depth learning experiences.

Program Hours

St. Peter's Early Childhood Program is a part-time, 3 day a week program. Students may be dropped off 10 minutes before the program begins and must be picked up within 10 minutes of the close of the program.

Parents who are late picking up students will be given a reminder at the first occurrence and thereafter will be charged \$5.00 for every portion of five minutes the parent is late. The late fee is assessed immediately and is due the following day. Frequent late pick-ups may be grounds for dismissal. Please call the director on the school emergency phone, (240) 780-1033 if you know you will be running late.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition

Tuition is based on a yearly fee, broken down into nine tuition payments. No refunds or credits are given for vacation, illnesses, or snow days.

A month's tuition is due upon a registration and acceptance for the following year. This will apply to tuition for the last month of the year. Tuition is spread evenly over 9 months regardless of vacation days or snow days. September's tuition is due two weeks before school starts. All other tuition is due the first of every month and must be paid by the third school day of the month to avoid a \$10 per day late fee. Tuition can be paid by check, credit card through the church website or money order. Tuition should be placed in the box marked for tuition on the director's desk.

Tuition for the three-day program is \$350 per month, September through May. Tuition for the two day-program is \$275 per month. Tuition for Mother's Day Out is \$135 per month.

Please allow one week for your checks to clear. Tuition fees listed in this handbook do not reflect available discounts, or payments for extended day or other programs. Notification of any changes in tuition for the 2019-2020 school year will be made by April 1, 2019.

Late Tuition Payments

A \$10 per day late fee every day past the third school day of the month will be assessed. After 2 months of past-due tuition a written notice of the child's dismissal will be mailed to the parents. A child may return to class after all outstanding tuition payments are received. ***Please talk to Financial Advisor, Sarah Vandersea*** or the Priest in Charge if there are financial hardships preventing you from paying your bill in a timely manner.

Fees and Deposits

A \$50 application fee is collected with the initial application for enrollment. This fee is collected one time. A \$350 non-refundable deposit is collected to guarantee a space once offered. The deposit will be applied as credit towards the last month of attendance. A forty-five day notice is required for withdrawal of a child from the program. If sufficient notice is not given, the deposit will be forfeited and parents must pay the final month's tuition.

Collection of Unpaid Tuition

In the event that a family withdraws from St. Peter's Early Childhood Program without completing their financial responsibilities, we will make an attempt to contact the family by phone and mail. If no response is received, we will utilize the services of Small Claims Court. The family will be responsible for paying all fees associated with the Small Claims Court.

Confidentiality of Records

Confidentiality of information about the child and family will be maintained. All enrollment documents will be accessible only to the parent/legal guardian, ECP directors, staff of the ECP (only when required), health/social service coordinator, and DHS state licensing representative.

IEP/IFSP Request

In an effort to facilitate the specific needs of each child, Saint Peter's ECP requests that each family with an IEP or IFSP provide a copy of these forms to be kept on file in the office. All IEP goals will be shared with the staff working with the child so that our staff can help to achieve your child's goals.

Daily Routines

Opening and Closing

Parents (or other designated person) are required to escort their children in and out of each child's classroom. Children should be signed in and out each day, sign in and out sheets will be outside the classroom. Parents should enter the classroom with their child and make sure a staff member is aware of their arrival. Children should not enter the classroom alone or be left in the hallway without direct parent supervision. Upon dismissal, parents should wait in the hallway until the teacher dismisses the students. Students will not be dismissed from the classroom until the parent is present to receive the child.

Sign In and Sign Out Procedures

Any student participating in our program must be signed in and signed out at pick up and departure on the sheet outside the classroom. Signing in/out is the responsibility of the person dropping off and picking up each day. This is our attendance system and therefore, helps our staff know the number of children in our care daily. *Any student account that has a missing sign in or sign out when the student is in our care will be billed at a rate of \$20 per occurrence.* If your child is absent please call the emergency phone (240) 780-1033 or email Beth Watt at stpetersecp@gmail.com to report your child absent for the day *before 8:30 am.*

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Each student will have an emergency contact list on file. At least one emergency contact in addition to the parents is needed. All legal guardians and authorized pick up people will have names on file. The parent/legal guardian may update the emergency pick up list in their child's file at any time. Any authorized pick up person may pick up the child with photo ID. If an unauthorized pickup person will be picking up, the parent would need to give written notification of this pickup. All unfamiliar pick up people will need to present a photo ID at the time of pickup. Without photo ID the child will not be released. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we may call the local child protective services agency.

Clothing

Children should be dressed in sturdy play clothes that are appropriate for outside play and messy art projects. Children will go outside to play daily except in extreme weather conditions (below 32 degrees, over 95 degrees, Air Quality Index of Code Red, or threatening wind or lightning storm).

Clothing requirements include:

- Provide protective clothing for weather conditions--including hot, rainy, or cold weather.
- If needed, **apply sunscreen in the morning before bringing your child to school.**
- Send your child in shoes with either lace up or Velcro that are closed heel and toe (e.g. tennis shoes). Sandals, slip on shoes and "Crocs" are not safe when running and climbing in the playground.
- Keep a complete set of extra clothes at the school.

Nutrition/ Allergen Policy

We ask parents to provide a well-balanced, nutritious lunch for their child each day. Please clearly label your child's lunch bag on the outside and include an ice pack in the lunch if the food or drink is perishable. *St. Peter's is a peanut and tree nut free program. Please be sure any food is free of nuts of any kind.*

Parents must notify the program of any food allergies or limitations on the medical form submitted to the program. Teachers will post a list of student allergies likely to be encountered in the classroom. Under no conditions will students be allowed to share food with other students., *except for those that have been previously approved by a staff member (e.g. cupcakes for birthday celebrations).*

Choking Hazards

When packing lunches from home, please avoid foods that are choking hazards for children under 4. Raw carrots, grapes, or hot dogs should be cut lengthwise. Other items likely to cause a choking hazard are hard candy, large seeds, and popcorn.

Toileting Guidelines

All children attending St. Peter's Early Childhood Program should be fully toilet trained. Children are considered toilet trained when they independently and consistently toilet, clean and dress themselves. For success elastic waist pants are strongly recommended. Accidents are part of the toileting process for young children, so please refresh the extra change of clothing immediately.

Toys and Valuables from Home

Unless it is a designated sharing day, please do not send toys or stuffed animals from home to school. Personal items can be disruptive to classroom activities and may be unsafe. SPECP is not responsible for the replacement of items that are lost, stolen or broken. For safety reasons, pets are not permitted unless authorized in advance by the Director.

Parent Involvement and Communications

Parents are welcome to visit SPECP at any time. Some classes have special parent activities that give you an opportunity to share in your child's day. If you wish to bring other relatives or friends, please inform the teacher prior to your visit. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for special activities in the classroom.

Each classroom teacher will hold a family conference at least once a year. We also will hold informal conferences at the family's or teacher's request. Families will be informed about conference scheduling via written notice and/or email.

Information about daily schedules, lesson plans and class events is located on the hallway bulletin board outside your child's classroom.

When picking up your child, please understand that Staff will assume you are in charge of your child once you enter the classroom and your child sees you. If picking up on the playground, please be sure to notify the teacher and sign your child out before taking your child. If you stay a few minutes with your child on the playground, we assume you are supervising your child.

Special Activities and Events

There are several special events during the program year to which parents are invited to participate. These include but are not limited to:

- Special Visitors' Day
- Holiday Celebrations

Program Policies

Behavior and Positive Support Policy

In order to create a cooperative learning environment for the children, we encourage positive behavior by providing positive reinforcement and guidance. The staff will provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for each child to practice making good choices so that all children can grow and thrive. It is essential that the adults, both staff and parents, have consistent responses to the children and model positive behavior. Social-emotional health is an important component in every child's healthy development and school readiness, therefore program staff will strive to help children develop internal self-control while building self-esteem. The classroom environment is set up to support child's exploration in different interest areas while interacting with their peers to foster positive peer relationships.

Teachers encourage children:

- To use their words with peers
- To learn to acknowledge feelings of themselves and others
- To redirect their focus on a different activity in a positive manner
- By telling them what they can do, rather than what they can't do
- By focusing on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
- By using positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behavior that should be continued in the future

Other examples of positive discipline techniques include:

- Set realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations and limits
- Consistently enforce a few (3-5) rules with known consequences
- Arrange the room to encourage positive behavior
- Establish a consistent routine with a balance between teacher-directed and child-directed activities
- Encourage the children to Stop, Think, and Make Good Choices
- Ignore some inappropriate behavior which is attention seeking and not harmful to the child or those nearby
- Provide a quiet place in the classroom and away from the flow of activity for a child to calm down. After the child has calmed down, the teacher may ask them if they are ready to return to the group.

Biting is a common developmental behavior for very young children. Children bite for a variety of reasons including frustration, being overtired, over stimulated, or lacking verbal ability in times of conflict. The staff uses a variety of approaches to help a child stop biting including verbal prompts, shadowing during times prone to conflict (e.g. transitions), supplying words to

resolve conflicts, and closely monitoring a child's behavior to anticipate frustration. If biting persists to such a degree that the safety of other children is at risk, the child who is biting may be removed from the program until this phase of development has passed.

Extended Day Policies

Extended Day students have a quiet rest time, which is a state requirement for preschool-age children in care for more than 4 hours a day. Students will have the option to nap or engage in quiet independent play. Students are permitted to bring the following items for nap time:

*Blanket/security blanket

*Pillow

*One small stuffed animal (without sound or rattles, toys/dolls are not permitted)

Permission to Photograph, Video or Audio Record Students

Throughout the school year SPECP staff will photograph or record the children during playtime and special activities. These pictures *may be posted on the closed Facebook page for parents* may be posted in the classroom or used in family gifts. We may also use children's pictures in Church or program communications including newsletters, Facebook, and the website. For electronic media the child's name will not be identified in the pictures.

If you do not wish to have your child appear in a video or published photograph or have their voice recorded, please notify the program of your preference by checking the appropriate line item on the form acknowledging the program policies and your receipt of the Parent Handbook. It is assumed that parents' consent to their child being photographed, video or audio recorded unless written notification is received.

Staff Babysitting

The Director of SPECP should be notified of any babysitting, housesitting, or other personal arrangements between SPECP staff and parents prior to the event by the staff member. Such arrangements between Staff and clients of the program require the Director's approval.

Health

In an effort to prevent the spread of illness and reduce the total number of days that parents need to stay home with a sick child, we will strictly enforce the following health guidelines from Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Service. A complete list of these guidelines is available in their fact sheet, "When to Keep Your Child Home from School." Please keep your child home if any of the following are present:

1. A temperature of 100 degrees or higher.
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Excessive Cough
5. Ear Infection
6. Sore throat
7. Rash
8. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
9. Any ailment that might be contagious or keep the child from participating in class activities.

If a child gets sick at school, staff will notify the parents or contact person to pick up the child within 1 ½ hours. A child should be symptom free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or any contagious disease for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

Length of Time that Common Childhood Diseases are Contagious: We follow the guidelines from Child Care Administration for exclusion from care. If a child has been sent home with any symptoms of these diseases, we will adhere to the following exclusion periods unless the child has been cleared to return by a medical doctor. Parents should bring a doctor's note upon return if the child has been cleared to return earlier than would otherwise be required.

<u>Medical Condition</u>	<u>Contagious Until</u>
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie)	Fever free for 24 hrs., blisters dried and crusted over
Impetigo	24 hrs. after administration of antibiotics
Roseola	Fever free for 24 hrs
Scarlet Fever	48 hrs. after administration of antibiotics
Bronchitis	Up to seven days after onset of cough
Croup	Fever free for 24 hrs.
Strep Throat	48 hrs. after administration of antibiotics
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	24 hrs. after administration of antibiotics (some types are contagious longer)

Colds: Most children will experience several colds each year. We will do our best to enforce proper hygiene in the classroom to avoid the spread of colds. **If the child is unable to participate in school activities and outdoor play, or has trouble eating or sleeping, he or she should remain at home until able to participate fully.** Staff are willing to administer over-the-counter cough and cold medications (as recommended by the pediatrician, with parent

permission form, and not on a regular basis) to make the child more comfortable and to decrease the spread of illness through excessive coughing, sneezing and runny nose. In other words, children may come to school with mild colds, but not severe ones.

Head Lice: Head lice is a common childhood issue and is not a sign of a dirty house, bad parenting, or a lack of cleanliness. Staff will immediately notify parents if there is a case of head lice at the program and provide directions for detecting and treating head lice. Any child who has head lice must be treated and may not return to school until a head check by staff finds the child's hair to be completely free of eggs/nits. Note that the head must have no nits whatsoever, regardless of treatments used. In the event of an outbreak of lice, there will be morning head checks of the entire class before children may enter the classroom. **If a sibling at another school is exposed to lice, we ask parents to please let us know immediately.**

Lice can be spread easily including from hats or coats hanging close together. If a case of lice occurs in the program, all families may be asked to take home all clothing items and wash them before they are returned.

Medication Policies

The director or teaching staff will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent, the prescribing physician's written instructions, and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that meets the safety check requirements. The center must have on file the written instructions of a licensed clinician to administer the specific medication. Whenever possible the child should receive his/her first dose of medicine at home, to watch for side effects, etc.

- For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the staff with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage and disposal instructions. For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names, specific legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer, and the child's physician who recommended the medication for the child.
- It is the parent or legal guardian's obligation to instruct the director, coordinator(s), and administrative assistant of the proper administration of medication or any form of special health care needed for a child by speaking to a staff member and completing the Medication Log.
- Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the child care staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label). This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- A physician may state that a certain medication may be given for a recurring problem, emergency situation, or chronic condition. The instructions should include the child's name; the name of the medication; the dose of the medication; how often the medication may be given; the

conditions for use; and any precautions to follow. A child may only receive medication with the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian.

- Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant, closed container that is inaccessible to children and prevents spillage.
- Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions that state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.
- A medication log will be maintained by the facility staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent and instructions obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.
- Medication errors will be controlled by having at least two (2) people present when medication is administered and by checking the following five (5) items each time medication is given:
 - a) Right child
 - b) Right medicine
 - c) Right dose
 - d) Right time
 - e) Right route of administration

Allergies and Asthma: *For any child with known allergies, asthma, or other medical condition, parents are required to complete the Medical Forms identifying the nature of the child's medical issues and the Medical Authorization Form indicating the required treatment and authorizing program staff to administer medical treatment. Parents are responsible for training staff on how to administer these medications including epinephrine and inhalers properly.*

Food allergies--St. Peter's is **a peanut and tree nut free** environment. Please do not bring products containing peanuts or tree nuts into the program. The program should be notified of any food allergies and this information will be shared with all staff. Students are not allowed to share food with other children to prevent exposure, but St. Peter's cannot guarantee that allergy causing foods will never be present. For children with multiple food allergies, parents will be asked to bring acceptable snack items which can be kept on site for their child. If exposure to an allergen is likely to cause an anaphylactic reaction, parents will be expected to provide Epinephrine to be kept in the classroom First Aid kit and complete the required Medical Authorization Form.

Environmental allergies, insect bites, and asthma--Parents should inform the program on the Medical Forms of any known allergies and provide directions for treatment should the child

have a reaction while at school. Staff will administer antihistamines, epinephrine, and inhalers or other medication as directed.

Emergency Drills

Each month students and staff will have a safety drill. The safety drills may include: Fire, Hazmat Shelter in Place, Weather Shelter In-Place, Lockout, Lockdown, Reverse Evacuation, Intruder Drill, and Evacuation.

First Aid Kits

First-aid kits are located in each class room, and are inaccessible to children. Additionally, the kit will contain an emergency dose of medication if any child in the group is known to potentially require such medication (e.g. Epi-pen®, metered-dose inhaler for asthma, and an antihistamine for allergic reaction). An appropriately supplied first aid kit will be taken on trips (walking or vehicular) to and from the church. The staff will check the contents of the first-aid kits and replace missing or expired items on a monthly basis. Any time the class leaves the Center, a first aid kit will be taken.

Fire or Threat of Fire

Anyone who discovers smoke, fire or risk of explosion will pull the fire alarm located at main exits and call 9-1-1 after they are at a safe location from the building. Staff will follow the Evacuation Procedures as explained in full detail in the Emergency Plan

In the event of a fire, all children will be evacuated to the **Poolesville Baptist Church or Poolesville High School.**

The director will report a fire or explosion to the childcare licensing agency within 24 hours

Snow and Emergency Closing

Saint Peter's ECP follows the MCPS snow closing schedule as a guideline for our snow closures and delays. In the event that the Center should need to be closed due to bad weather or other emergencies, parents will be notified via email and Facebook. If we deem it necessary to close the Center, we will post our closing as early as possible.

Policy on Safety and Prevention of Child Abuse

Accidents: The program requires First Aid and CPR/AED training for all staff. For ordinary scrapes and bruises, staff will administer first aid, record the event, and allow the child to return to the program. Parents will be notified at the end of the day of the incident. In the event of a more severe accident or emergency, staff will tend to the child's needs until a parent or other designated person arrives. In an acute situation Emergency Medical Services will be notified immediately. If emergency professionals are called, a familiar adult will remain with the child in the ambulance and emergency room until the parent arrives.

Please be sure that the program always has a way to reach a responsible adult in the event of an emergency. If one or both parents are unreachable during the day, be certain the program is informed of an alternative contact.

Child Abuse Prevention: All staff members are required to undergo FBI and State criminal background checks when hired, and to attend a child abuse and sexual harassment workshop provided by the Episcopal Church. Parents are welcome and encouraged to observe classrooms and staff at any time and should report any concerns to the Director immediately. Any staff member who thinks that a child has been abused or neglected is required by law to make a report to Child Services. These reports are confidential.

Policy for Handling Persons Who May Pose a Safety Risk (Includes abusive parents or legal guardians and any adults who cannot take the child safely from the facility):

The child will not be released to anyone who cannot safely care for the child. The office Personnel will notify the police to manage an adult under the apparent influence of drugs/alcohol or an individual who poses a safety risk. Office personnel will also contact the emergency contact person to make arrangements for the child's transport to a place of safety. If no one is available to care for the child, the director will contact child protective services for guidance.

Custody Disputes

In cases of custody disputes, the Program is legally bound to respect the wishes of the person with legal custody. A certified copy of the most recent court order must be kept in the child's file.

Policy on Communicating and Parent Concerns

Parents' questions or concerns about curriculum, classroom procedures, or staff should be addressed to the appropriate person--Head teacher, Director, or Rector of the Parish. Whenever possible speak directly to the person in charge to avoid rumor, innuendo, and gossip. If the questions cannot be answered or the issue cannot be resolved efficiently, parents may take the concern quickly to the person's supervisor either in person or in writing. Parents may request a meeting with staff, the Director, and/or the Priest in Charge to address the concerns. When conflicts or concerns cannot be resolved at this level, parents may put the concern in writing addressed to the Early Childhood Program Board and/or the Vestry of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 20100 Fisher Avenue, PO Box 387, Poolesville, Maryland, 20837

At each level, an appropriate length of time should be allowed before a response is expected. In the case of classroom procedures, observation is usually the first step in an investigation. Additional supervisory or support staff will be provided as quickly as possible if deemed necessary. In all cases, confidentiality and privacy of children, parents, and staff will be protected to the greatest extent possible.

Screen Time Policy St. Peter's Early Childhood Program has a no screen time policy. Students will not watch videos, work on computers, or play computer games at school. On the rare occasion, a teacher may show a brief educational video related to a curriculum unit.

Handbook Revisions

This handbook is subject to change without notice.

Updated 8/15/2018

St. Peter's Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The Parent Handbook describes important information about St. Peter's Early Childhood Program. Please contact the Director with any questions or concerns regarding the information within the Handbook.

After reviewing the St. Peter's Early Childhood Program Handbook, Please sign and return this form to the program Office.

By signing this form, I/we acknowledge that I/we have received and read the St. Peter's Early Childhood Program Handbook and agree to abide by the program policies and any changes in policy as notified during the program year. We also give permission for program staff to take and use photographs or video of our child/children for general program use, class projects, church or program social media and the church newsletter. Our child's name will not be identified in any external media.

Child's Name(s) _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature(s) _____

Photograph/Video Distribution Exclusions

_____ Please do not include photos or videos of my child on the program or Church website or in the Church newsletter.