



Parent Handbook

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Lic #372002475

St. Peter's Preschool is licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing to operate a child care center.

St. Peter's Preschool Parent Handbook

OUR MISSION

St. Peter's Preschool strives to assist each family with the education and development of their children. Our goal is to provide a safe and enriching Christian environment. Our program is consistent with the highest standards and will allow each child to develop to his or her maximum potential, and to successfully proceed into the primary levels of education.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

St. Peter's Preschool is committed to offering an atmosphere conducive to development of the whole child. These areas will include the social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual development of each child. Our staff is experienced and qualified and will assist the facilitation of this process as each child develops according to his or her own internal schedule. We are dedicated to helping shape young lives into confident, loving, and caring individuals. Our academic curriculum includes activities based on themes, along with a letter of the week and early math experiences. Young children learn best through experimentation with their world and St. Peter's Preschool will provide activities that help them explore their world.

OUR GOALS

Social Development

To encourage positive social interaction by giving support and guidance in accepting and expressing emotions, and modeling socially acceptable behavior.

To encourage each child to participate in individual, parallel, and social play.

To promote prosocial behavior through various activities and experiences, observation, and modeling such behavior.

To model and reinforce respect of peers, elders, one's self, and property, and to foster a sense of responsibility.

Emotional Development

To constantly provide a safe and secure environment, and be aware of and sensitive to the particular needs of each child and his or her family.

To foster a sense of self-worth and self-esteem through daily activities, self-help skills, encouragement, and positive reinforcement.

To aid children in achieving self-discipline and independence through the use of age-appropriate materials and activities, and through interactions with peers.

Spiritual Development

To help the child grow in relationship to God through weekly Chapel experiences with their peers, teachers, and the Pastor.

To serve the children by introducing an awareness of God's World, the Bible, and God's Love through song, prayer, projects, and activities.

To help the child come to know that each of us is one of God's Children; his very own special creation.

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Physical Development

To expose the child to songs, rhythm instruments, finger plays, balance, and self-expression through daily music and movement experiences.

To offer a safe and challenging outdoor environment with play items and activities that stimulate gross motor (large muscle) development.

To facilitate hand-eye coordination and fine motor (small muscle) development by offering age-appropriate materials and activities.

Intellectual Development

To continuously expose the child to age-appropriate materials which stimulate cognitive development in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

To assist the child in wonder, reasoning, abstract and logical thinking through discussion, imagination, and skill-developing activities.

To expose the child to the basic skills which will be introduced in kindergarten, and encourage those who are developing in these areas to continue forward at their own rate of speed.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

St. Peter's Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin for admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Required Policies

1. HOURS OF OPERATION

St. Peter's Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 7:30am-5:30pm, year round.

We close to observe the following holidays: New Year's Day, MLK Jr. Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, Presidents' Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, 2 weeks at Christmas time to coincide with SDUSD closure.

We also close for 3 Staff Development Days to be determined and included on the current annual school year calendar. Email reminder notifications will be sent for all closures.

Full tuition is due every month even with holidays and closures.

NOTE: In some cases, if the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday St. Peter's Preschool will close the day before or the day after the holiday. Parents will be updated on each school year's holiday schedule in September.

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2. DROP OFF and RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Per California state laws, parents have a right to access their child at any time. However, we do have set drop off and pick up times so that the child can take part in our full educational program.

Children are to be signed in and out daily through the brightwheel app. This is required by licensing and failure to do so will result in a \$5 charge.

In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to a minor. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form to pick up and the authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

Drop off time is between 7:30 – 9:00 each day, depending on half or full day programs, pick up time is 12:40-1:00pm for half day programs and 3:30-5:30 for full day programs. Late fees are enforced and will be covered in our financial policies section.

Gate codes & etiquette: Gate Codes and key pad are for adults only. Children are not allowed to use the key pad or climb up and open the gate and please do not teach them the code.

This policy is for the safety and protection of our group.

Please work with us to maintain the safety of our children by **closing the gate securely behind you each and every time you enter and exit the playground - it does NOT close by itself!**

3. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY

St. Peter's Preschool teachers and staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. Children who are ill may not attend preschool. Your child must be in overall good health. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating in **all** school activities.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. Temperature of 100 or higher.
4. Vomiting and/or diarrhea
5. Uncontrollable nasal drainage
6. Lethargy
7. Abnormal Breathing

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact a parent immediately. We will care for the child with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices. **Parents will be required to pick up children within 30 minutes of notification.** In the

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event of *severe* illness or injury, St. Peter's Preschool may call 911, to determine if an ambulance is needed, at the parent's expense. **If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may not return the next day. They are required to stay home until *symptom-free* for 24-hours.**

Please don't administer a fever reducer before sending your child to school, if they need medication they aren't well enough to attend.

Communicable Diseases: St. Peter's Preschool strives to provide a safe and clean environment for our students and even with the extra care and cleaning there will be cases of communicable illnesses. In the event of a communicable illness our families will be notified and updated through email messages.

4. MEDICATION

Please inform your physician that your child is in full-day or part-day preschool and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer acting medications. Limiting medications dispensed away from home prevents medication errors. Please remember, **St. Peter's Preschool is designed for well children.**

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- ❑ Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in the original container and hasn't reached its expiration date.
- ❑ Before any prescription medication can be administered, we must have permission in writing by the child's parent or guardian. A medication consent form will be given at the request of the family.
- ❑ Medication needs to go home after the last date that the medication is administered.
- ❑ Nonprescription medication **will not** be administered at St. Peter's Preschool unless authorized by a doctor.

5. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EMERGENCIES

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents through Brightwheel.

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR/AED or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. **All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.**

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If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222.

Disaster Response Plan: In the case of a disaster of any kind, we have prepared the preschool for evacuating the children and have emergency supplies for up to 8 hours. Emergency supplies include: drinking water, non-perishable foods, first aid supplies, flashlights and extra batteries, fire extinguishers, family contact information, etc.

Offsite evacuation locations: Warren Walker School or Silver Gate Elementary School

The children will practice emergency procedures on a regular basis.

6. PARENT COMMUNICATION

Open Communication with parents is very important to children's success. St. Peter's Preschool has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are ways that St. Peter's Preschool may communicate with parents:

- Email notifications
- Parent Board located on door to staff lounge
- Social media public Facebook/Instagram page
- Brightwheel
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and director

Annual School Calendars are provided at the beginning of the school year. It has every school event and every closure – we ask that you review it so that you can plan ahead for our school events and field trips.

Monthly Calendars will go out every month with special events highlighted

7. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICIES

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. This aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior.

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St. Peter's Preschool staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self direction. Just a few examples used in this situation are: praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing upon unacceptable behavior; reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements that redirect behaviors. There may be times during the day when a supervised separation time is needed. This is a "breather" and is used according to the child's age and individual development. St. Peter's Preschool staff will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

Behavior Management Plans: We will make every effort within the school to help a child learn and grow through challenging behaviors. However, in a school setting, we have to consider the health and safety of all the children in our care. If a child is having difficulty in an area of behavior and disruptive behavior does not improve with our appropriate guidance we will meet with you to set up a behavior management plan. The behavior in question will need to improve during an agreed upon timeline or your child may need to find care elsewhere.

Biting: Some children will try hitting, screaming, running, acting out and even biting. These are actually normal developmental behaviors for some children but that does not mean that these behaviors are okay – it means that we have an opportunity to help the child learn and grow.

Toddlers will usually bite because they lack the language development to express their feelings and needs. Teachers will observe and work with children and families to help identify what they are trying to express, including shadowing and immediate redirection. The best thing we can offer both the biter and the child bitten is patience, compassion, and understanding. When a toddler goes through a biting stage we will work actively with the parents and child to help them learn other ways to express themselves.

Biting is not a normal developmentally appropriate behavior in older children. Older children who resort to biting will be reminded that it is not okay .

Children will be sent home for biting on the day of as an ultimate redirection.

8. NAP TIME

A supervised nap period is provided for all St. Peter's Preschool students enrolled in a full day program. Our nap time is from 1:00 -2:45 daily. Parents are asked to provide a crib sheet to fully cover the cot provided and small crib size blanket. You may also send in a special small stuffed animal if desired. A special St. Peter's nap bag will be provided for each full day student and all **nap items must fit comfortably inside the bag so that it can be easily zipped up**. Nap bags will be sent home weekly to be laundered at the end of each child's school week.

Nap readiness: Your child should only be enrolled in a full day program if he or she is able to lay down quietly on their own and sleep through nap without disrupting their sleeping friends.

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families will be asked to switch to a half day program if, after 2 months, their child is unable to self sooth, lay quietly, or make it through nap time.

9. BATHROOM READINESS & POTTY-TRAINING

St. Peter's Preschool is licensed for 50 children per day. We do accept children in diapers and ask that you supply diapers and wipes and we will communicate through brightwheel when they need to be refilled. When you and your child's teacher feel your child is ready we will support you and them through the process.

Please review the following tips and suggestions to set your child up for success.

- **Send children to school in elastic waist bottoms
- **Teach them to pull their underwear up from the front and back
- **Teach them to use a regular toilet
- **Teach boys to stand for #1
- **Teach them to wipe themselves
- **Teach children to wash their hands with soap & rinse thoroughly
- **Keep a full supply of extra clothes at school ***at all times.***

10. LUNCH & SNACK

St. Peter's Preschool children bring their own lunch. Each child's lunch must be kept on the lunch shelf in a personal lunch box brought from home. Lunch boxes must be **clearly labeled** with the child's first name. Our school does not have a refrigerator available for children's lunches. Lunches must be ready to serve from their lunch box. Cold packs are a good way to keep cold as needed. We are able to heat lunches in a microwave if completely ready to heat and serve with **no additional prep needed**. All containers are to be **clearly labeled** with your child's first name. Lunch is served at 12:00 for our Sea Stars, Flying Fish and Otters and at 12:20 for our Dolphins and Sea Lions. **NO GLASS CONTAINERS.**

Lunch readiness: Lunch time at St. Peter's Preschool is a shared social experience. It is a valuable time that allows for teachers and children to talk and enjoy mealtime together. Children will be required to sit at the table during lunchtime and to be able to feed themselves. Our school promotes good table manners and quiet voices at the table.

IMPORTANT:

Allergies & food restrictions: St. Peter's Preschool is sensitive to families with diet restrictions and allergies. Please send a snack to keep on campus available for birthday celebrations.

11. BIRTHDAYS

Birthday treats are welcomed and will be shared with your child's class during morning snack. Please speak directly to your child's Teacher – verbally or by Brightwheel to the school office – to inquire about allergies and confirm the day/date.

12. ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

St. Peter's Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national, or ethnic origin and enrollment is open to all toilet trained children between the ages of 2 to 5 years old.

Once you've been notified that an opening is available you will receive a registration packet. All paperwork in the registration packet, along with a current copy of your child's immunizations, is required before your child's first day of school. **St. Peter's Preschool requires children to be fully immunized to attend school.**

When removing your child from enrollment please give us a 2 week written notice. Email notification is sufficient.

13. TUITION AND FEES

St. Peter's Preschool operates year-round and tuition is due at the first of the month regardless of school holidays, and scheduled closures. Tuition is due and non-refundable even when children are absent or away on vacation and make-up days are not provided for missed days. **Children must stay enrolled and pay full tuition through the summer months of June, July, and August, regardless of missed days and vacations to stay enrolled for the following school year.**

Annual Registration Fees are due every year. Current program tuition rates, registration fees, late fees, extra full or half day fees are all provided separately along with the handbook.

When enrolling your child for a future date the registration fee and half of the tuition payment is due to hold your child's spot. This payment is **non-refundable** if you decide, for any reason, not to attend as planned.

Checks are to be made payable to **St. Peter by the Sea Lutheran Church**. Credit card payments are not accepted. There will be a NSF fee of \$24.00 or current bank NSF fee amount for all returned checks. The fee and replacement payment will be accepted by check, however, after 2 returned checks we will require payment by money order or cashier's check.

There is a 10% discount for: siblings, military, veterans, SPLC members, and clergy.

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Termination: If a child or family is unable to adjust to St. Peter's Preschool program, has delinquency in payments, or is habitually late to pick-up, the school reserves the right to terminate enrollment. We also reserve the right to terminate enrollment for the following: Cases where a child exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness which the school cannot meet. In this case, St. Peter's Preschool will make every effort to involve parents and resources to decide together on the best course of action for the child, prior to termination.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES & INFORMATION

14. BABYSITTING

It is not the mission of St. Peter's Preschool to provide child care for families in any location other than the preschool and off-site field trips during regular operating hours.

Some families may wish to engage a St. Peter's Preschool employee for the purpose of babysitting outside of the school. If an employee decides to do so, it is at their own discretion, and any arrangement for child care outside of St. Peter's Preschool operating hours is strictly a private arrangement between the parents and the individual. Such arrangements are not to be made during the employee's regularly scheduled shift.

St. Peter's Preschool assumes no responsibility for any employee who cares for a child outside of the preschool's regular operating hours. St. Peter's Preschool is not responsible for the care of the children or the actions of any staff member during the employee's non-working hours.

Staff members are not permitted to discuss anything school related while babysitting.

15. FIELD TRIPS

St. Peter's Preschool has 2 all-school field trips each year. We visit the pumpkin patch in October and either the Zoo, Birch Aquarium, or Sea World at the end of the school year in April or May. We request that one parent, adult family member, nanny, or trusted friend accompany their child.

Brightwheel messages will be sent out for each field trip and parents are required to respond as directed.

16. PARENT PARTICIPATION & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parent participation is a valuable part of the teamwork involved in providing the best experience possible for each child. We welcome and encourage your voluntary assistance for field trips and special events.

17. TOYS FROM HOME

In order not to confuse school toys with a child's personal property, we ask that children not bring playthings from home. An exception to this is a stuffed animal for use during naptime by full-day preschool children.

18. CLOTHING

Please dress your child in comfortable and casual clothing. We recommend you dress them in clothing that it is okay to get paint, glue, markers and/or dirt on! Although we use smocks, clothing still gets soiled. Preschool is messy and fun!

It is requested that you send them to school in clothing they can manage and remove independently as this makes bathroom trips successful.

We require shoes that protect the feet and fasten securely around the entire foot. Flip flops will only be allowed if they have the back ankle strap. We recommend closed toe shoes with socks for health and safety reasons.

Children are required to have a complete change of clothing including a lightweight jacket, **clearly marked with the child's name**, at all times.

Soiled clothing will be in your child's cubby in a white bag labeled with name and date.

19. ART

Please check your child's cubby often for art. This is their "work" and they are very proud of it.



20. CURRICULUM

St. Peter's Preschool believes that children learn best through actively engaging with people and things in their environment. Children are involved in hands-on experiences, real-life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play and teacher direction. St. Peter's Preschool is a place where essential readiness skills are nurtured through play, investigation, and of course, fun! Our programs provide developmentally and age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and wonder filled environments. Our teachers use a variety of teaching styles to give all students a chance to learn and participate.

St. Peter's Preschool curriculum is based on weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly themes. We also focus on alphabet recognition and phonics with a "letter of the week" incorporated into our themes.

Daily circle times include, but are not limited to: Calendar & Counting, Colors & Shapes, Name Games, Letters and Sounds, Stories, Songs and Finger plays to promote language development.

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Art projects are offered daily during morning class time and again for the afternoon program.

Transitions: Young children need fun guidance when transitioning from one area or activity to another. Our teachers use songs to ensure that each transition is happy and successful. We use songs to encourage cleaning up and to give them something to focus on while waiting in line.

21. CHAPEL TIME

St. Peter's Preschool Program has Chapel time twice a week on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Your child will attend Chapel both days if they are a full time student. Chapel time is held in the Sanctuary and lasts between 15 to 20 minutes. The children sing Sunday School Songs and hear a Bible story. They will also pray the Lord's Prayer and learn to pray for family and friends. We will also pray together daily after group music and before snacks and lunch.

We will teach the love of God, kindness, tolerance and forgiveness and we will strive to teach and exhibit these traits with each other throughout our daily interactions.

22. DAILY SCHEDULE

St. Peter's Preschool classrooms follow a daily schedule designed specifically to meet the children's developmental, social, emotional, and personal needs. Children do very well when they know what to expect. Schedules are posted in each classroom.

23. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to staff.
- Read the notices and all information left for you in your child's folder and/or posted outside your child's classroom, messaged through Brightwheel, or in e-mail.
- Pick up your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Please be aware of the daily schedule and make sure your child arrives on time. When children arrive late it is very difficult and causes a disruption in the classroom schedule, which affects all of the children in the classroom.
- Please do not allow your child to bring gum or candy or toys to the classroom.
- Check daily on your child's supply of extra clothing. Please take-home soiled clothing promptly.

24. CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Classroom assignments are based on our student's chronological age. Classroom assignments are posted at the beginning of August for each new school year. Transitions to a new classroom, however, are still possible during the first 3 months of the new school year. This is specifically for our youngest children as enrollment fluctuates based on preschool readiness. Changes are always discussed with parents first and will not be made without parental consent.

25. CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

St. Peter's Preschool exceeds state ratios in most classrooms. From time to time, if necessary, we may follow state ratios by combining classrooms. This will only happen in the event that one or more teachers is out with an unplanned illness.

26. HALF DAY PICK UP

Our half-day program pick up time is 12:45-1:00. We are then in "QUIET NAP-TIME" mode for our full-day students. **The Playground and all areas around the preschool are CLOSED at pick up time.** If you wish to speak to your child's teacher, please arrive early at **12:40-12:45**. **Late Fees are applied at 1:00 as per our current program rate sheet.**

27. CUSTODY SITUATIONS

St. Peter's Preschool will not get involved with custody disputes. St. Peter's Preschool will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. ***PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.*** With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parent's information, regardless of who is living in the child's home. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, St. Peter's Preschool has the right to terminate care.

28. PHOTOGRAPHS

St. Peter's Preschool has a Facebook and an Instagram page. We will, from time to time, update the Facebook page with pictures of our children. Children are only added to the Facebook/Instagram pages if permission is given on the consent form included in the Registration Packet.

29. SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking is very exciting these days. However, please understand that employees of St. Peter's Preschool are to always maintain professional boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, X, Tic Tok, Substack and Instagram. Staff members and families must adhere to our confidentiality and babysitting polices on all social network sites and consequences for inappropriate behavior may lead to disenrollment and/or employment termination. Please keep this in mind when making friend requests and be respectful of professional boundaries,

30. CELL PHONES

It is important that every staff member's attention remains on the children at all times.

St. Peter's Preschool does not permit staff members to be on their their cell phones in the classrooms.

The exception to this rule is when the children are taking a walk or on a field trip, in which case, staff members will carry a cell phone to be used in the event of a school related emergency.

31. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Concerns about children should first be discussed with their teacher. If there are still concerns it is then discussed with the director. It is not appropriate to discuss concerns that you have with a particular child or staff member with another family or staff member. All concerns regarding children and staff members are to be discussed with the director.

St. Peter's Preschool knows that you trust us with your most valuable treasure, your child, and we strive to serve our families the absolute best in preschool education and childcare. We believe that excellent early childhood development is the foundation for a bright future. With our nurturing environment and God's love we feel confident our children will grow to be well rounded and developmentally prepared when they leave our program for Kindergarten.

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Parent signature page

By signing the page and returning it to St. Peter's Preschool director I agree to follow the parent hand book and it's olicies within.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date