

Portland Circle of Friends & Family Preschool
2018/2019 Member Handbook

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Overview of Our School

Mission Statement

Portland Circle of Friends and Family Preschool (PCFFP) serves young children by providing a play-based program, which builds self-esteem and encourages problem-solving skills.

Who We Are

PCFFP has been in existence as a cooperative preschool in Portland, Oregon, since the fall of 1996. The preschool is operated by parents and guardians, and continues to provide a valuable educational service, at a low cost, to families within the community.

The Caterpillar class is for children aged 2 & 3 and meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9am-12pm. The Butterfly class is for children aged 4 & 5 and meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9am-12pm.

Our Philosophy

PCFFP offers an experiential hands-on learning environment that encourages independence, positive social interactions, and meaningful learning experiences.

We believe in helping children build high self-esteem in a non-competitive atmosphere where personal challenges are valued as a natural happening from which we learn. We believe it is of primary importance to help children learn to accept what is beautifully unique about themselves, others, and the world around them.

Our Teacher

Teacher Tami has raised two children and provided in-home childcare for 12 years. Years ago, while doing childcare for Kelly Elementary School's Family Stories Group, Tami realized that our community lacked a high-quality preschool to meet the needs of its families. With the support of the school staff and other community organizations, Circle of Friends first opened its doors in the fall of 1996.

Teacher Tami truly believes that children learn best through a play-based curriculum. She believes that with the proper learning environment, where children can explore, participate in hands-on investigations and conduct experiments, they will build the foundation necessary for successful future educational experiences. She also believes that by playing both alongside and with other children, they will grow to have more self-confidence and be better equipped in group settings. Teacher Tami cites Bev Bos as her philosophical mentor, and agrees with her assertion that "Experience is not the best teacher, it is the only teacher."

Portland Circle of Friends and Family Preschool is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Parent Child Preschool Organization (PCPO)

PCPO is a nonprofit organization of more than 60 cooperative preschools and kindergartens with a membership of approximately 2,400 families and teachers. PCPO was founded in 1956 by eight Portland preschools to promote the exchange of ideas among schools and to aid in the forming of new co-ops.

PCPO's primary purpose is to act on behalf of the needs and interests of young children by:

- Promoting developmentally appropriate programs according to the current consensus of the early childhood profession;
- Strengthening and expanding the interdependence of the parent-teacher cooperative philosophy;
- Promoting the development of cooperative schools through the exchange of information, while respecting the diversity of educational philosophies without compromising the standards of PCPO;
- Providing resources and services for teachers, families and schools; and, studying and promoting activities and programs designed to further the health and well-being of children and families.

For more information about PCPO, you may visit their website at ParentChildPreschools.org.

What is a Cooperative Preschool?

A cooperative preschool is a program that is operated by a group of parents and guardians who take an active interest in their children's first educational experience. Family members help the Teacher in the classroom, are given opportunities for education, and are involved in decision-making.

Benefits of a Cooperative Preschool for Children:

- A wider world to explore and enjoy
- Encourages self-esteem and self-confidence
- Above average adult to child ratio in classroom
- Children play and learn to respect others
- Expressive materials, games and art activities
- Builds a positive attitude towards school

Benefits of a Cooperative Preschool for Parents/Guardians:

- Direct participation in their child's education away from home
- A better understanding of their child's individuality through observing them with other children
- A voice in school decisions and policy-making
- Education in child development and nurturing skills at Parent Meetings, PCPO conferences, and through publications
- Mutual understanding and moral support from other families with similar concerns, interests and problems
- Feelings of community and togetherness

10 Things Every Parent Should Know about Play by Laurel Bongiorno

1. Children learn through their play.

Don't underestimate the value of play. Children learn and develop:

- cognitive skills – like math and problem solving in a pretend grocery store
- physical abilities – like balancing blocks and running on the playground
- new vocabulary – like the words they need to play with toy dinosaurs
- social skills – like playing together in a pretend car wash
- literacy skills – like creating a menu for a pretend restaurant

2. Play is healthy.

Play helps children grow strong and healthy. It also counteracts obesity issues facing many children today.

3. Play reduces stress.

Play helps your children grow emotionally. It is joyful and provides an outlet for anxiety and stress.

4. Play is more than meets the eye.

Play is simple and complex. There are many types of play: symbolic, sociodramatic, functional, and games with rules—to name just a few. Researchers study play's many aspects: how children learn through play, how outdoor play impacts children's health, the effects of screen time on play, to the need for recess in the school day.

5. Make time for play.

As parents, you are the biggest supporters of your children's learning. You can make sure they have as much time to play as possible during the day to promote cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development.

6. Play and learning go hand-in-hand.

They are not separate activities. They are intertwined. Think about them as a science lecture with a lab. Play is the child's lab.

7. Play outside.

Remember your own outdoor experiences of building forts, playing on the beach, sledding in the winter, or playing with other children in the neighborhood. Make sure your children create outdoor memories too.

8. There's a lot to learn about play.

There's a lot written on children and play. Here are some [NAEYC articles and books about play](#). David Elkind's *The Power of Play* (Da Capo, 2007 reprint) is also a great resource.

9. Trust your own playful instincts.

Remember as a child how play just came naturally? Give your children time for play and see all that they are capable of when given the opportunity.

10. Play is a child's context for learning.

Children practice and reinforce their learning in multiple areas during play. It gives them a place and a time for learning that cannot be achieved through completing a worksheet. For example, in playing restaurant, children write and draw menus, set prices, take orders, and make out checks. Play provides rich learning opportunities and leads to children's success and self-esteem.

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Enrollment & Registration

Non-Discrimination & Diversity Policies

PCFFP does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, orientation, national or ethnic origin, age or ability, and welcomes all preschoolers and their families.

PCFFP encourages participation in the program by all interested children and their families, and respectfully encourages family traditions, special cultural celebrations, and ethnic diversity to become a part of the learning experience. PCFFP strives to ensure familiarity with a variety of cultures through activities, art projects, books, and displays; to create awareness that the world is a diverse place that everyone is a part of; to enrich the lives of students through caring and acceptance.

Requirements for Admission

Students must be 2 years or older by October 1st of that school year to enroll in the Caterpillar Class. Students must be 3 years 6 months or older by October 1st of that school year to enroll in the Butterfly Class. These age requirements are guidelines set by the Board as recommended by Teacher Tami. Only the Board has the right to make the decision to place a child in a class that is not within the guidelines, after an observation by the teacher and a majority vote. Children need not be potty trained to attend either class.

Enrollment shall be prioritized as follows:

1. Returning Students
2. Alumni Families (siblings or children of former students)
3. All Other Applicants

Returning students must communicate their intent to return for the next school year by May 1st to hold their place; a non-refundable registration fee is due by May 31st. Registration for the following year will be open from January 1st until each class is full, after which, applicants can submit their names to a wait list.

Enrollment Process

- Read Preschool Member Handbook
- Submit a registration fee (see below)
- Fill out and return the complete [Registration Packet](#):
 - [Registration Form](#)
 - [Getting to Know Your Child & Family](#)
 - [Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment](#)
 - [Medical Information](#)
 - Immunization Records from doctor or Vaccine Exemption Certificate
 - [2017/2018 Oregon Vaccine Requirements](#)
 - [Vaccine Exemption information](#)
 - [Permission Slip for Neighborhood Walks & Photos](#)

- [Parent Contract](#)
- [Background Check form \(rev 4/13\)](#)
- (These forms can also be found on Jovial)
- Attend Orientation

Financial Information

Registration & Tuition Costs

The annual registration fee for all students is \$95 per child. The registration fee covers each child's yearly insurance and one background check; additional background checks are \$5 each. All volunteers 18 years of age and older will have criminal background checks completed prior to having contact with children, which are run through the Oregon Department of Education and are valid for 2 years. For more (legal) information: http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_400/oar_414/414_061.html.

Monthly tuition for the Caterpillar Class is \$115, and monthly tuition for the Butterfly Class is \$150. Monthly tuition is due, in full, ***no later than the 1st of the month***. If the 1st of the month falls on a weekend please make arrangements to pay earlier. There is a \$20 late fee for tuition not paid by the 1st of the month (excluding September, where tuition is due by the first day of class).

Discounts

Families that are able to pay for the entire year by October 1st will receive a discount equal to one month's tuition. Multiple child discount of \$10 off monthly tuition per child also available.

Fees & Fines

PCFFP relies heavily on the involvement of all families and takes pride in the quality education that comes from the cooperative effort of its members. Other than fulfilling one's obligations, the best way to avoid any fees being assessed is to communicate with the Board about the situation. Fines may be disputed by submitting a letter of exception within seven days of the missed commitment to the Board, or in advance if possible. Please see the "Parent Contract" for more information.

Financial Policies

PCFFP accepts cash, checks, PayPal, and Square (credit cards). We have added 3% to all credit card and PayPal transactions and they are included in the price if paid via those methods.

All tuition, registration, and other fees are non-refundable. Please contact the Treasurer with any questions.

Yearly & Daily Schedule

School Year Schedule

The school term begins the Monday after Labor Day in September and continues through mid to late June. The Caterpillar Class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9am-12pm, and the Butterfly Class meets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9am-12pm.

School Closures

PCFFP follows Portland Public Schools for inclement weather (<https://www.pps.net/Page/124>) and holidays, including 2 weeks off for Winter Break each December and 1 week off for Spring Break each March. If a two hour late start is announced, PCFFP will be closed. In the event of an unexpected closure, the Board will notify families as soon as possible.

Daily Schedule

- 9:00a-9:30a Arrival/Free Choice
- 9:30a-10:00a Gym or Outside
- 10:00a-10:30a Free Choice/Circle Time
- 10:30a-11:00a Snack Time
- 11:00a-11:45a Free Choice (art projects & painting are put out at this time as well)
- 11:45a-12:00p Story Time/Departure

Please walk children all the way to the classroom door. If someone different than usual will be picking up, please let Teacher Tami and the Classroom Volunteers know in advance. When picking up children, come to the door of the classroom and wait until class is over. Please call the school or another parent to let Teacher Tami and the Classroom Volunteers know if children will be picked up late. Please remember to sign children in during drop off and out during pick up.

Clothing

Play clothes are necessary, because children play on the floor and engage in messy activities, such as art, sand and water play. Soft-soled shoes with traction are recommended. Please dress child according to the weather as there will be outside time daily, unless weather conditions are extreme.

Each child needs to bring a gallon-sized bag labeled with their name, containing an extra set of clothes (shirt, shorts/pants, socks, and underwear or 3 diapers) and a small plastic grocery bag, to be kept near the changing table. If the child is not yet potty trained or is currently potty learning, there may be an additional need for diapers and wipes as part of the School Supply List.

Rain Gear

Except on the most inclement days, children will have outdoor time in our fenced in play area. Please send your child to school with appropriate outside gear, including a rain coat, rain pants, and boots, or keep an extra set at school.

Personal Items

Each child will have chances throughout the year to bring items from home to share during circle time, through activities such as the Share Bear or Letter Can. Please do not allow them to bring toys when it isn't their sharing day. Toys are sometimes hard to share and can get lost or damaged. Occasionally, a toy or object from school will find its way home; please return it as soon as possible.

Family Responsibilities

PCFFP defines a “family member” as any adult who is significant in the child's life. The active involvement of each child's family within the school is valued and desired. All parents, adult siblings, aunts & uncles, grandparents, and caregivers are welcome, provided each person has previously passed a background check.

Cooperative Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Please bring children to school well rested, healthy, in clean clothes, and having had a healthy breakfast.
- Please interact with the other children and parents/guardians within the classroom.
- Please be supportive of the children as they explore and make new friends.
- Some children become anxious when they are unsure as to whether their parent has really gone, so please do not stay and wait after saying goodbye.
- Please bring issues directly to the Board or Teacher Tami in order to have them resolved.

Responsibilities for each family include:

- Volunteer in the classroom as required
- Attend Orientation and Parent Meetings throughout the school year
- Clean the preschool one time during the school year
- Sign up for and fulfill a family job
- Participate in fundraising, as required

Classroom Volunteer Days

Classroom volunteer days are an opportunity to expand and practice guidance skills with young children, and get to know other co-op members. Parents will also have the chance to see their child interact with other children and adults in a supportive environment. Without volunteers it would not be possible for the class to run smoothly.

Things to Keep in Mind:

- Two Classroom Volunteers will assist in the classroom during each class session.
- Family members are welcome to stay during class time, but it will not count as their volunteer day unless they are scheduled for that day.
- Other children are welcome to attend on volunteer days.
- In the event of an emergency (illness, accident, etc) and you cannot make it to your volunteer day, please contact the Calendar Coordinator, Jenni Walden, at 503-329-7646. If you can not get in touch with Jenni, contact Becca Binford at 503-839-9186. If an Emergency Backup is used, the original Classroom Volunteer will cover a future volunteer day for Backup volunteer. Please note: the emergency backup is to be used only in a true emergency and not for scheduling conflicts.
- Classroom Volunteers need to arrive 15 minutes before the start of preschool; please call the Teacher or another parent if running late.
- Dress appropriately for working in a messy classroom, and bring appropriate outdoor wear.
- As a role model for the children, be playful and open to new experiences.
- Gently guide the children and redirect undesirable activities.
- The most important thing is that the Volunteers are interacting with and observing the children, to facilitate their learning and social interactions; *cleaning can wait*.
- Share talents within the classroom; let Teacher Tami know in advance if there is a special activity, song, story, or game to share.
- Never talk about concerns regarding a child in the child's presence.
- Teacher Tami will inform volunteers of any special events, visitors or circumstances of the day.
- Occasionally, Teacher Tami will be attending a conference, in which case a substitute teacher (usually a qualified parent/guardian) will be on duty.

Volunteer days will be signed up for quarterly through Signup.com. This is usually 2 Classroom Volunteer days and 1 Emergency Backup day per month; exact number may vary depending on class size and other factors.

A typical preschool day:

Arrival/Free Choice

One Classroom Volunteer will stay at the door after Teacher Tami unlocks it, greeting children and families as they enter, until about 9:15. The other Volunteer will help Tami downstairs, overseeing the children as they play, draw/color, etc. Tami will count down the time to clean up, and the Volunteers will help the children pick up any messes and items in the way. Because they will have play time after gym/outside time, some children are not ready to clean up their projects, which is fine as long as it does not interfere with getting to and from the door or the bathrooms.

Free Choice/Circle Time

After coming back from outside, there is a little time before snack for free play and circle time. This can include finishing building/creating, drawing, and continuing dress-up. Teacher Tami will call the children for Circle Time - this is when the Classroom Volunteers will start setting up for snack. Circle Time is optional as long as children are not being disruptive while playing

elsewhere. This is the time for songs, games, and the Letter Can. Tami will usually play a game to decide how the children line up to wash their hands. One Volunteer will need to assist the children in proper handwashing techniques (and possibly manage the line).

Snack Time

A snack is offered to the children in the middle of each school day. Snack time offers many opportunities for children to practice skills such as serving and pouring, using utensils, using appropriate table manners, and choosing healthy foods. The Classroom Volunteers are responsible for providing the class snacks on their volunteer days. Volunteers choose whether to serve individually or family-style depending on the food and age of group.

Please bring healthy snacks that are low in sugar. Some preferred snacks include: fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, dried fruit, applesauce, pretzels, crackers (gluten-free and not), yogurt, and cheese. Please note that there may be allergies or restrictions to be mindful of - these will be posted in the classroom.

After snack time is over, one Classroom Volunteer will usually do dishes while the other helps Tami set up play dough, painting, art projects, etc.

Free Choice

This time after snack is usually for the “messy” stuff: painting, crafting, play dough. All of the other choices are still open as well. Children are invited to be creative and get messy (aprons and towels are available). The Classroom Volunteers will help with setup and cleanup as needed, and help with sharing and conflict resolution. Make sure that names are written on the back of paintings and art projects, and that play dough (and sequins, beads, etc) stay at the appropriate areas.

Story Time/Departure

At this point, the Classroom Volunteers will help the children clean up, although the messier play pickup is usually done by the adults. The children will gather back at the rugs for Story Time, which ends at pick up time. The children are encouraged to sit and listen to the story as closure for the day, although it is acceptable for them to not participate, or listen from another place in the room. One Volunteer will go up to open the door just before noon, and will say goodbye to the children and their families as they leave.

Active Play/Departure

If it is an “outside” day, the Classroom Volunteers will help the children get up the stairs and down the hall to the outdoor space, making sure the gate is latched (not locked) securely behind them, then open the sandbox lid if not already done. They will help oversee the children, which outside tends to be monitoring “taking turns” and helping with the tree climbing (mostly helping kids get down safely). Teacher Tami will count down the time to clean up, and the Volunteers will help the children put the sandbox toys back in the sandbox, gather

other things if needed, and make sure the sandbox lid is closed (unless Tami specifies otherwise). The Volunteers will then help the children back to the classroom, along the alley behind the church.

On our wettest Pacific Northwestern days, children can run, chase and play in the hallway where our classroom is located. It makes a fun little loop and the children love playing there! We have a gate to ensure that the stairs are off limits. Riding toys, soft balls and various other "active toys" will be used to get our "Active Play" indoors. We ensure that at least 45 minutes a day is dedicated to this type of active play.

Parents will pick up their children from the Active Play area.

The Classroom Volunteers need to stay until all children are picked up, unless told otherwise by Teacher Tami. They will return to the classroom, and finish the dishes, sweep if needed, vacuum, and generally clean up.

Parent Meetings

One Preschool Orientation and four Parent Meetings are planned throughout the year. Except Preschool Orientation and school closures, meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday evening of the month, and last approximately two hours. Families need to have at least one person in attendance at each of the scheduled meetings. Childcare is available during Parent Meetings for \$5/child.

This is the time to help plan events, ask questions, and learn. There are guest speakers at each Parent Meetings; covering topics such as emotional regulation in preschoolers, play-based learning, and positive discipline.

Classroom Cleaning Days

Keeping the preschool clean and sanitary is a high priority and a team effort. Therefore, at least one adult from each child's family must participate in a classroom cleaning day once a year.

These cleaning days are usually held the first week of the month, after class. Children are welcome to attend, although it does make the afternoon take a little longer. During classroom cleanup, the parents/family members will wipe down shelves, tables, and chairs, disinfect toys as appropriate, vacuum, sweep, and mop.

Family Jobs

For the preschool to run smoothly, each family is required to sign up for one family job. Jobs are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, and the Board will do their best to make sure each job fits each family's preference and skill set. Please read the Board and Family Job Description pages and contact the Board if there are any questions, or if an assigned job does not feel like a good fit.

Fundraising

PCFFP offers a very affordable tuition to families in the community. One of the ways that this is possible is through a cooperative fundraising effort. These fundraisers are small-scale, fun family events spread throughout the year. Every family is expected to participate in each of the school fundraisers in some way. The level of participation may vary, however some level of participation is expected at each event.

If there is a scheduling conflict or some other reason a family cannot participate in an event, please let the Board know as soon as possible. Families who do not participate in an event without letting the Board know will be levied a fee of \$20.

Field Trips

Field trips are always scheduled on weekdays during class time. Some field trips will have both classes attend at the same time; some are done separately. Permission slips must always be filled out and turned in prior to any outings.

Each family is responsible for transporting their children to and from field trips. PCFFP strongly encourages families to follow Oregon State Law in regards to child seat safety (<http://www.oregon.gov/odot/safety/pages/belts-seats.aspx>):

Child Safety Seat Law

Child passengers must be restrained in child safety seats until they weigh forty pounds or reach the upper weight limit for the car seat in use. Infants must ride rear-facing until they reach two years of age unless the child turned age one prior to May 26, 2018.

Booster Seat Law

Children over forty pounds or who have reached the upper weight limit for their forward-facing car seat must use boosters to 4'9" tall or age eight and the adult belt fits correctly.

Rear Seating for Children

There is no Oregon law specifically prohibiting children from riding in the front seat of passenger vehicles. However, a rear-facing infant seat cannot be placed in a front seating position that is equipped with an airbag because this would violate Oregon's requirement for "proper use" of a child safety seat. There is a national "best practice recommendation" calling for rear seating through age twelve.

Drivers are required to follow all Oregon traffic and safety laws, including no smoking when carrying children.

Special Events & Birthdays

There are special events held throughout the year at the Preschool. All dates and times will be on the school calendar and the monthly newsletter. Examples include Halloween, Pajama Day, and Valentine's Day.

Birthday celebrations should be low key; party favors are discouraged at school. Children can celebrate with a special treat and singing. Invitations to parties should not be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited.

Health & Hygiene

Remember that a child who does not feel well is not happy in school. When in doubt please keep children home. If a child is going to be absent from school, please let Teacher Tami or another parent know, before school starts if possible. If a child is or becomes obviously ill during class time, they will be sent home.

Please do not bring children to school if they exhibit any of the following, and for 24 hours after symptoms clear:

- Skin rashes
- Sore throat or earache
- Congested-sounding cough
- Red eyes or crusty or yellow/green discharge
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fever

Please notify the school immediately if children have been exposed to any communicable conditions such as chicken pox, strep throat, measles, whooping cough, ringworm, etc.

In the event of head lice, which can be common in preschool environments throughout the school year, PCFFP follows the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC: students are excluded from school for live lice, but not for nits (lice eggs). In the event that head lice are found, the student will be sent home for treatment and then rescreened before returning to the classroom.

Children do not need to be potty trained to attend PCFFP. The child's parent/guardian and Teacher Tami are the only people to change diapers, unless another adult is given permission by the child's parent/guardian.

It is important that children learn to wash hands after going to the bathroom, after playing with messy or dirty things (such as coming in from outside), and before eating. The topic of handwashing, as well as other hygiene topics such as covering the mouth during a cough or sneeze, and not sharing food with others, are all practiced as routine, and brought up during normal play and during circle time.

Please note any food, contact, or insect allergies on the "Medical Information" form. This allows other families and Teacher Tami to plan snack, art projects, and other events accordingly.

Vaccines are required by law for children in attendance at public and private schools, preschools, child care facilities, and Head Start programs in Oregon. Nearly every place that provides care for a child outside the home requires vaccines or a medical or non-medical exemption to stay enrolled. Please provide proof of child's current immunization status or exemption during registration. Information on non-medical exemptions can be found here: (<https://goo.gl/dDpjb5>). PCFFP shares its immunization rates with Multnomah County as required by law.

Safety & Emergencies

All chemicals will be labeled properly and kept out children's reach.

Medication is only to be given by the child's parent/guardian or Teacher Tami, and must be clearly labeled.

Students are not to handle knives or other sharp objects (besides child scissors), and will not use any hot cooking utensils or appliances.

Teacher Tami is a mandatory reporter and required to report any instances of suspected child abuse.

Alcohol and/or drugs (including e-cigs) are not allowed on the school premises or on field trips.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

PCFFP maintains a first aid kit and Emergency Binder that go with the class to the gym, outside, and on field trips. The Emergency Binder is located in the leftmost cupboard above the counter, and contains the "yellow pocket" (see below) along with the "Registration Form" and "Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment" form for each child enrolled in the school. The "Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment" form allows the preschool to authorize emergency life-saving treatment if no family member is able to be reached. Please review this carefully before signing.

If an accident occurs, the family of the injured person will be notified as soon as possible. The injured person will need to take the "yellow pocket" with them to the medical facility. The Board will then fill out and submit a Claim Form to PCPO within a week of any injury requiring medical treatment. All students and 2 Classroom Volunteers are covered by Accident/Medical Insurance through PCPO during classroom hours.

General precautions should be observed by first aid providers in all situations with exposure to blood:

1. If possible, first aid should be provided by a Teacher or adult who carries a current first aid card.
2. Wash hands before and after providing first aid.
3. Gloves MUST be worn when providing first aid for a bleeding injury.
4. If exposure to blood occurs, rinse the exposed part (including eyes) thoroughly with water.
5. Clean up any spilled blood with soap and water, then disinfect with a freshly made solution of one part bleach to ten parts water.
6. Place blood-contaminated items such as gloves, bandages, and paper towels in a plastic bag, tie it closed, and put it in the garbage.

In the event of a fire or other emergency that requires evacuation, the students will follow Teacher Tami with the Classroom Volunteers to the SE corner of the church's rear parking lot and wait until emergency or church personnel give the ok.

Media Policy

PCFFP asks that families refrain from posting photos of students who are not their own, unless given explicit permission by the other child's parent or guardian. The preschool may use photos for the PCFFP Facebook Page, the monthly Newsletter, the Website, or for advertising and enrollment purposes. Effort will be made to use photos that do not directly show children's faces when possible, and all children who are photographed will have a signed consent form on file.

Guidance Principles & Conflict Resolution for Children

One of the most delicate tasks of raising children is helping them to develop their own internal controls. PCFFP works to maintain an atmosphere of acceptance and warmth wherein the children can accept the necessary limits and frustrations of group interaction. Children are not allowed unlimited freedom to express hostility, whether physically or verbally, for it is essential that the children feel safe in this environment.

PCFFP encourages independence, positive social interactions, and meaningful learning experiences by guiding children with the following principles:

- Verbal, emotional, or physical/corporal punishment of a child or children is not allowed.
- Time outs are not used at PCFFP, although a child may need to be removed to a quiet space with adult supervision to cool down.
- If a child is physically harming another child, the offending child should be removed from the situation.
- If a child's safety is at stake, firmly tell the child "No," or "Stop."
- If a child is misusing equipment, or displaying inappropriate behavior, use positive statements (ie "Walking feet, please" rather than "No running").
- Bend or squat down to the child's level while talking with them whenever possible.
- Speak calmly, positively, and in simple terms the child can understand.
- Allow plenty of time to change activities; transition is difficult for many preschoolers.
- Offer choices and be prepared to accept the child's decision.
- Praise a job well done and types of behavior that are acceptable in the classroom (ie walking).
- Avoid discussing a child in their presence.
- Withdraw physical and verbal help as child progresses toward independence.

Teacher Tami may not be present in all situations requiring adult intervention. There will be times when a Classroom Volunteer needs to help a child or group of children work through a problem. If a problem occurs between two or more children, Teacher Tami finds this problem solving method most effective:

- Go to the children; do not yell across the room.
- Get down to their eye level and use a low voice.
- State the problem clearly, “You both want that block.”
- Give children the chance to explain what the problem is (often we have not seen the whole incident), and validate their perception by repeating their words.
- Recognize each child's feelings: “You feel angry and frustrated because you want that block.”
- Generate ideas from the children on how to solve the problem. “What could we do to help you solve the problem?” (Get another one, take play elsewhere, etc.)
- Help the children evaluate the ideas and decide on what plan they will follow.

Whenever possible, allow children to solve their own problems rather than immediately providing a solution. Hold back from facilitating as long as possible before getting involved. The goal is always to help the children develop inner-control and confidence.

Teacher Tami reserves the right to contact the parents of any students at any time if disruptive behavior continues and situation is unable to be controlled in the classroom.

Code of Conduct

All adults and children have the right to be treated respectfully. Any inappropriate actions (such as yelling at someone else), language, or subject matter will not be tolerated. If disrespectful behavior or language is displayed in the preschool, the Teacher or a Board Member will ask the offending person to review their handbook. If the conduct policy continues to be ignored, the conflict resolution system will be implemented.

It is PCFFP policy that the Teacher and all co-op members be able to work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment. Such conduct is specifically prohibited. Any employee or volunteer who believes themselves or their children to be subjected to sexual or other unlawful forms of harassment or discrimination is encouraged to bring such incidents to the immediate attention of the preschool President or other Board Member.

Grievance Procedures for Adults

If any adult family member of PCFFP has a concern, conflict, complaint, or problem with any other adult family member of the school, they will follow the steps of the conflict resolution described below:

1. Direct Communication - Adult family members of PCFFP are expected to contact an individual with whom they have a conflict directly, respectfully, and in a timely manner.
2. Calling the Board - If attempts to resolve the conflict one-on-one fail, the President is contacted and the situation is referred to the Board for mediation if necessary. The Board shall designate 2-3 members to be the point of contact - the Resolution Team. The Resolution Team follows the “Resolution Team Steps” (below) and meets with the parties to develop an action plan.

3. Calling in a Professional Mediator - After working with the Board, if those involved find it necessary, a professionally trained mediator from PCPO will be asked in and the process will continue with his or her support.

Things to Keep In Mind:

- All individuals involved in a conflict, including the Teacher, President, and members of the Resolution Team, will maintain strict confidentiality.
- Any contacts made to or by the Teacher, President, and/or members of the Resolution Team will be carefully documented.
- Documentation will be written in a timely manner rather than from memory at a later date.
- Each documenter will keep a confidential copy of their records until the end of the school year when they will be turned over to the President. The President will keep all documents in a confidential file for 10 years. Duplicate documents will be destroyed.

Resolution Team Steps

1. Active listening: acknowledge each person's feelings, paraphrase what was said
2. Ask each person what their needs are in the situation, help clarify understanding
3. Jointly brainstorm many possible solutions to meet needs - accept all suggestions as possibilities
4. Evaluate possible solutions and select one
5. Make an action plan together, and distribute copies of the action plan to those involved
6. Implement the action plan
7. Check in with all parties one and two weeks later to see how they are doing
8. Modify action plan and/or call additional meetings as necessary

Concerns About Individual Children's Development

Parents should address all concerns about classroom behavior directly to the teacher.

Every child develops in his or her own way and it is ultimately a family decision how to address any difficulties. However, it is also true that (A) families may not recognize a "difference" in their child unless a teacher brings it up, and (B) some children in need of intervention may display disruptive behavior that negatively affects the entire classroom.

This is a sensitive matter and can be very upsetting to the child's family. This policy is intended to provide a road map to ensure that these situations are dealt with in a consistent and sensitive way.

1. Professional Judgment: Teacher Tami will use her best professional judgment when making a determination that a student needs to be professionally evaluated for intervention in an area of development. The Teacher may notify the President if she deems it appropriate.
2. Initial Communication: The initial communication to the family of the Teacher's opinion and impressions should be made in private, either over the telephone or in a meeting outside school hours. Email is discouraged as a venue for communicating on sensitive subjects.
3. Parent Observation and Plan of Action: The parent should be invited to observe behavior (if applicable/appropriate) in the school setting, while parent helping or otherwise. The parent and

Teacher should communicate following the observation (also in private as described above). The goal of this conference should be to formulate a plan of action together with the family. This may take more than one meeting. At any time during this process the Teacher or the family may separately meet with the President, in confidence, to discuss their respective perspectives.

4. Impasse: Occasionally, even after repeated good faith efforts to reach a consensus, the Teacher and the family cannot reach agreement on a plan of action. In such an event, the Teacher and the President will hold a meeting to determine how best to proceed for the good of the classroom as a whole. Reasonable accommodations for a child diagnosed with a condition recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act must be incorporated into the determination, when appropriate. The process developed by the Teacher and President (which shall be presented to the family in writing after being reviewed by an attorney) may include a decision to require the family, as a condition to the child remaining in the classroom, to: a) Seek professional help, b) Provide a caregiver when the child is in the classroom, and/or c) Any other solution the Teacher and President deem necessary and appropriate in the specific circumstances.
5. Confidential Nature of Decisions: All details pertaining to items 1 to 4 above will remain CONFIDENTIAL to the Teacher and the President unless the family involved wishes it to be discussed by the Board as a whole. This is intended to preserve the privacy of the child and the family.
6. Deferral to Teacher's Judgment: No policy can cover all aspects of this sensitive subject. At all times the professional judgment of the teacher will be recognized and deferred to. The Teacher is strongly encouraged to consult with their fellow teachers and/or PCPO, and from an administrative point of view with the President (or Vice President if the President is unable to serve) before taking any definitive action.
7. Continued Concerns from Parents: All continued concerns regarding classroom behavior should be directed to the teacher and/or President directly and confidentially.