



# **Parent Handbook**

## **2023-24**

**Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church Preschool**

**1837 Grandin Road**

**Roanoke, VA 24015**

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## **Purpose**

Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church Preschool was established to provide a ministry to the preschool age children of this church and our community. At RCPC Preschool, our staff works together to lovingly guide our children through a program of spiritual, physical, emotional and mental growth. We introduce our children to the wonder of God through God's creations. We also teach them the importance of love, tolerance, and cooperation as ways to respond to God's love.

Through a warm, accepting climate and well-planned curriculum, our preschool gives children a natural transition from home to school. Each child is encouraged to grow in independence as well as in social development and in the development of his or her own unique talents and abilities. Special attention is given to help each child develop, respect for others, a sense of self-worth, effective working habits and a desire to learn.

## **Ministry and Mission**

Through the Preschool, RCPC provides a Christian ministry to the community without regard for religious belief, gender, class, race, family structure or national origin. Christian nurture is an intentional part of the program. Its mission is to:

- Provide an age appropriate program and curriculum to prepare young children academically and socially for the transition from home to K-12 school.
- Provide an environment of caring, acceptance, discipline, and security.
- Provide chapel time with a Pastor and/or a Director of Christian Education for all students once a week during the school year.
- Offer experiences which are not restricted to, or exclusive of Biblical content. The object of including Christian content is not to teach doctrine but to expose preschoolers to Christian values and stories.

## **History**

In September 1967, a Preschool Program for physically handicapped children opened as an outreach ministry of Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church. This program met twice a week, and started with seven enrolled students. Enrollment grew to 20 children in 1969 with a staff of three. Nowhere else in Roanoke or in the outlying areas was there known to be a preschool program of this nature. In the 1970's, this program became the REACH Program in the Roanoke City Schools.

In April 1980, the church's Session approved a weekday, preschool program in the church. In September 1980, there were three classes, 32 students, and three teachers. On December 22, 1980, the preschool was made a permanent part of the church's education program.

## **Philosophy**

We strongly believe that age-appropriateness needs to coincide with both learn-through-play and academic philosophies. Our program allows each child to remain an active learner by providing hands-on learning, exploration, problem-solving and reflection. Learning materials and teaching styles are responsive to the age and individual differences of children. We see the importance of learning through play and of learning important socialization skills, while acknowledging that academic instruction in the older classes is necessary to adequately prepare our students for the leap into Kindergarten.

## **Disclosure Statement**

RCPC Preschool is located on the basement level of RCPC Church. Facilities available to the preschool include classrooms equipped with age-appropriate toys and learning materials, RCPC's Chapel, Children's Library and an inside gymnasium. An outdoor playground is used daily, weather permitting. Enrollment capacity is 100 full-time children. Each member of the Preschool & PMO (Parent's Morning Out) staff is certified annually by a

practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent caring for the children. Staff members are required to have experience with children and are required to receive ongoing training provided through RCPC Preschool in early childhood methods. The Preschool & PMO program is covered by Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church's public liability insurance. RCPC Preschool & PMO meets all standards required by the State of Virginia to qualify for state exemption status. All RCPC Preschool teachers are required to report any suspicions of child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities. Teachers and assistants are certified in CPR and First-Aid Training and we perform fire drills with the students and staff monthly, shelter in place drills twice a year, and lockdown drills once a year. Should we have a need to evacuate, our designated safe location is Christ Lutheran Church at 2011 Brandon Ave SW, Roanoke, VA 24015

## **Preschool Policies and Procedures**

### **Drop-Off and Pick Up:**

**PMO**– Pick up and drop off will be located at the outside PMO classroom door (room 1), at the bottom of the RAMP. Drop off for PMO will be from 8:50-9:00 and pick up will be from 11:45-11:55. This will allow PMO parents to drop off and pick up prior to other students arriving and dismissing and allow access to the ramp for other classes. Parents will be greeted at the PMO classroom door and we ask kindly to keep drop off swift to allow your child to adjust to the classroom faster.

**Ms. Emma's Twos (Classroom 2)** - Pick up and drop off will be located at the outside PMO classroom door (room 1), at the bottom of the RAMP. Drop off for Ms. Emma's Class will be from 9:00-9:05 and pick up will be from 12:00-12:05. Unless attending Early Risers, please do not plan on dropping your child off before 9:00 am as the ramp will be used for PMO drop off at that time.

**Ms. Brittini's 2's, all 3's and Pre-K will utilize a car line drop off service in the main parking lot.** The car line runs from 9:00 – 9:10 for drop off and from 11:55-12:05 at pick up. There will be three orange cones indicating where you should drop off and then pick up your child. During drop off, if you are in the first three spots of the car line, please walk your child to the appropriate cone and wait for someone to escort them into the building. **If you are more than three cars back in the car line, please remain in your car and move your car forward when the cars in front of you leave. PLEASE AVOID BLOCKING THE ALLEY.**

**5 day 3's Pick up** Our 5 day Three year old class will be on the playground at the end of the day. (Weather permitting) When you pull into the parking lot, if you see your child's class is on the playground, please park and walk to the playground gate to pick up your child. If weather does not permit for the class to be outside, you child will be picked up in the same procedure as drop off (car line in front of main entrance)

### **Other:**

If you have multiple students in the school using different entrances, please pick up your youngest student first.

If you plan on walking your child to school and do not want to utilize the carline, please walk your child to the main entrance to drop off and pick your child.

\*\* PLEASE always drive slowly in the parking lot and be aware of your surroundings. Once you load your child in the car, IF YOU feel comfortable, please move forward slightly to buckle them in to allow other cars to move up (DO NOT drive into Grandin Road without buckling, just a couple parking spots forward)

### **Other:**

If you have multiple students in the school, please pick up your youngest student first.

If you plan on walking your child to school and do not want to utilize the carline, please let the teacher know the best place to meet you for drop off and pick up.

If someone other than those listed on your child's enrollment form (under parent or emergency contacts) is going to pick-up your child(ren), a note or email must be sent to the director and id's will be checked if we have not met this person before.

An additional charge of \$1.00 per minute will be applied if your child is not picked up by 12:05 PM. If your child participates in an after-school program, the additional charge will be applied at 1:05 PM for LB, Dance, Melody Makers and Bricks and after 1:50 for Soccer. Late charges will automatically be added to your account.

**If you are running late., etc..** Please communicate via Brightwheel if you need to pick up or drop off late, this way, we can try to meet you outside if we know when you are arriving. If no one is outside to meet you, please ring the video accessible doorbell outside of the main entrance. Once your identity has been verified, you will be buzzed inside, where you will need to wait for a preschool staff member to come and get your child.

### **Inclement Weather**

The Preschool typically follows the Roanoke City Schools' decision regarding school delays/closings.

If the Roanoke City Schools:

- start one hour late, the Preschool will start one hour late
- *start two hours late, the Preschool will open from 10:15-12:15 with no Early Risers.*
- are closed, the Preschool will be closed

We will not make up days missed due to inclement weather and no refunds of tuition will be given. We will post school closing and school delays on our Facebook page and via Brightwheel.

### **Sick Policy**

The health of our students and staff are of great importance at RCPC Preschool. Therefore, we require all children to be fever free (below 99.9) without medication and free of diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours in order to attend school. Please allow 24 hours from the start of an antibiotic before allowing your child to return to school. Please keep your child home if they have profuse nasal discharge, severe congestion/cough or conjunctivitis (pink eye). This is not only for the consideration of others but also for the sick child who needs to be at home resting.

If your child exhibits symptoms of illness while at preschool, the child will be moved to an empty classroom with a staff member and a parent/caregiver will be called and asked to pick-up their child in the preschool office within 20 minutes. It is extremely important that you are always reachable via the contact information you provide the school and come to get your child as soon as called. **Please use the illness symptom checklist provided online and that we sent home with your child BEFORE bringing your child to school each day. If your child is showing any signs of illness, please keep them home.**

If you are asked to pick up your child due to a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, your child should remain home the following day, as well as any additional days needed to be free of these symptoms for 24 hours without medication. If your child has been diagnosed with allergies, asthma or another condition that is not contagious you may provide a Doctor's note at any point in year which we will take into consideration if your child presents those symptoms.

Parent(s)/guardians agree to inform the center within 24 hours after his/her child or any members of the

immediate household have developed a reportable communicable disease, as defined by the State Board of Health, except for life threatening diseases which must be reported immediately.

### **Immunization Policy**

All students are required to be fully immunized. Only medical exemptions are allowed.

### **Attendance Policy**

If you choose to keep your child home for any reason, please message us on Brightwheel before the start of the school day.

### **Medicine**

It is Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church Preschool's policy NOT to dispense any oral medication while your child is at preschool. If your child is on medication, please see that it is given before or after preschool hours. If your child has any specific medical needs or conditions, please alert your child's teacher and be sure it is noted on your child's application form.

### **Toilet Training**

Children in our three, young 4s and Pre-K classes are required to be potty trained and in underwear prior to the start of the school year. If you have any specific concerns, please speak to your child's teacher or to the Preschool Director.

## **Classroom Policies and Procedures**

### **Incident Reports**

We utilize incident reports to maintain open communication between parents and staff. We have two types of incident reports. One incident report is for daily classroom concerns or accidental injury (i.e. scratched their knee from tripping). The other is a behavior incident report which is used to communicate disruptive classroom behavior.

### **Toys from Home**

Toys or other items from home are not allowed to be brought into school. Toy guns, swords, or other weapons are NOT ALLOWED at school for any reason. Teachers are not responsible for items brought from home.

### **Pacifiers**

If a child in PMO or Two utilizes a pacifier, it should be attached to your child's clothing with a clip.

### **Birthdays**

Parents are welcome to celebrate their child's birthday at school with a special treat! Cookies, muffins or rice crispy treats are always class favorites. Please arrange the day with your child's teacher. Invitations to a party outside of school should not be brought to the classroom unless every child in the class is invited. Parents should check with the teacher about any food allergies.

### **Daily Communication Folder**

Each preschool student will provide a folder (in supply list) to be used for communication needs. Your child's teacher will be checking this folder daily for notes from home. We will use this folder to send home flyers, important announcement and more. Please check the folder daily.

### **Brightwheel Software Tool**

Brightwheel is an all-in-one app where you can stay connected to your child's school. You will receive updates

from your child's teacher and director (both urgent and non-urgent), pictures and be able to make payments. Please be sure to have the app downloaded on your mobile device and turn your updates on to receive messages. This will be the main form of communication from your teacher and director.

### **Classroom Holiday Parties**

Parents will be able to sign up as party "hosts" and bring in special treats, goody bags, etc for the class and even plan a special activity. If you are not able to attend, no problem...you can still participate by sending in something special. Teachers or classroom parents will organize volunteers for parties.

**Here are some helpful classroom party suggestions. Feel free to personalize 😊**

1. Check with the teacher and find out what day and time the party is scheduled.
2. Party parents are responsible for the party snack and drink. Try to work with the teacher for a theme to the month's party. Usually it involves a holiday or topic the class has been discussing.
3. You may want to have special cups, plates or napkins for the party.
4. Many families send in a party favor or treat bag for the children in the class. Some examples are: party straws, small toys, stickers, candy, necklaces, or items that coordinate with the theme.

### **Playground Safety**

Playground time is a great time for the children to get fresh air, exercise, and have a chance to interact with children in other classrooms. We provide safe equipment and safe mulch levels to insure that the children have a fun, risk-free playground experience. We go outside if it is over 35 degrees and not too windy or raining. Please send your child with appropriate clothes (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) as the weather gets colder. The staff shall teach the children the following rules to lessen the likelihood of getting hurt:

1. Do not climb up the slide.
2. Do not climb on the fence.
3. Do not throw mulch.
4. Do not climb the tree.
5. No standing on the playground toys (i.e., rockers and picnic tables).
6. Playground toys are not allowed on the playground equipment.
7. Keep the sand in the sandbox.
8. Bikes and scooters must go in the same direction on the bike path.
9. Always wear shoes.

*RCPC Preschool reserves the playground for school use until 2:00 PM Monday-Friday. However, please feel free to utilize the playground immediately after school, **until** the after school group is ready to use it. We respectfully request that you exit the playground when the lunch bunch/afterschool program enters. We do ask that if you choose to remain on the school playground after school, that you enforce the playground rules listed above with your children and please do not leave any trash behind.*

### **PMO Outside time**

PMO students have an age appropriate area for outside now! They will continue to go on stroller rides, but now can have their own playground time outside.

### **Indoor Gymnasium**

In the event that it is below 35 degrees or raining, classes will use the indoor gym for their playground time.

## 8035 Classroom Management and Discipline Policy

**Philosophy** - All children should have the opportunity to learn, develop, and grow in a safe and positive learning environment. RCPC Preschool will utilize positive discipline and guidance techniques in order to provide this environment. We believe parents are an important link to guiding proper behavior in school. When there is a cause for concern based on disruptive behavior, which distracts from the full benefit of the preschool program, the Preschool Director and staff will work with the child and parents to develop positive behavior.

### **Examples of disruptive behaviors:**

- Requires constant attention from the staff
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom
- Verbally threatens other students and/or staff
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children

**Discipline Approach** – RCPC Preschool staff will focus on the positive behaviors of the children while reinforcing those behaviors as often as possible. Our staff will also utilize positive behavior techniques and guidelines to help them develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

### **Our discipline approaches will consist of some the following strategies before we move on to the procedures listed below...**

1. Establishing and communicating classroom expectations and consequences – expectations/rules will always revolve around keeping our students and staff safe (both physically and emotionally)
2. Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child which helps children to settle their own disputes.
3. Redirecting behavior
4. Logical consequences to behavior concerns, such as a toy being taken away if it was used inappropriately
5. Separating a child from the group if necessary – approximately one minute away for each year of age
6. Explaining to the child why their behavior was inappropriate and what they could have done differently
7. Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns

### **Procedures for Behavior Concerns**

- ***First Incident:*** After multiple attempts by the teacher to manage the child's behavior in the classroom through preventative actions and re-direction, the teacher will inform parent of disruptive issues in class via a behavior incident report. The incident report will be placed in the child's folder to be taken home, signed and returned the following day to the teacher.
- ***Second Incident:*** The behavior will be documented and shared with the parent and Preschool Director via a behavior incident report. The incident report will be placed in the child's folder to be taken home, signed and returned the following day to the teacher.
- ***Third Incident:*** The child will be removed from the class and will be waiting in the Director's office for pick up for the day. A behavior incident report will be documented and shared with the parent and Preschool Director and signed off by all parties. A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled at the

earliest possible time to discuss a behavior modification plan. The Director will observe and document the child's behavior in class upon the child's return the following school.

- **Fourth Incident:** The child will be removed from the class and will be waiting in the Director's office for pick-up for the day. The Preschool Committee will be notified. The Preschool Director may request that the child be evaluated by an outside specialist. This evaluation as well as further classroom observation will help determine best techniques to help the child succeed, as well as determine if RCPC Preschool is the appropriate environment for the child. If the parent chooses to not get their child evaluated, the Preschool Director may terminate enrollment.

\*\* RCPC Preschool reserves the right to request a child be sent home if the **first incident** warrants removal from the classroom and the child does not seem fit to return. In addition, while this is always the last resort, RCPC Preschool reserves the right, with preschool committee approval, to request a student remain home for a determined amount of time if the student's behavior is continuously disruptive and endangers himself and /or the well being of other children.\*\*

We are committed to fostering a safe, nurturing and healthy environment for our students. It is our intent to extend all of our efforts and resources to assist our families in finding suitable environments for all of our students.

### **RCPC Registration & Tuition**

#### **Monthly Tuition**

*\*\* Tuition payments are due before the first of each month, one month in advance\*\**

THE PREFERABLE WAY TO PAY TUITION IS VIA THE BRIGHTWHEEL APP. Please be aware, Brightwheel charges a fee when paying online. The fee for using a checking or saving account is only .60 but there is a higher fee for using credit cards. If you are not comfortable with online payments, you may choose to pay with a check. You can put the check in your child's communication folder and brightwheel message to notify payment is inside folder. Please refrain from handing tuition payments to staff during drop-off or pick-up. This is a busy time for our staff as we are focusing on your children – it can be very easy for your payment to get misplaced during this time. If you place a payment inside your child's back pack, it must be in their communication folder.

Tuition for the month remains the same and no amount is refundable if the child is withdrawn before the end of the month. No refund on tuition is given for illness, vacation, school closing due to inclement weather, or for any other reason that necessitates the child being absent from school. A \$10.00 late fee will be automatically charged for all tuition payments received after the 10th of the month. A \$35 return check fee will be applied for any check returned from the bank.

*If paying by check, please always write your child's first and last name and the purpose(s) of the check on the memo line. If writing one check for multiple tuitions or for various purposes, please specify how much should go towards each purpose.*

#### **Snack Suggestions**

Please send in a healthy, age appropriate snack for your child each day. It should be a snack they can eat by themselves and should not need to be refrigerated or heated up. If there is an allergy in your child's class, please do not send a snack for your child that contains the allergy.



## School Support & Spirit

### Kroger Plus Community Rewards Program

Kroger has made it even easier to help raise money for RCPC Preschool! If you already have a Kroger Plus card, in one easy step you can link your card to our school. A percentage of your purchases are given back to the preschool. Visit <https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards> and either sign into your existing account or create a new account. From there, just type in the first three letters of our school (RAL) OR, you can type in our unique account number which is VS207. Everything is automatic from there. Alternatively, you can link up your Kroger Plus card to our school by visiting Customer Service at a Kroger Store.

### Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat

A fun evening held the Sunday before Halloween. Enjoy dinner, children's activities and a Trunk-or-Treat. This joint event with the church includes a raffle with prizes from local businesses. Ways to help are by donating or collecting prizes and gift cards for an exciting raffle. All proceeds benefit RCPC Preschool.

### Krispy Kreme Doughnuts

**RCPC is selling coupons for Krispy Kreme Doughnut Coupons. 50% of the proceeds come directly back to the school. Order forms were sent home with students and can be sent back anytime. Payment can be made via check or via brightwheel.**

### Townside Garden Plant Sale

**We will be selling holiday plants and garland this fall and proceeds all benefit RCPC. Order forms will be sent home in October with delivery of the plants December 4<sup>th</sup>**

## Optional Before School Program

### Early Risers (ER)

Early Risers is offered Monday-Friday in room 1 and will be accessed by the entrance at the bottom of the ramp. **Students in our two year old classrooms and older** can be dropped off anytime between 8:30 – 8:55 am for Early Risers. Since students are not allowed into their classroom until 9:00 am, if you need to drop off your child for even only 5 to 10 minutes early, please plan on utilizing Early Risers and paying the \$6 fee. **No pre-registration is required, but payment must be provided through a pre-purchased punch card or paid through the Brightwheel APP before the day of service.** The cost is \$6/day or \$60 for a punch card which allows 11 visits (one free visit). **We recommend the punch card if you plan on multiple visits.** You can purchase punch cards with a check or through Brightwheel. These cards are kept at the school in the early riser room and will be sent home when there are no punches left. There is no need to alert any staff beforehand if you choose to utilize ER. It runs every school day. Early risers is offered to PMO on a case by case basis and parents must make arrangements with the director prior to attending. Early Risers for PMO is \$8/visit.

**\*\* RCPC Preschool reserves the right to cancel the Early Risers program due to low enrollment. If this occurs, a one month notice will be sent home\*\***

## Optional Afterschool Programs

For those in our two year old and older classrooms, we offer a variety of programs from 12:00-1:00, Monday – Thursday. Whether your child wants to stay to eat lunch and get some extra play time in with friends, or attend one of our more structured classes, there is something for everyone! Registration information will be sent home before school begins and prior to each new session starting.

### **Lunch Bunch (LB)**

Lunch Bunch is a special time on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for students in the two year old and older classrooms to stay an extra hour for fun with their friends. No pre-registration is required, but payment must be through a pre-purchased punch card or through the brightwheel APP. Students bring a packed lunch and the cost is \$12/day or \$120 for a punch card which allows 11 visits (one visit free). Siblings are only \$10/day (punch cards for siblings are \$100 for 11 visits). We recommend the punch card if you plan on multiple visits. These cards are kept at the school in the lunch bunch room and will be sent home when there are no punches left. You can purchase punch cards through brightwheel or simply add it to your child's monthly tuition payment. Pick-up for lunch bunch is at the playground (weather permitted) or the main entrance of the church. After 1:05, late fee charges will apply. **Lunch Bunch is offered to PMO on a case by case basis and parents must make arrangements with the director prior to attending. Lunch Bunch for PMO is \$16/visit.**

### **Melody Makers**

For students ages 2 and older, this music program is offered at our preschool on Wednesdays until 1:00 pm. Please pack an easy to eat light lunch for your student to eat before the program begins at 12:15. You will pick up your child from Melody Makers at 1:00 outside of the children's library.

### **Soccer Shots**

Soccer Shots is a national program that introduces children ages 2-8 to the fundamentals of soccer. Children will learn basic dribbling and rules of the game. Through fun songs and games, the children will begin to enjoy the game. In addition, their caring team positively impacts children's lives on and off the field through best-in class coaching, curriculum and communication. Please pack a lunch for your child to eat before Soccer. The program runs from 1:00-1:50. Pick up is at 1:50 at the main entrance of the church.

### **Dance with Ms. Wendy!**

Ms. Wendy will use movement as a tool to unlock cognitive, social and emotional development. Children learn the basics of ballet, creative movement and gross motor skill. Students must be in our three year old class and older to attend. Please pack an easy to eat light lunch for your student to eat before the program begins at 12:15 and pick up is at 1:00 at the main entrance.

### **Bricks 4 Kidz**

Through LEGO® Brick, this program delivers a hands-on lesson correlated to cross-disciplinary curriculum objectives. Students will learn to build an age appropriate model by being given step by step instructions. Please pack an easy to eat light lunch for your student to eat before the program begins at 12:15. This will be offered once a month on Fridays. Pick up is at the main entrance at 1:00.

### **Additional Program Options:**

**PMO Drop-In**– If you need an occasional extra day for your current PMO student, you can confirm there is space and pay a drop in fee of \$30/day.

**Summer Camps** – We offer three week-long summer camps from 9am-12pm