



# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2014-2015

Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center

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State License Number: CDC 9761

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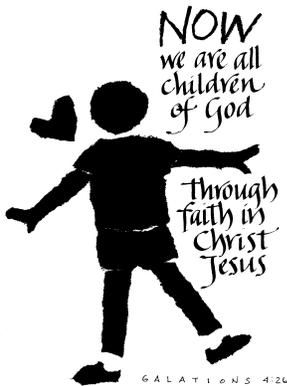
## PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

The purpose of Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center is to provide a nurturing and developmentally appropriate care and educational experience in a Christ-centered environment. The primary basis for all decisions regarding programming is based on what is best for children.

Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center strives to promote the academic, emotional, physical and spiritual development of each child. We believe that each child is a unique creation of God and is therefore treated with respect and loving care.

### Spiritual Beliefs

Precious Stones Preschool is a ministry of Rock of Ages Lutheran Church and is affiliated with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Each is committed to the beliefs and truths revealed in God's inerrant Word, the Holy Bible and the following scriptural truths:



1. That the Bible is the inspired Word of God.
2. That there is only one true God, eternally existing in the three persons of the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. That forgiveness of sins and salvation has been won for all men through the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This forgiveness is freely given to all who believe in Christ's atoning work, as a result of God's Grace, without any merit or worthiness on our part. (1John 2:2; Romans 3:22-28; Acts 16:30-31.) As a result, we can confidently look forward to spending eternity with God in heaven.
4. That Baptism is a means of grace that the Holy Spirit uses to bring us to faith and grants us salvation.
5. Life itself is a gift from God and that we are to live our life totally committed to Him and in loving service to our neighbor.
6. Sharing the Good News of salvation with children prepares them to lead a life to enable them to also share this Good News.

### Worship Opportunities

Christian worship is included in each school day's activities. There are morning devotions, Bible story time, mealtime prayers and weekly Chapel services. Students are expected to participate in school worship.

If you currently do not have a church home, Rock of Ages invites you to join us for worship and to consider becoming a member of the Rock of Ages family. Weekend worship services are Sunday mornings at 8:30 am for Classic Grace, a traditional worship and at 10:30 am for Worship at the Rock, a contemporary worship which includes Children's Church time. Join us from 9:30 to 10:30 for Fellowship time.

New membership classes are offered on a regular basis to inform about the Christian faith and membership at Rock of Ages Lutheran Church. There are numerous opportunities for Bible Study, worship and activities throughout the week. Feel free to speak with the director or the pastor about attending and please know that you are always welcome.

## Parent Involvement

Excellence at Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center can best be achieved when the relationship between school, home, and community is tremendous. Opportunities to support the school with your time, your talents and your treasures are available. We recommend that you volunteer through fundraisers, school events or class activities, at least 2 times per year. Your continued prayers are also important.



Parents may visit classrooms during the day, but you must check in at the school office.

Precious Stones participates in the eScrip Community Education Program as well as Labels for Education. Participating in these programs supports your child and the school.

In addition, parents may also provide support during school functions, school activities and classroom activities. School functions might include: the ice cream social, any special programs or classes and any fundraising activities. Each activity may need volunteers who are willing to assist with planning, organizing, set-up and serving. Volunteers during nap time are appreciated, so that teachers may take a break or work on curriculum. These events give you an opportunity to connect with the other Precious Stones Preschool families, your child's teachers and Rock of Ages members. If you are absolutely unable to volunteer for 2 events in the year, a monetary gift will be accepted.

## Parent Conduct

The conduct of our school parents makes an important impact on our school environment. Parents are significant and powerful role models to our students. Accordingly, it is expected that parents follow these guidelines when interacting with teachers, students and other parents:

- \* Treat all staff, students and property with respect, as you can expect in return. (Philippians 2:3-4)
- \* In expressing questions, concerns and suggestions, speak calmly and listen with an open mind to the responses. Stay focused on the shared desire to meet the Christian educational needs of all students. (Colossians 3:12)
- \* Teachers can give you her full attention when you make an appointment to discuss your issue. Approaching them in the midst of a crowd of children or people, or during other school activities is not optimum.
- \* Remember that everyone makes mistakes. Kind understanding of staff errors will always be appreciated and you can expect the same treatment in return. (Ephesians 4:32)
- \* Never directly confront or challenge a child (other than your own) while the child is under school supervision, unless you have been so empowered as a volunteer. If you observe or hear about behavior that you believe should be addressed, inform the proper school authority (such as you're your child's teacher/caregiver), and then trust the staff member to take action, as she believes appropriate to the situation.
- \* Please keep to the same standards of decent language to which the students are held. (Exodus 20:7)
- \* Parents should communicate any concerns in an appropriate manner, to the person or persons who can best address those concerns; this includes issues with other parents. (Matthew 18:15-22)
- \* Inappropriate parent behavior or a disregard for school authority can be grounds for your child's dismissal. (Romans 13:1-2)

## SCHOOL STRUCTURE INFORMATION



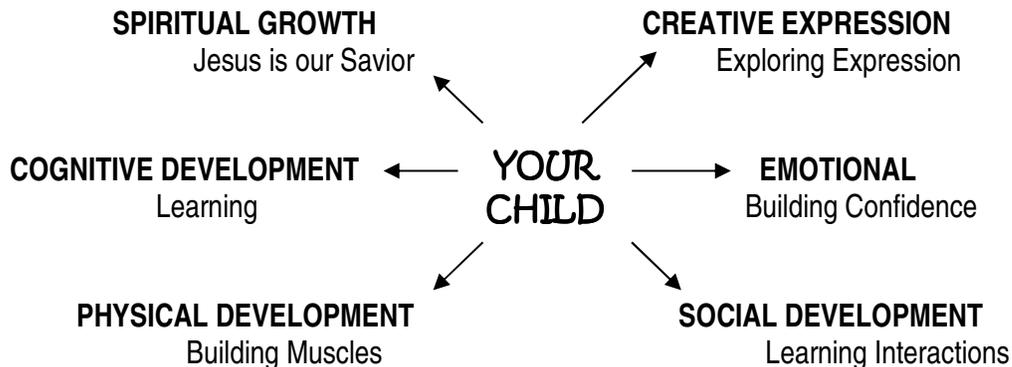
### Communication

The director and school staff will communicate with families in person, through notes, phone calls or texts, on social media, newsletters and on the school webpage ([www.preciousstonespreschool.com](http://www.preciousstonespreschool.com).) Staff will not communicate about your child with other people. Classrooms will also have postings with information about snack schedules, lesson plans, upcoming lesson activities and upcoming events. General school information and announcements can be viewed at the check-in location. Parents should accept the responsibility to remain informed.

If you have a question or concern about a classroom issue, please contact the classroom teacher directly. (Matthew 18:15-22) If you believe the director's attention would be helpful, feel free to contact the school office after you've spoken to your child's teacher. Please do not hesitate to contact the teacher or director with any general questions or concerns.

### Curriculum

Curriculum refers to all educational experiences the children at Precious Stones Preschool and Child Care Center receive. Spiritual growth, creative expression, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development is addressed within each aspect of learning.



### Toddler, Preschool and Pre-kindergarten Curriculum

Curriculum materials include the Creative Curriculum and Zoophonics Curriculum. Curriculum includes topics for each development area: spiritual, creativity, cognitive emotional, social, and physical activity. Curriculum is enriched through topic subjects, guest speakers and other experiential learning.



Academic components that encourage effective transition into kindergarten is a focus in the pre-kindergarten classroom. Students are introduced to early academics such as letters, numbers, matching, cutting, sequencing, special recognition, vocabulary and writing.

Due to the young age of preschool children, field trips off-site will not be taken. Regular efforts to enrich learning experiences, such as guest speakers, demonstrations and special activities will occur on the school site.

## Entrance Requirement and Enrollment Policies

Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center practices a non-discriminatory admission policy. Programs and opportunities are open to all children regardless of gender, race, color or ethnic origin. These practices are founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ and in compliance with Federal and State laws.

Please speak with the director if your child has severe special needs (for example: mental or emotional handicaps, behavior problems or other special needs) to discuss appropriate accommodations to be made for the continued safety and health of the child.

For enrollment, each student must have completed the following items:

1. Completed Registration and Enrollment Form
2. Emergency Information
3. Photocopy of a Immunization Record for the Student
4. Paid registration fee and school fees



Children aged 12 months may enroll in the toddlers program for child care. Children entering preschool must be age 3 by August 1 and no longer in diapers/pull-ups may enroll. Children must be able to take care of their own toileting needs and be able to verbally express their needs to staff. Students entering pre-kindergarten must be age 4 by August 1 and planning to enter kindergarten the following year.

It is in the best interest of children to transition into the programs offered at Precious Stones Preschool. Toddlers will visit with their parent for several times prior to several short solo visits prior to independent attendance in the toddler classroom. The child's comfort and security is the primary.

Preschool students will visit with their parent and have several short solo visits prior to independent attendance.

Toddlers will transition into the preschool program in a similar fashion. Several accompanied visits, followed by several short solo visits prior to independent attendance.

Classroom assignments are at the discretion of school staff and the director.

### TODDLER CHILD CARE SERVICES

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00 am – 6:00 pm Up to 6 Hours \$23.40 6-9 Hours \$31.20 Over 9 Hours – Extra \$5 Drop In Rates \$8/ Hour	Reserved Child Care				

## Elementary After School Child Care

After-school child care is offered for elementary students from kindergarten through grade 3 at the end of the school day. (Parents must reserve the days care is required the week preceding care.) Students riding the public school bus are picked up from the bus stop immediately adjacent to Precious Stones Preschool. Students attending schools other than public school, must provide transportation to the center.

### ELEMENTARY AFTER SCHOOL and SCHOOL VACATION CHILD CARE SERVICES

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3:00 pm - 6:00 pm					
\$3.75/hour					
\$8.00/hour drop-in without reservation	Reserved Child Care				

### PRESCHOOL and PRE-KINDERGARTEN TUITION PROGRAMS

All preschool and pre-kindergarten students are enrolled in tuition programs during the 8:00 am – 4:00 pm time period each day, during the school year. Tuition for each program is paid monthly. Tuition statements are delivered and tuition is due on the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payment is made in the school office and may be made by check, money order, credit card, debit card or cash. Cash payments should be placed in the brown envelopes, labeled with your child’s name and placed in the wooden lock box. Check and money orders may be placed directly in the wooden lock box.

Tuition payments made 5 school days or more after the first Monday of the month may be assessed a late fee of \$15.00. Should tuition be more than one-month delinquent, the parent will be notified and the child dropped from the program. If there is a financial problem, please contact the director to see if you are eligible for a *First Things First* scholarship program or DES. All returned checks will be charged \$15.00.



Tuition is not adjusted for days missed due to illness or holidays. Make-up days and refunds are not offered.

To put the best interests of children first, preschool and pre-kindergarten students are expected to be in their classrooms promptly at the time his or her class begins. Please call the school office if your child is sick and won’t be attending:

**928-282-4091.**

If you wish to change your child’s tuition program day, time or program selection, please provide a two-week notice to the school office, requesting the change. Changes will be honored if there are available spaces in the program requested. Tuition program changes must occur at monthly intervals to accommodate monthly tuition billing cycles.

Attendance is an essential component of your child’s preschool experience. Making the choice to have your child in class provides continuity of content presentation, practice with school readiness skills and consistent social interaction and development.

**PRESCHOOL and PRE-KINDERGARTEN PRESCHOOL TUITION PROGRAMS**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Over 9 Hours – Extra \$5 \$8.00/hour drop-in without reservation	Reserved Child Care				
Preschool/Pre-kindergarten 8:00 am – 1:00 pm AM M-F 5x/week = \$450/month M-W 3x/week = \$270/month TH-F 2x/week = \$180/month	AM PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	AM PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	AM PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	AM PS/PK 5x/week 2x/week	AM PS/PK 5x/week 2x/week
Preschool/Pre-kindergarten 8:00 am – 4:00 pm FD M-F 5x/week = \$600/month M-W 3x/week = \$360/month TH-F 2x/week = \$240/month	FD PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	FD PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	FD PS/PK 5x/week 3x/week	FD PS/PK 5x/week 2x/week	FD PS/PK 5x/week 2x/week

**Testing, Assessment & Evaluation**

Kindergarten readiness tests will be administered annually to pre-kindergarten students who are preparing to enter kindergarten. Test results are used by school staff to establish developmental encouragement goals for each child. These test results are considered confidential and will be provided to every parent during scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Parents may make additional appointments with teachers at any time throughout the school year.

School staff will discuss other developmental assessments for your child and is available to provide resources to parents.

## School Dress

Parents are responsible for dressing their children appropriately for school, using the general guidelines of safety, cleanliness, modesty and decency for appropriate choices. Fashion, fashion accessories, make-up, jewelry and societal pressures about what children should be wearing are inconsequential to how children are learning or developing in school.

General dress guidelines are as follows:

1. Sneakers are required foot ware and safest for playground use. Other shoes may be worn to school, but once a student arrives, sneakers must be worn.
2. Children should be dressed for the weather, including coats if cooler, gloves and hats.
3. To protect your child's skin from the sun, hats, sunglasses and sunblock are encouraged.
4. Jewelry is discouraged and may be taken away if used as a distraction. Dangle earrings are not safe for recess play and may not be worn at school.

## Behavior and Discipline

Good behavior is a prerequisite for good learning and social development. Children learn best in a safe environment that has boundaries. Class rules are determined and implemented by the teacher and provide consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate behavior. When a child is corrected for his or her misbehavior, teachers always indicate the appropriate behavior choice and then forgiveness, following the example of Christ Jesus.

The purpose of discipline is to help children learn self-direction and self-discipline as they mature in their relationship with the Lord and their neighbor.

Behavior expected of students is as follows:

1. Students are expected to be cooperative, dependable and honest. (Proverbs 12:13)
2. Students are expected to demonstrate good stewardship – care for all that God has created. (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)
3. Students will treat classmates and staff with respect. (Philippians 2:3-4)
4. Students will respect the authority of God, parents, teachers and other adults in positions of authority. (Romans 13:1-2)
5. Students will conduct themselves in a manner that brings honor to God, their families, the school and themselves. (Proverbs 17:17)



Some guidelines of unacceptable behavior include:

1. Fighting or inflicting bodily harm to another child, staff member or staff.
2. Profanity, spoken or gestured.
3. Defiant behavior or language.
4. Disrupting learning.
5. Willful destruction, theft or misuse of property.
6. Conduct, language or attitudes unbecoming a Christian.

The staff will make an effort to use positive reinforcement, divert attention, provide alternative choices, give verbal counsel and explanation by the classroom teacher. Time-out or forfeiture of privileges may be necessary as a last resort. Contact with parents will occur if further intervention is necessary. It is the goal at Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center to make learning and care a positive experience.

### **Discontinued Enrollment**

If you are removing your child from enrollment, please give a two-week notice, in writing, to the School Office. Please include a forwarding address if you are moving. All financial obligations must be paid prior to any release of student records.

A two-week notice will ordinarily be given to the parent if your child is dismissed from Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center. Monthly tuition refunds will not be given. Reasons for dismissal include:

1. Child's inability or refusal to adjust to the program;
2. Excessive disruptive behavior;
3. Child repeatedly harms other children, staff or self;
4. Inappropriate use of equipment;
5. Parent's unwillingness to cooperate with school staff or school policy;
6. Parent's inappropriate interference or inappropriate behavior;
7. Failure to pay tuition or fees.

### **Licensed Child Care Program**

Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center is licensed by the State of Arizona to provide Child Care services this includes Precious Stones Preschool toddler, preschool, pre-kindergarten and childcare programs. The public case records regarding Precious Stones Preschool are available for inspection pursuant to A.R.S. 39-121 at:

Arizona Department of Health Services,  
1500 East Cedar Avenue, Suite #22, Flagstaff, AZ 86004  
or by appointment, in the school office.

### **Insurance Liability**

A general liability insurance policy, that meets the Department of Health Service's mandate, is maintained by Rock of Ages and Precious Stones Preschool. It is intended to supplement the health coverage already maintained by each family and is applicable should a student require medical attention due to injury during school hours or at a school sponsored activity.

### **Child Care Reservation and Drop-In Child Care Guidelines**

Reservations are **required** for all child care services, with reservation sign up the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of each month. Child care fees are charged whether the child does or does not attend. Billing statements for extended care will be distributed on the Monday morning following the week of care.



IF there is sufficient space, drop in child care is allowed at the rate of \$8.00/hour only into child care programs, NOT tuition programs. Elementary aged students may not drop-in to tuition programs during the preschool/pre-kindergarten programs in session.

Students are allowed to arrive **30** minutes early and may be picked up **30** minutes after the close of the tuition program at no additional charge. For example: 7:30 am - 12:30 pm for morning session and 7:30 am – 4:30 pm for full day session. Children still in attendance following the 5/9 hour time period will be charged \$5.00. Childcare is not offered or available during the tuition programs, regular school day.

### **CHILDREN MUST BE PICKED UP BEFORE OR AT THE 6:00 PM CLOSING TIME.**

If there is an emergency and you will be late, contact the school immediately. If your child is not picked up by 6:05 pm and the childcare staff has not heard from you, the procedure is as follows:

1. Try to contact the parent/guardian by phone.
2. Try to reach your emergency contacts.
3. If all contacts are unsuccessful, local law enforcement or child protective services are contacted.



A \$3.00 per minute late charge will be assessed for each minute after 6:00 pm.

### **Sign-In and Sign-Out of Children**

You must sign your child into and out-of Precious Stones Preschool each day. State licensing requires that you sign your first and last name legibly and add the time in and out. Unsigned sheets are billed \$1.00 per day.

For billing purposes, children must be signed into the time key pad. Each child is assigned a time key number at the time of registration.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Transportation and Pick-up of Children in Licensed Programs**

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from school. It is expected that you drive slowly and with care in the parking areas at Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center. Park in stalls for drop off, not in front of the gate. Children are unpredictable and can dart into traffic at any time. An adult must accompany children into and out-of the school building. An adult must accompany children directly into the classrooms and sign children in and out. Children **may not** be left unattended in a car in the parking lot.

**ONLY THOSE PERSONS AUTHORIZED BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS  
AND LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CARD  
WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE A CHILD FROM THE SCHOOL PROPERTY.**

## Snacks and Lunches



Information about any food allergy or sensitivities should be included on the Medical Information Card. It is helpful to inform your child's teacher as well.

Lunches are not provided at the school. Lunches from home are refrigerated and not heated at lunchtime. The lunchtime period is from 11:00 am to 11:45 am for Weebles and Little Jewels and 11:45am to 12:30 pm for Pebbles and Gems.

Please select nutritious foods that are easily eaten by hand and that your child likes. Allowing your child to assist with lunch preparation is a fun family activity. Hot or cold foods may be brought in thermos containers. Nutritious lunch and snack items include, fruit, vegetables, crackers, cheese sticks or yogurt. Do not send soda or glass bottles in lunches and include all necessary eating utensils and drinking straws.

Nutritious snacks are provided during morning and afternoon class hours.

## Birthdays and Other Celebrations

Birthdays, baptism birthdays, adoption birthdays and other special days may be celebrated at school for a brief period of time. All students in the class must be included in the treat. Consider nutritious snacks or party favors instead of sugary treats as an option. Treats must be prepared in a commercial kitchen. Birthday lunches and/or gift bags or gift deliveries should not occur.

Please inform the classroom teacher and the school office of your plans to celebrate such days to insure it fits in with the school day schedule. Please plan at least one week in advance, if possible.



## Personal Items at School

Please mark jackets, coats, lunch boxes, backpacks and all personal items with your child's name. With prior teacher permission or scheduling, children may share their special things with class friends but at appropriate times such as "show and tell". Favorite books, nature treasures and photos are always welcome. Jewelry and money should stay at home. Toys and personal items are not permitted in except for a small item for comfort during naptime.

Please do not bring pets to school. If you wish to visit with an animal, make prior arrangements with staff.

## Sick Children

Please do not send your child to school if he or she is sick, especially if your child has a cold less than two days old, heavy nasal drainage, or a congested cough. Children **may not** attend if they are experiencing any of the following contagious symptoms:

**fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cough, pink eye, head lice, chicken pox, or any contagious illness**

- If the child has been exposed to a contagious illness at school, a notice will be posted in each classroom to inform you immediately.
- If a child becomes ill at school, the parent or emergency contact person will be asked to pick the child up immediately.

Following an illness, the child may return to school if:

1. There has not been a fever for 24 hours.
2. The cold is over and the child has only minor nasal drip.
3. When the child is no longer contagious after having a contagious illness.

### Medications



A licensed staff member is permitted to dispense prescription medications with written parent/guardian authorization. Over the Counter medications cannot be administered. IF a child needs prescription medication the parent must fill out an Authorization to Administer Medication Form provided by school staff. A separate form is needed for each medication. All prescription medications must be furnished by the parent/guardian in the original container labeled with the child's name, date, the name of medication, dosage, time to be taken, and date to be discontinued.

All non-prescription medications may be given with a doctor's note indicating dosage and frequency. Any medications given are charted with time, date, dose and signature of the staff person who administered.

IF a parent wishes to administer medication to his or her child, the parent should check into the school office and wait for the child to be brought to the office. Parents may not administer medication in the classroom.

### Emergencies

All teachers and staff have been trained in CPR and First Aid to handle minor injuries or accidents. A parent will be notified of any accident or an emergency involving their child. Should emergency treatment be required, staff will attempt to contact the parent or one of the emergency contacts on file. If deemed necessary, the child will be taken by ambulance to Verde Valley Medical Center.

### SUMMARY

It is Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center's hope and prayer that we may assist you in caring and teaching your child in an atmosphere permeated with the love, joy and peace as shown us by Jesus Christ.



Precious Stones Preschool and Child Care Center thanks you for sharing in this important work.