



PARENT HANDBOOK

Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center

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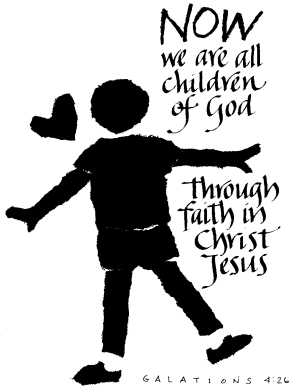
PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

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 a weekly Chapel Service. 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. Weekend worship services are Sunday mornings at 9:30 am and Bible Study at 10:30 am. Children's Church is available during the worship service.

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.



In addition, parents may also provide support during school functions, school activities activities. School functions might include: Preschool Graduation, Christmas Program programs or classes and any fundraising activities. Each activity may need volunteers w assist with planning, organizing, set-up and serving. Volunteers during nap time are app teachers may take a break or work on curriculum. These events give you an opportunity to other Precious Stones Preschool families, your child's Teachers and Rock of Ages member



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 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



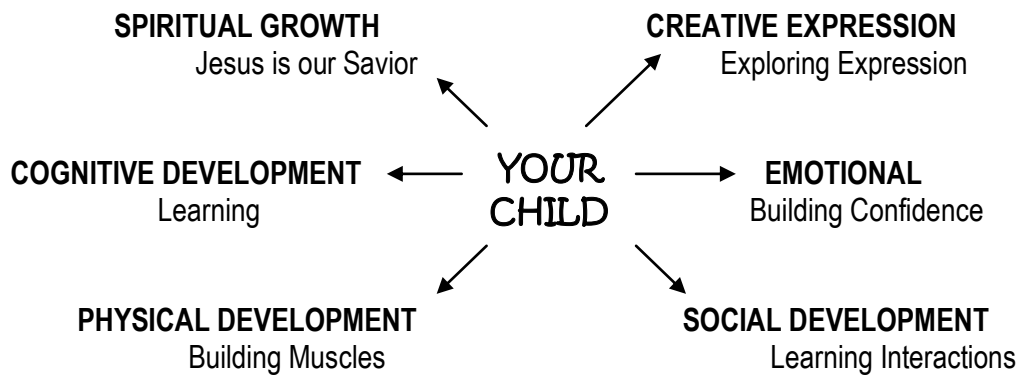
Communication

The Director and school staff will communicate with families in person, through notes, phone calls or texts, email, newsletters, on the school webpage (www.preciousstonespreschool.com) and on Facebook. Parent/Teacher Conferences are conducted twice per year; Fall and Spring. Staff will not communicate about your child with others, other than staff members, without your consent. 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 are 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 (\$150 Annually/Pro-rated) and Tuition



Infants aged 6 weeks to 1 yr. and not yet walking may enroll in our Infant Room. Children 12 mo. and walking may enroll in our Toddler Room of 1-2 yr. olds. Children 2.5 - 3.5 yrs. old (who have already begun potty-training,) enroll in our Preschool classroom and children entering Pre Kindergarten must have had their 4th birthday and no longer be in diapers/pull-ups.

It is in the best interest of children to transition into the programs offered at Precious Stones Preschool. Parents are asked to bring the child during the first tour. It is important for the child to meet staff members, other children and to see the center he/she may be attending. Upon enrollment, parents are encouraged to accompany their child for 1-2 play days before the child attends alone. It is also recommended to arrange for a half day on the child's first alone day. The child's comfort and security is the primary focus.

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

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.

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 for 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 have transportation to the center.

PRESCHOOL TUITION PRORAMS

All students are enrolled in Tuition programs during the 9:00 am – 3:00 pm time period each day, with child care included from 7-9:00 am and 3:00-6 pm. Tuition for the program is paid monthly. Tuition statements are delivered and tuition is due on or before the 1st of the 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 manila 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 \$10.00. 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 a *First Things First* scholarship is available. Precious Stones is also a DES certified center. Child Care Assistance may be available through them. All returned checks will be charged \$15.00.



Tuition is not adjusted for days missed due to illness. Make-up days may be available depending on classroom availability.

To put the best interests of children first, preschool 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 of request to the school office. 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.

PRECIOUS STONES PRESCHOOL & CHILD CARE PROGRAM OPTIONS

Programs	Morning/Afternoon	Afternoon	After School	Full Day
<u>Pearls (Infants)</u>	Up to 6 Hours			Over 6 Hours
5 Days	\$1036/month			\$1372/month
4 Days	\$896/month			\$1232/month
3 Days	\$728/month			\$1080/month
2 Days	\$560/month			\$728/month
<u>Jewels (Toddlers)</u>	Up to 6 Hours			Over 6 Hours
5 Days	\$884/month			\$1170/month
4 Days	\$728/month			\$1040/month
3 Days	\$572/month			\$832/month
2 Days	\$416/month			\$572/month
<u>Pebbles/Gems (Preschool)</u>	Up to 6 Hours			Over 6 Hours
5 Days	\$832/month			\$1118/month
4 Days	\$676/month			\$988/month
3 Days	\$520/month			\$780/month
2 Days	\$364/month			\$520/month
<u>Boulders (Aftercare 5-12)</u>	7:00 – 8:00 am \$5.00/daily	3:00 – 6:00 pm \$15.00/daily	12 pm – 6 pm \$25.00/daily	7:00 am – 6:00 pm \$45.00/daily
<u>Boulders (Summer Care)</u>	3 days/ week Up to 6 Hours	3 days/ week Over 6 Hours	5 days/ week Up to 6 Hours	5 days/week Over 6 Hours
Ages 5-12	\$130/week	\$195/week	\$227.50/week	\$260/week

Testing, Assessment & Evaluation

CDC Developmental Checklists are completed in the Fall and Early Spring. These and parent input forms are used by school staff to establish developmental goals for each child. The Teacher may complete these any time a question of development arises. Parents may be asked to conduct the screening at home, as well. Results will be discussed at the following Parent/Teacher Conference or an additional scheduled time. If there are concerns that may not be solved by classroom time, we may refer you to Little Learners, Child Find or AZEIP for a professional screening.

Portfolios are also kept on each child, documenting developmental milestones and assessments. Parents will see these during the Spring Parent/Teacher Conference.

All test results are considered confidential and will only be provided to the child's parent/guardian.

Transitions

Entering the Center/Enrollment – This transition may be found on page 4 of this Handbook.

Classroom to Classroom – Children change classrooms when they are of age and developmental skills. At that time, they will continue to attend their original class, but spend several hours a day in the new classroom environment. Depending on the child, he/she will do this for 5-10 days, before officially switching

Exiting From the Center –

a. Those families who are exiting the center are asked to give a 2 week notice. This ensures time for the child and their peers to get used to the idea, have time for “good-byes” and re-form new ideas for the future. This will help to develop emotional stability for all concerned.

b. The full month of May, and again the beginning of August, students transferring to Kindergarten will receive lesson plans about the physical, emotional and mental changes and challenges that may occur. A Graduation is held in May to help the children and parents address and celebrate the transfer. Parents will be notified of Elementary Schools in the area and dates for the Open Houses. The child's screening assessments and other pertinent records will be sent to the new school upon request.

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 the recommended foot ware and safest for playground use. Other shoes may be worn to school, but they must have a back on them (No Flip Flops).
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/implemented by the teacher, providing consequences for both appropriate/inappropriate behavior. When a child is corrected for his or her misbehavior, teachers always indicate the positive choice and forgiveness, following Christ's example.

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, and give verbal counsel and explanation. 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.

As a DES contracted site, we move through an expulsion prevention process before requiring a child be disenrolled. This begins with a behavior development plan, and may lead to a referral, connecting the family with additional external resources. A two-week notice will ordinarily be given to the parent if your child is dismissed from Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center, despite these efforts, and assistance provided in finding another suitable program. 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 Toddler, Preschool and After School 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



Reservations are **required** for all child care services. 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.

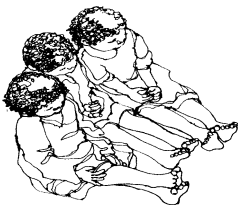
Drop-In Child Care Guidelines

If there is sufficient space, drop in child care is allowed at the rate of \$8.00/hour. Elementary aged students may not drop-in during the time the Preschool program is in session.

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 6:05 pm.

Sign-In and Sign-Out of Children

time in and out.

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

Children must **also** be clocked in and out on the key pad. Each child is assigned a time key number at the time of registration.

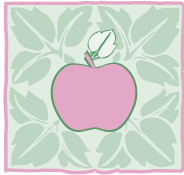
HEALTH AND SAFETY

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.**
A photo ID will need to be presented when picking up a child for the first time

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.

Lunch is not provided by Precious Stones. Lunches from home are refrigerated and are not heated. We **do** provide milk with lunch.

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 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 (9am) and afternoon (3pm) 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 (without fever reducer) 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.

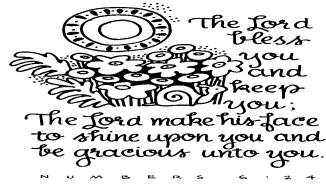
Emergencies

All teachers and staff have been trained in CPR and First Aid to handle minor injuries or accidents. Should a child get a bump, bruise or cut, the child will receive immediate care and an "Ouch Report" will be placed in the child's cubby. 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.

A Health and Safety Policy and Procedures binder containing more detailed information is available in the office. Please see the Director if you wish to read it.

SUMMARY

It is Precious Stones Preschool & Child Care Center's hope and prayer that we may assist you in caring for 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 allowing us to share in this important work.