



# Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd Preschool & Enrichment Program

## PARENT HANDBOOK 2024 - 2025

### Addresses & License Numbers:

301 Corral de Tierra Road - *License No. 270700262*  
348 Corral de Tierra Road - *License No. 274404879*  
Salinas, California 93908

**Our Tax ID No.:** 94-1595238

**Phone:** [\(831\) 484-2154](tel:8314842154)

**Email:** [preschool@goodshepherdcorral.org](mailto:preschool@goodshepherdcorral.org)

**Website:** [www.goodshepherdcorral.org](http://www.goodshepherdcorral.org)

**Hours:** 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

*Includes Base Program Extensions and After School Play Program.*

### Licensing Office:

Monterey County / Community Care Licensing  
2580 N First Street Suite 300, San Jose, CA 9513  
Phone: (408) 324-2148

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*The Rev. Rich Towers, Interim-Rector  
Rachel Cruz, Director*

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# COVID-19

See our 2024-2025 Parent Resources page for COVID Resources.

<https://www.goodshepherdcorral.org/parentresources2425>

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are a preschool community rooted in Episcopal Christian values and the culture of Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula, located in Corral de Tierra Pastures of Heaven. We are a ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd.

We are committed to creating an inclusive community infused with meaningful Episcopal Christian values. We celebrate the liturgical seasons through stories, colors, materials, and worship. Our program is built on the fundamental premise that children learn and understand their world through play. Our curriculum is developmentally appropriate and includes math, science, arts, music, social-emotional development, gross and fine motor skills as well as language and literacy.

**Our Vision:** To become a model Episcopal Christian preschool that employs best practices in Early Childhood Education where children, parents, and teachers experience transformative learning.

**Our Core Values:**

- Respect for all as God's beloved children
- Wonder, Awe and Joy
- Kindness
- Community
- Social and Environmental Justice

*"Sustain your children, O Lord. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works." Amen. (Book of Common Prayer)*

## PROGRAM GOALS

- ◆ To provide a loving and relaxed environment where the children's physical and emotional needs are met
- ◆ To establish an atmosphere of respect for others and self
- ◆ To establish an atmosphere of respect for property, equipment, and materials
- ◆ To provide an opportunity to become independent and responsible through self-directed and individualized learning activities
- ◆ To provide children with appropriate alternatives to anger & aggressive behaviors
- ◆ To help children learn how to participate and interact in a group
- ◆ To provide an environment where children can develop an enthusiasm for learning, a curiosity to explore their world, and the creativity to engage in a variety of activities
- ◆ To provide ample opportunity to develop coordination skills through physical activity and outdoor play
- ◆ To ensure a safe environment, both indoors and out
- ◆ To document developmental milestones and reflect individual progress through parent/teacher conferences
- ◆ To be supportive of parents, encouraging open and honest communication
- ◆ To develop the spirituality and faith exploration of young children in an inclusive Christian environment

## OUR STAFF

All the staff at Good Shepherd Preschool have been carefully chosen for their knowledge, experience, and/or natural love of young children. They have been given thorough training on our philosophy and program. All School employees are fingerprinted and checked for criminal background. All teachers and support staff are legally mandated child abuse reporters. If a staff member reasonably suspects that a child is the victim of child abuse or neglect, he/she is required by law to report it. Many staff members are college educated as well as certified in First Aid and CPR.

**Babysitting/Transportation:** Good Shepherd Preschool does not allow personnel/staff to "baby-sit" and/or "transport" students for families. Good Shepherd Preschool claims no responsibility for activities between families and Good Shepherd Preschool employees for which are not part of the regular program.

**Social Relationships with Staff:** We understand the desire for positive relationships between teachers and students, but it's generally not advisable for teachers to have close relationships with their students' families outside of the school setting. This is for a few important reasons:

- *Maintaining Professional Boundaries:* Teachers are responsible for maintaining professional boundaries with their students and their families. Having personal relationships with students' families can blur these boundaries, making it difficult to provide equal attention and support to all students.
- *Fair Treatment:* It's crucial to ensure that all students are treated fairly and without bias. Building personal relationships with some students' families may inadvertently lead to favoritism, perceived or real, which can undermine the learning environment.
- *Confidentiality:* Teachers often have access to sensitive information about their students. Maintaining professional boundaries helps protect the privacy and confidentiality of this information.
- *Avoiding Conflicts of Interest:* Personal relationships can lead to conflicts of interest. For example, if a teacher is friends with a student's family, it might be challenging to objectively address academic or disciplinary issues involving that student.

Our main goal is to provide a safe and conducive learning environment for all students. Encouraging professional boundaries helps in achieving this goal. It's important to remember that teachers are available to discuss a student's progress and any concerns you may have, but these conversations are best held within the school's official channels.

## REGISTRATION & ENROLLMENT

Church of the Good Shepherd Preschool offers an enriching preschool program beginning at age 2 and continuing up to age 6.

**Tours:** Prior to registration, families may request that the Director provide them a tour of the facilities and provide a program overview.

**Registration:** Registration begins in February for the following school year. Parents will be informed of the exact dates through the Brightwheel app, email, or Newsletter. Before registration opens to the public the following groups receive a priority window of time to register:

1. Presently enrolled families
2. Active, pledging members of Church of the Good Shepherd and previously enrolled families (Alumni)
3. Families on our interest list

Definitions/Qualifications:

- Active pledging members of Good Shepherd:
  - **Pledging** means to commit financially to the church. The difference between a donor and a pledger is commitment; specifically, a pledger submits a commitment in writing stating that they intend to give a certain amount (no specific threshold) to the church for the given year. The donations 'pledged' to the church are used to set the budget each year.
  - A **member** of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church attends Holy Eucharist worship services at least several times a year, participates in new member, baptism, and confirmation classes, and is on a spiritual journey to walk in Jesus' way of love. Good Shepherd is part of the Episcopal Diocese of Camino Real, under the leadership of Bishop Lucinda Ashby. We accept, baptize, and ordain qualified LGBTQ children of God as equal to all others.
- Alumni: If the parent of the new potential student or a sibling of the new potential student previously attended Good Shepherd Preschool, that would qualify for the Alumni priority of registration.

**Eligibility:** In order to be accepted for enrollment, each and every child must be deemed by the family/guardian and the School Director to be able to benefit from the program and constitute no danger to the health and safety of themselves and other children. A pre-enrollment visit may be necessary to assess a child's ability to benefit from a school setting.



**Enrollment:** Once registered, you will receive an email confirming your spot and class. To complete the enrollment, you must complete all of the tasks listed in said email, including but not limited to:

- Admissions Agreement (online form)
- Birth Certificate
- Licensing Forms (online form) which includes:
  - ID & Emergency Form (LIC 700)
  - Health History (LIC 702)
  - Physician's Report (LIC 701)
  - Personal Rights (LIC 613)
  - Family's Rights (LIC 995)
  - Consent for Treatment (LIC 627)
  - Immunization Record\*

**\*Immunizations:** A specific Health Certificate form included in the licensing packet AND an Immunization Record showing your child is complete on all required vaccinations must be signed by your child's pediatrician and approved by the school prior to the child attending school.

Immunizations must be kept up to date throughout the school year.

If your child has not had all immunizations required by the California Department of Public Health on schedule because your child needs a medical exemption, register with The California Immunization Registry now with an email address to request the exemption from your child's doctor. The site will walk you through the process. [Instructions to Request a Medical Exemption](#)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ORIENTATION

Once registered and enrolled (all required paperwork submitted and fees paid) an orientation is schedule between the family (including child) and the Lead Teacher.

At your Orientation you will receive information from your teacher inviting you and your child to an individualized open house for your specific classroom the week before school. This will allow both of you to see the space, get to know the teacher, hear an overview of how the day will be scheduled, drop off emergency supplies, and ask any question that may be on your mind. You will be scheduled at the same time as other families from your class to balance the need to keep groups small yet begin to introduce children and families to one another.

### CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Personal Rights, See Section 101223 for waiver conditions applicable to Child Care Centers.

(a) Child Care Centers. Each child receiving services from a Child Care Center shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
2. To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to: interference with daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
4. To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative, if any, informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In Child Care Centers, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors shall be made by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child.
6. Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.

7. Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

**Agency to contact for complaints:**

Monterey County / Community Care Licensing  
2580 N First Street Suite 300 San Jose, CA 9513  
Phone: (408) 324-2148

**PARENTS' RIGHTS**

1. Enter and inspect the childcare center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review, at the childcare center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the childcare center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the childcare center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.
7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the childcare center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Teacher's/Aide's Background Check Process form.

NOTE: CALIFORNIA STATE LAW PROVIDES THAT THE LICENSEE MAY DENY ACCESS TO THE CHILD CARE CENTER TO A FAMILY/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE FAMILY/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE POSES A RISK TO CHILDREN IN CARE.

For the Department of Justice "Registered Sex Offender" database, go to [www.meganslaw.ca.gov](http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov).

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**LICENSING AGENCY RIGHTS**

The State of California Licensing Agency (Community Care Licensing) has the following authority:

1. To interview children, or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent.
2. To observe the physical condition of the child (ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and to have a licensed professional physically examine the child(ren).

**COMPLIANCE REVIEWS**

Compliance Reviews are conducted by the State to assure compliance with regulations governing the facility, health, safety, admissions, personnel qualifications, policies, monitoring of fiscal attendance data, and program quality.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Families have unlimited access to their children, including written records concerning their children during normal hours of operation and whenever the children are in attendance. Additionally, Agency staff and regulatory agencies such as CDE, DSS, etc. may request immediate access.

**SECTION 1596.857 HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE**

(a) "Upon presentation of identification, the responsible family or guardian of a child receiving services in a child day care facility has the right to enter and inspect the facility without advance notice during normal operational hours of the facility. Families and guardians when inspecting shall be respectful of the children's routines and programmed activities...

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the person present who is in charge of a child day care facility may deny access to an adult whose behavior presents a risk to children present in the facility and may deny access to non-custodial families or guardians if so requested by the responsible family or guardian. ..."

**OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Good Shepherd Preschool practices an open-door policy. This means that any parent/guardian is welcome to stop by the school at any time during school hours; however, it is required that you check in and sign the visitor log at the school office before proceeding to a classroom.

For some children, it is difficult for them to say goodbye to a family twice. Please talk to your child's teacher before dropping by unexpectedly if this is the case. When you let the teacher/aide know you are coming, they can help prepare your child for your visit.

## **BRIGHTWHEEL SOFTWARE APP**

The Preschool utilizes Brightwheel, a childcare management application. This program provides business assistance while providing a mode of communication between the school and families. The program allows for tracking of attendance and room ratios, sharing of photos and videos, a streamlined method for collecting payments, and other management features. Each family will receive an invitation to join the Preschool's Brightwheel community and instructions for downloading the application to your cell phone. Please be sure to add a photo of your child when you sign up. This program allows you to add individuals approved for picking up your child. Please make sure to send messages at appropriate times of the day.

## **COMMUNICATION**

1. If you would like a check-in to know how your child is doing, inform the teacher either in person when you drop off/pick up your child or via the Brightwheel App and they can send you an update through the Brightwheel App.
2. Teachers must focus their attention on the children during the school day, so please limit communication with teachers or staff at arrival/dismissal time or during class time to time-sensitive information only.
3. Do not join teachers and children on the playground for conversation as this creates a distraction of the teacher's supervision of the children.

If you would like to speak with a teacher, please schedule a time with them. Please do not call staff members at home or on their personal cell phones. Our valued teaching staff gives their all at work. Please respect their private time so that they can revitalize and be 100% present for their families. Most teachers have audible notifications turned on in the Brightwheel app and school emails. Please make sure to send messages at appropriate times of the day.

## **MESSAGES**

The Brightwheel app is a fast and easy way to connect with your teacher for regular communication. Feel free to call or email the office and the Director should you need further assistance. The school office hours are 8am-3pm Mon. - Fri. We check our messages frequently and can respond quickly. We are happy to make appointments with parents at any time.

## **BULLETIN BOARD**

Please take a moment to check the bulletin board and notes on the sign-in table. They contain current and pertinent information regarding Preschool programs, notices of special events, parenting seminars, contagious illnesses, resource materials, snacks, and calendars.

## NEWSLETTERS

Monthly newsletters, photos, and short video clips are sent to you through Brightwheel. The newsletters provide you with important information and dates on activities such as parent meetings, fundraisers, fire drills, and special announcements. Please be sure to read them.

## BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special celebration of your child. We make birthdays special by giving a birthday crown to your child. Some teachers may ask your child to bring in a picture of when he/she was a baby or ask the children in the class to make a special wish for the birthday child.

We also have a small wooden birthday cake that the birthday child decorates with candles as we all sing "Happy Birthday." Small birthday treats are welcome, and your child will enjoy passing them out to friends. We appreciate efforts made to keep birthday treats as healthy as possible because we are learning about life-long nutrition while at school. Consider sending your child's favorite fruit, vegetable, or healthy snack to celebrate their individual preferences. Please talk to your child's teacher regarding the celebration at school.

If your child is having a birthday party, please be sensitive to the feelings of the children in your child's class by being mindful of inclusion. It is natural for children to talk about the party at school and a child can be hurt deeply if not included. Invitations should be mailed rather than distributed at school if the entire class is not invited.

## CELEBRATIONS

Children love to celebrate special events. Your child's teacher will have a list of special celebrations for which snacks will be needed during the school year.

1. **October** - Although we do not wear costumes or eat candy at school, we still find ways to celebrate and have fun at the end of the month by having each child decorate a paper-plate mask/hat and participate in a drum-line parade for classmates.
2. **November Harvest Celebration** - This is a time that children learn about seeds and our agricultural community. We cook with seeds and celebrate with a classroom feast and fun activities.
3. **Christmas** - We celebrate the birth of Jesus by throwing him a birthday party at school.
4. **Valentine's Day** - We celebrate the friends we have made along the way during the school year by exchanging cards. They can be handmade, or store bought. If your child can, this is a great opportunity to have them practice writing their name. A small token like a sticker or an eraser can accompany the card but please refrain from sending candy or goody bags as we are trying to teach healthy habits at school.

5. **Easter** - We celebrate Easter by reading stories and then have a fun time running around our play yards looking for hidden eggs.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

School will be closed on field trip days. Parents will receive advance notice and details of any upcoming field trips planned.

Parents must transport their own child to and from the field trip location. Parents must stay with and actively supervise their own child during field trips. If your child requires an Epi-pen, inhaler, or has any other medical or special needs then the parent must bring it with them.

If you choose not to bring your child on the field trip, tuition will not be reduced.

### **SPIRITUALITY**

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd cares deeply about serving the emotional and spiritual needs of children and families. The Episcopal values of respect for all as God's beloved children; kindness; community; wonder, awe and joy; and social and environmental justice are reflected in the preschool curriculum and preschool staff philosophies. The assurance that the world is beautiful and good and that God loves each and every one of us just the way God made us is nurtured through prayer before meals, songs, stories and observance of the liturgical seasons. The Rector of the church works closely with the Preschool Director in creating a positive environment for spiritual growth.

This prayer from our Book of Common Prayer captures the heart of our spirituality: "Sustain your children, O Lord. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works." Amen.

### **ITEMS FROM HOME**

Unless it is necessary for the child's emotional adjustment into school, toys should be left at home. We aim to have the toys at school be "school toys" for everyone to share and enjoy. Electronic items, candy, gum, jewelry, money, and make-up should never be brought to school.

Children often need transitional objects to help with the switch from home to school. Transitional objects are used only during the time in which the child is adapting to the center. This usually takes 1-2 weeks. Temporary transitional objects such as a small stuffed animal or blanket are welcome.

Please label all transitional objects with the child's name to help the teacher keep track of whose belongings are whose.

Children are not required to share their transitional object. Other objects that children may want to bring from home are prohibited as they may get lost, broken, or may lead to situations where children are unable to share the toy. If your child will not leave the house without their treasured action figure, allow them to take it, but tell the child that you will keep it safe in the car so it will be there on the drive home. You can also encourage your child to tell the teacher about the special toy.

## CLOTHING & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Learning clothes are play clothes! The clothing you send your child to school in should be practical, comfortable, durable, and washable. We ask you to send your child in clothes and shoes that encourage self-help skills such as elastic waist band pants and closed toe Velcro closure or slip-on shoes if they do not know how to tie their shoes yet. We have a beautiful, yet rustic, outdoor learning environment which means sand, water, dirt, and mud are available every day.

All children need to have 2 full sets of extra clothes on site (one in their emergency pack and one in their cubby). This includes tops, bottoms, underwear, and socks. Children should also have an extra pair of shoes and an extra sweater or jacket.

Remember to label all your child's belongings. Please remember to replace your child's extra clothes as they are used and/or they outgrow them, so they will always have them when needed.

Children's clothing is very important at the center. Think of your child's comfort – and provide simple clothing free of fastenings. Think of the messy activities - and provide clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. Think of our playground - and provide clothing that is sturdy. Think of our changeable weather and provide warm cover-ups. Finally, think of our collection of unlabeled, unclaimed clothing - and label everything. Children are encouraged to change their own clothing as they become developmentally able. Help is provided as needed. However, children will not be coerced to dress by physical force at any time.

## LOST & FOUND

All articles of clothing, **especially jackets**, are to be labeled with your child's name. Items not claimed will be given to charity.

## SIGN IN/SIGN OUT – DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES

Please legibly sign in/out your child on the applicable class sheet; this is a LEGAL LICENSING REQUIREMENT. Please initial the small grey box acknowledging your child is free from any signs of illness each and every day.

The person who delivers your child to school or picks your child up from school must their attendance sheet. This is a licensing regulation and is for your child's safety.



The person delivering your child must also make contact with a teacher before leaving. Likewise, the person picking your child up must inform a teacher of their departure in addition to signing out in the book.

Please arrive a few minutes before closure to ensure a timely departure by 5:30pm so staff can complete their closing duties timely. Check in with a teacher verbally before signing in and out your child. The teacher needs to have an accurate record of how many and which children are present at any time in case of emergency.

This is extremely important as the same teacher who greeted your child in the morning may not be present in the late afternoon.

Children will only be released to the parents or persons authorized in the Brightwheel App. If you have other family members or friends who will be picking up or dropping off your child, you will need to authorize them via the Brightwheel app. When a person is not familiar to staff, they will need to provide a picture identification before a child will be released. We will not accept a phone authorization to allow someone not listed in the Brightwheel App. This is for the safety of your children. No exceptions will be made.

If the authorized pick up person appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the person from leaving with the child, including offering to call a cab or another contact person. While we cannot legally withhold a child from their designated pick up person, we will not hesitate to call the local authorities if we feel the child is in danger.

If your child has difficulty separating from you, walk him/her to the door or drop off location. Always say goodbye to your child so they can trust they will be included in what is happening. If they are experiencing separation anxiety reassure them you will be back right after story time. Exude confidence to your child that you know they will have a great time and be well taken care of. If your child is experiencing undue stress, talk to the teacher or Director about a "Slow Start" opportunity for you and your child.

## **CHILDREN IN CARS**

In adherence with California law (Senate Bill 255, also known as Kaitlyn's Law), do not leave young children in the car when on the property/premises of Good Shepherd church or preschool.

## **CUSTODY AGREEMENTS**

To accommodate the special requests and arrangements necessitated by marital separation and/or divorce, a copy of the parents' most recent custody agreement may be required for their child's file. Our goal is to respect the privacy of the family while always assuring the safety of the child.

If the other parent of your child and you are divorced or separated, Church of the Good Shepherd will follow the instructions of the parent having legal custody of the child in the

most recent applicable court order or in the absence of a court order, the instructions of the parent with whom the child is then residing, in determining the person to whom the child will be released.

### **LATE ARRIVAL**

The school day begins at roughly 9:00 a.m. based on your enrolled class. If you will arrive late, please message your child's teacher. You must wait for the teacher to meet you outside to check-in your child so arrival protocols can still be implemented. We always attempt to start the day promptly on time. Children who arrive late miss the important beginning-of-the-day activities and interrupt learning for the rest of the students. Never drop off your child without communicating with the teacher, always take a moment to connect with the teacher at drop-off time.

### **DIAPERS**

Families are required to supply the diapers and wipes that their child needs.

Teachers/Aides check diapers approximately every two to two and a half hours as well as when children wake up from naps.

When your child is running low on diapers or wipes, you will receive a message from the teacher.

Teachers/Aides try to give families advanced warning when supplies are getting low. If you have not replenished notice, you will be called either to bring what is needed immediately or to pick up your child until you are able to bring in more supplies.

Children will NOT be accepted if they are out of diapers/wipes.

Additionally, families are required to check their child's diaper upon arrival and change the child if needed. This is for the health of your child and will ensure that they can start the day with no interruptions. Children will be refused services for that day if a family and/or drop-off person refuses to do so.

See below for additional information on potty learning.

### **POTTY LEARNING**

We feel it is important to only introduce a new task when it is developmentally appropriate to do so. The rush to "potty train" is often premature and can be harmful to the child's emotional development. At home, your child may be eager to sit on the potty and be successful most of the time. At the children's school it is a different environment.

Special care must be taken to ensure your child's sense of security and trust are well established before we begin. We are focused on the whole child as opposed to the mere attainment of goals and milestones. We have specific guidelines and policies concerning potty learning that stem from these beliefs.

We will facilitate potty learning when the child is ready, not when parents/guardians are ready. If you feel your child is showing signs of readiness, please set up a time to speak with your child's Lead Teacher and they will begin the process with your child. If, after starting the process, it is determined that your child is not ready, we will not force them.

Children who are learning to use the potty independently will need plenty of underwear changes and possibly diapers for naptime for a while.

Please be sure your child wears clothes that are easily removed when potty learning. No overalls, snap crotch pants or one-piece jumpers. If your child does have an accident during the day the soiled clothing is put in a plastic bag and is then placed in your child's cubby. When your child uses his spare clothing make sure you bring in new ones the next day.

### **EARTHQUAKE /EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Each child is required to have an Earthquake/Emergency kit at the Preschool. Information on what should be included in the kit will be provided by your child's teacher prior to the start of school.

### **FIRE OR EVACUATIONS**

Emergency drills are held once a month. In the event of a required evacuation, the staff will immediately transport the children in the staff's personal vehicles to the Corral Market parking lot at Hwy 68 and Corral de Tierra Road or to Washington Union. Parents will be notified immediately.

### **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

In the event of an emergency that requires **immediate** medical attention, 911 will be contacted for ambulance service. All 911 calls and emergency services provided to the child will be at the family/guardian expense. In no instance, will staff transport children for medical or dental care. The Preschool staff is authorized to consent to whatever medical treatment is deemed **immediately necessary** to maintain the health and well-being of a child. Parents and persons listed as emergency contacts in Brightwheel will be notified as quickly as possible, as will the child's pediatrician, if deemed necessary.

### **INJURY/ ACCIDENT REPORTS**

Minor accidents or injuries, such as a scrapped knee, are reported to parents through our Brightwheel app. If a child has a major accident/injury at the Preschool, the parent(s) will be called immediately, and the details of the accident clearly described by the teacher.

A Department of Social Services Accident Report is filled out when a child has been taken to the doctor because of an injury, whether taken directly by the staff or later by a

parent. The parent(s) are to notify the Director, as soon as possible, should medical attention be required.

### ILLNESS, INJURY & DAILY HEALTH CHECK

The Preschool makes every effort possible to protect the health and safety of your children.

1. The staff conducts a health check each day when the child arrives. A child found to be with a sore throat, pink eye, runny nose, excessive coughing, fever, rash, earache, vomiting, diarrhea, head lice, or other physical ailment and/or injury will not be admitted to the school. Depending on the identified issue/illness/injury a doctor's note confirming treatment and/or confirmation that the ailment is not contagious may be required before the child can return to the school.
2. A child with a sore throat, pink eye, runny nose, excessive coughing, fever, rash, earache, vomiting, diarrhea, head lice, or other physical ailment must be kept at home.
3. Children must be free from fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and other ailments for **24 hours** prior to returning to school. **A fever is 100.4° or higher.**
4. If a child exhibits symptom of illness during school hours, the parent(s) will be contacted via the Brightwheel App and/or the phone numbers listed in the parent's Brightwheel account/profile. If we are unable to contact either parent, we will contact those listed as Emergency Contacts in the Brightwheel App. It is our policy to have sick children moved out of their classroom and to an isolated area and picked within one hour of notification. If children are not picked up within the hour of the attempt to reach a parent and/or emergency contact the child will not be accepted for two operational days regardless of the child's condition. Refusal to pick up your child may result in notification to Child Protection Services.
5. Parents are required to keep their contact information and that of their emergency contacts current in the Brightwheel App.
6. Parents must notify the office and teacher immediately if a child contracts a **communicable** disease. It is also suggested that the teacher be notified regarding significant change in the home routine, such as hospitalization of a parent, divorce, death in the family, etc.

### ALLERGIC REACTION

Should a child exhibit symptom(s) of an allergic reaction to medication, food or beverage, insect bite, etc., the parent will be notified and/or 911 called if it appears to be serious.

## SEVERE ALLERGIES

We accept children with severe allergies. We make every effort not to have foods that children are allergic to at the Preschool. If needed, we will notify all site families of an allergy and request those specific foods not be brought to school. This is an important safety precaution that takes support and commitment of all families in the program. Preschool aged children are not developmentally capable of assessing these dangers so it takes a village approach to keeping our student's healthy.

## MEDICATION

To administer prescription or non-prescription medication to a child while at the Preschool, a Medical Consent Form must be signed and on file. All prescription medication must be in its original child-proof container, with the original label, indicating the child's name and instructions for administration from the child's physician.

The staff will administer non-prescription medication in accordance with the product label instructions. The medication must be delivered to the Teacher/Aide by the Parent/Guardian and needs to remain at school in a locked cabinet and may not travel with your child in their backpack from home to school. This includes diaper cream and Neosporin.

Expired medications will not be accepted or administered. Expiration dates on medication will be checked every two months by staff. If an expired medication is identified the Parent/Guardian will be notified.

Medication administrations will be documented in the Brightwheel App.

Parents shall take any medication needed for children under their supervision on any activity, event or field trip away from campus.

A parent/guardian may elect to administer medications to a child during the school day. This may be done without having a Medical Consent Form on file. The child may remain in the classroom while the parent administers the medication. The administration must be documented by staff in the Brightwheel App. The documentation should reflect the parent administered the medication to the child. If the medication given is to relieve respiratory distress (i.e. an inhaler treatment), the parent/guardian must stay 20 minutes after the administration to ensure the child is well enough to remain at the School. If the medication given is for a long-term diagnosed medical condition (i.e. asthma, seizures, etc.), a care plan must be on file.

Sunscreen will ONLY be applied to those children who have a signed consent from their families and are over six months of age. We ask that families apply sunscreen to their child in the morning before arriving at the center; the center staff will reapply sunscreen in the afternoon and as needed. Please turn it in to your teacher.

## INSURANCE

Health insurance is not provided. It is the responsibility of each child's family.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

Good Shepherd believes in including children with disabilities and special needs in our high-quality early learning center. It is part of our value system that an inclusive classroom is a richer classroom for all. Preschool staff works diligently to meet the individual needs of each child but also has a responsibility to the functioning of the class as a whole. Should the needs of the individual child exceed the capabilities of the classroom teachers, a request to the family to financially support the engagement of an aid to assist the individual child may be necessary to meet the needs of the class as a whole.

It is often during the preschool years where developmental, behavioral, or learning special needs are first brought to light. Staff may request that parent(s) engage professional evaluations to assist in developing a plan for best serving the child's specific needs.

## DAILY PARTICIPATION

Children must be able to fully participate in all parts of the program to attend on any given day. When a child needs care or supervision is greater than staff members can provide without compromising the health or safety of themselves, other children and staff members, they will be excluded the program for the remainder of the day. Families will be asked to pick up the child within an hour of notification.

If the need for exclusion is ongoing, the Preschool Director and Lead Teacher will work with the families to create a plan to help the center manage the situation appropriately. Good Shepherd Preschool does not provide one on one care for children.

Please remember if you are called to pick up your child, we require the family or emergency person to pick your child within one hour. If someone has not arrived within the hour, children will be excluded for 2 operational days.

## SHOW & TELL

Each teacher has a distinct way of introducing Show and Tell. Most teachers use the "What's Inside Bag." Show and Tell encourages self-expression and language development. Learning how to stand or sit in front of a small group and express oneself, building confidence in language expression, and enjoying the opportunity to speak about their personal items is beneficial to a child's development. Nature objects, artwork, pictures of a trip, a special toy are welcome contributions to be shared with the class. If insects or plants are to be shared, they should be in plastic or cardboard containers, **not glass please**. Refrain from sending weapons of any kind, candy, valuable jewelry, or

electronic devices as we are trying to protect the innocent exploration of their natural world.

### **LIBRARY & RESOURCE MATERIALS**

We have an excellent book collection for the children to access. We teach the skills of “checking out” a book weekly. Children will have the opportunity to select a library book to take home. “Library Time” is a special time for teacher and child to select books. Reading to your child for a minimum of 20 minutes per day is one of the best ways to build your child’s literacy skills and have them school ready.

### **LUNCH**

Lunch time at school is not only an opportunity to teach and learn about life-long nutrition, but it is also a wonderful social time rich in communication and relationship building. Parents are asked to provide a small healthy lunch for their children. If your child is in the Afternoon Enrichment Program, please provide extra snacks for later in the day. Sodas, candy, juice, and gum are not allowed at school.

### **SNACKS**

Parents will sign-up to contribute food at the sign-in table where weekly menus will be posted. In accordance with the “Growing Body” information on both nutrition and behavior, every effort is made to provide healthy, nourishing snacks for the children including at least two different food groups. Bottled water is available to refill the children’s personal water bottles but please send them full each day.

### **NAP/REST TIME**

All children will have a time to sleep/rest during the day. Each child will have a designated mat and sheet that is labeled with his/her name on it. Children, who wake up early, will not be forced to remain on their mat longer than an average rest period.

Nap rooms will be kept quiet, darkened, and peaceful while children are sleeping/resting. The Preschool provides sheets for the children. We encourage blankets and stuffed animals from home to help comfort your child.

### **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Family involvement is the number one indicator of school success; therefore, paying tuition is not your only responsibility toward your child’s academic success. Involvement efforts in support of your child, the faculty, and staff at the Preschool are essential to the Preschool’s ongoing operation and your child’s success. Throughout the school year, parents are essential and required to help coordinate events.

## ROOM PARENTS & MONTHLY MEETINGS

At the beginning of the year every family will sign up to be the room helper for one month out of the year. On the last school Friday of the month prior for which you have signed up, you will meet with the director and other room parent representatives for that month. This meeting is mandatory, so do not sign up if you cannot meet this obligation. During this meeting we will explain how you will support the teacher and students during the month. This may include tasks such as making playdough for the class, helping during a classroom celebration. If a conflict arises, it is your responsibility to find your replacement.

## GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE

The Preschool philosophy involves creating a supportive, cooperative atmosphere which encourages self-regulation, and positive self-image. Positive guidance is based on a belief in each child's ability to grow and learn. Positive behaviors are supported by:

1. Demonstrating a respectful and responsive adult attitude toward the child
2. Designing an environment which offers safety, physical comfort, and opportunities for peer interactions
3. Creating a relaxed yet predictable daily routine
4. Listening to, recognizing, and reflecting children's thoughts, ideas, and concerns
5. Acknowledging children's individual abilities and learning styles
6. Facilitating problem solving skills
7. Establishing necessary limits and boundaries
8. Anticipating, intervening, and re-directing before disruptive behavior occurs

Staff are prohibited from using corporal punishment; withholding light, warmth, clothing, or medical care; ridicule, embarrassment, humiliation; using ethnic, gender or racial put downs; physically restraining a child other than the restraint necessary to protect a child or others from harm.

## BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

Setting limits for young children provides them with the security they need for healthy development. Healthy boundaries make children feel safe and when they feel safe, they have the mental and emotional freedom to explore and learn. We believe each moment can be a teachable moment. In some instances, a child's behavior requires intervention. If a child engages in inappropriate or unsafe behaviors the following procedures will be used:

1. Teacher's use modeling to help children see and practice social skills. They use redirection with children who are having difficulty in area and offer choices, so the



child has a sense of control in their environment. Teachers observe and record behavior patterns and interactions with others. If behaviors continue to be disruptive to the other children or functioning of the class, a teacher may take a child outside of the room to help the child regroup. Our preschool office is also a place for a child to take a few minutes to unwind from what might be the overstimulation of the classroom while still having caring adults present for co-regulation practice.

2. If behavior problems persist, the parent(s) will be asked to participate in a parent/teacher conference to develop an action plan to address the behavior. The plan will outline steps the staff and parent(s) will take to help the child develop new behavior patterns.
3. In rare instances, staff may request that the parent(s) seek out professional evaluations to better understand potential root causes of behaviors and assist in developing an appropriate plan.
4. If the behaviors continue, the parent(s) may be asked to come pick a child up early, keep a child home temporarily, or withdraw the child from the school. If asked to come and pick up a child early, it must occur within 1 hour of the request.
5. Aggressive behaviors such as hitting, kicking, and biting are serious. If a child bites another person, the parent(s) will be notified immediately as human bites sometimes need medical attention. The teacher will speak with the child about biting and read a book to the child about how our teeth should be used. Parent(s) will be required to pick up the child immediately. If the biting continues, the parent(s) may be asked to withdraw the child from the program.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

Please see the Tuition, Financial Policies & More document on the [parent resources page](#).

## PROGRAM EXPANSIONS

We offer three program expansion options: Early Care, Afternoon Care & Evening Care. If you choose one or more program expansions, it will coincide with your program choice. For example, if you choose 3 days of preschool and you also want afternoon care, you will be billed for 3 days of afternoon care.

1. **Early Care** - The program operates from 7:30 a.m. to class-specific start time (8:45 a.m., 9:00 a.m., or 9:15 a.m.) Monday through Friday.
2. **Afternoon Care** - The program operates from the class-specific end time (12:30 p.m., 1:00 p.m., or 1:15 p.m.) to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. There is rest or quiet time for children five and under for approximately one hour. They are provided a mat and a sheet. Parents are encouraged to provide a pillow and special blanket or

sleeping bag from home for additional comfort. Loveys are welcome additions to nap time. Children nap in a quiet room with teacher supervision. Quiet time can include teachers reading to children while they rest on their mats, children doing puzzles by their mat, or just silent reading. Snacks are provided by the parents; extra are needed for kids that will remain for Evening Care. After rest time the teacher engages in additional fun activities until pick-up time at 3:30 p.m.

- 3. Evening Care** - The program operates from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday. The Extended Care teacher sets up fun activities for the children each day and we continue to follow our play-based program. This extension takes place at the Church site; we are responsible for transporting the children from the Grange site to the Church site for this time period. Families will pick up at the Church site.

### **DROP-IN REQUESTS**

As a courtesy to our families, we offer a drop-in option. You can pay a day rate to have your child come early or stay late on a given day. This can help parents accommodate the occasional need for extensions to their child's care for things like attending a doctor's appointment, picking up someone from the airport, or attending a meeting.

Requests for a drop-in must be submitted 24 hours in advance and no more than one week in advance. The number of drop-ins permitted per month per child are limited.

- Children in a 3 day per week program may use the drop-in service 3 days per month.
- Children in a 5 day per week program may use the drop-in service 5 days per month.

Should the day you need the drop-in be a Monday (or first day back to school after a holiday) then the request needs to be submitted by 3:00 PM on Friday (or last day of school before a holiday). Accommodation is not guaranteed and is based on staffing and child-adult ratios. Please wait for acknowledgment and acceptance of the availability before depending on the drop-in care.

### **AFTERSCHOOL PLAY PROGRAM (ASP)**

The After School Play Program (ASP) is a five-day program offered for T-K and Kindergarten children attending Toro Park Elementary School. The program allows new and past students to connect back to their preschool, a place they feel safe and welcome. The children are transported from Toro Park Elementary School to the Preschool in our car seat filled van. The ASP teachers set up fun activities for the children each day and we continue to follow our play-based program.

## CURRICULUM

The basis of our Preschool curriculum is an understanding of the developmental stages of growth in young children and implementation of curriculum that is appropriate in practice.

Children construct knowledge through active exploration and discovery, therefore **PLAY** is the primary mode of learning in early childhood. We aim to help children become self-confident, independent, and inquisitive by providing enriching experiences everyday they are here with us. The goals of our curriculum are to give your child the foundation they need to make a successful start in school, but also to develop life-span skills such as critical thinking, creativity, perseverance, resiliency, collaboration, and communication skills. We aim to balance the intentional building of these capacities and skills, with developmentally appropriate practices for each individual child.

We have strategically organized the curriculum, intentionally designed the school environment, and purposefully structured the daily routines to foster growth in the domains of learning.

Besides a rich spiritual component, we utilize the California Preschool Learning Foundation as the guiding principle of our curriculum content. There are nine content areas:

**Social-Emotional Development** - True school readiness consists of social emotional competencies as well as other cognitive and motivational competences. School creates opportunities for children to become self-aware, show empathy and caring for others, show initiative, and develop self-regulation skills. It creates opportunities for social interactions with peers, teachers, and group participation which builds close relationships and friendships.

**Language & Literacy** - Children will experience the kind of interactions, relationships, activities, and play that support successful learning of language use and conventions, development of vocabulary, listening skills, speaking skills, grammar, concepts about print, alphabet and word recognition, reading comprehension, and writing strategies.

**English-Language Development** - Foundations in language and literacy for preschool children whose home language is not English.

**Mathematics** - Children began to develop a sense of numbers and mathematical reasoning by counting, exploring number relationships, and grouping. They continue to expand this mathematical thinking into algebraic functions when they sort and classify, create, and recognize patterns, and experiment with comparing, ordering, and measuring. They are introduced to geometric concepts such as identifying describing and constructing shapes and understanding spatial relationships.

**Visual & Performing Arts** - We create opportunities for children to notice, respond, and engage with visual art, music, drama, and dance. They develop creativity skills by inventing and expressing themselves.

**Physical Development** - Young children's fundamental movement skills are progressively elaborated, refined, and consolidated as they move through the developmental stages. Children will have opportunities to explore balance, body awareness, spatial awareness, cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility using both their fine and gross motor skills.

**Health** - Setting the foundation for wellness knowledge children will develop into healthy adults including the concepts of healthy habits including hygiene, nutrition, safety, and injury prevention.

**History-Social Science** - Beginning to understand themselves and their family within their society, the general premise of civics and working with others in a group, an introduction to the concept of history, geography, ecology, and economics.

**Science** - Science is about providing children with the basic skills of scientific inquiry, such as observing and describing, comparing and contrasting, classifying, experimenting, and recording, and using the scientific vocabulary associated with these skills.

## *Learn to Play and Play to Learn*

### CONFERENCES & ASSESSMENTS

There will be two Parent-Teacher conferences scheduled into our calendar: one in the Fall and one in the Spring. Additional conferences can be scheduled upon request of the teacher or parent(s).

We use a multifaceted approach to assessing learning. We do daily anecdotal learning observations, use photos and videos to document learning, utilize the DRDP, and complete portfolios on each student that is given to the family at the end of the year.

We will ask for your participation in completing the Ages and Stages Questionnaire twice per year.

### GRIEVANCES/DISPUTES/CONCERNS

**ANY CONCERNS SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE LEAD TEACHER. IF THE CONCERN IS NOT RESOLVED BY THE TEACHER, IT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE CENTER DIRECTOR. IF THE CONCERN IS NOT RESOLVED BY THE CENTER DIRECTOR, IT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF AN AGENCY DIRECTOR.**

**Denial of Services** Good Shepherd Preschool reserves the right to deny services to any person or persons for any reason which does not constitute deliberate discrimination.

**Cause for Termination:** Services may be terminated based on the following causes, which is not all inclusive: funding limitations, constituting a hazard to self and/or others, fundamentally altering the nature of the program, abusive and/or negative behavior of the family(s) toward the staff/other families, licensing, inability to meet the child and/or family needs, unexcused absences, child's inability to benefit from a group care setting, non-payment of family fees/tuition, failure to abide by any policies set forth in this Parent Handbook.

Good Shepherd Preschool is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser.

## **SECURITY / SURVEILLANCE MONITORING/RECORDING**

Parking, classrooms, playground areas and other Good Shepherd Preschool premises may be monitored/recorded with video or other surveillance for purposes of protecting Good Shepherd property. This system is in no way intended to provide anyone with personal security.

The school uses or may use video surveillance/recording in public areas (not in restrooms or other changing areas).

Good Shepherd is equipped with locks to prevent immediate entrance into the buildings.

## **PEST MANAGEMENT**

Both sites are services every other month by a local pest management company.