

FULLERTON FREE **preschool**

Parent Handbook 2024-2025

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FULLERTON FREE PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

History

Fullerton Free Preschool (FFP) was originally formed in 1980 as a ministry of the church that served mothers of preschool-aged children. This ministry provided a weekly opportunity for mothers to leave their children in an engaging and fun atmosphere, knowing that their children were cared for and loved. This ministry later developed into a state licensed, non-profit Preschool, serving children and families with quality christian education with the child's needs and interests in mind. Today we operate under three separate licenses, infant/toddler, preschool, and school-age and serve over 125 Preschool children in our community from ages 6 weeks to 6 years and over 50 school-age children ages 5-9 in the summer.

Purpose

We are committed to providing a strong Christian foundation for our students and laying a solid foundation for a love of learning! We value our families and understand that you are your child's first teacher. In such, we are dedicated to teaming with our families in providing opportunities for children to create, explore, problem-solve, and interact with peers and teachers through age-appropriate experiences and activities. We are committed to encouraging your child's development in the areas of spiritual growth, social and emotional growth, physical development and cognitive growth.

SECTION 2 - PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM

Age appropriate curriculum will be created to challenge the child's stage of development, both during individual and small group instruction. The role of the teacher is to assist and guide the child during instruction and encourage curiosity in understanding themselves and the world God created. Opportunities are provided to encourage the child to develop new skills and reinforce current levels of understanding in the following areas:

BIBLE

We believe in building a solid spiritual foundation through example, songs, stories, Bible verses, and prayer. Children will learn Christian values and Biblical truths through formal and informal teaching.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

The basis of this foundation is a sense of belonging, feeling valued and loved and peer interaction. We provide a safe environment for children to feel loved and accepted, and to develop self-esteem and self-regulation.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The primary developmental areas emphasized are listening/speaking, reading and writing.

MATH

Children learn math concepts through the understanding of numbers, patterning, comparison, identifying shapes, and measurement.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Children learn to improvise vocally or act out with others through music and movement, visual arts, and drama where they can create, invent, and express themselves.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Through gross motor activities and playground equipment, children are provided with opportunities to develop strength and coordination and to simply just play!

HEALTH

Foundations in basic hygiene, safety, and nutrition are emphasized daily.

HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE

Students are introduced to history as it relates to events, people, and places of time. They also learn understanding of responsibility, following rules, and relationships with others.

SCIENCE

The practice of scientific inquiry draws on children's cognitive, language, social and physical skills. These are developed in abilities to group and sort items as well as identifying the cause and effect of events.

SECTION 3 - AGE GROUPS & SCHEDULE

Infant/Toddler Ratio: 1:4

Infant: 6 weeks-12 months

Transitional Toddler: 12-18 months

Toddler: 18-24 months

Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten

Ratio 1:12

2-6 years of age

School Age (Summer Only):

Ratio 1:14

*Must have completed Kindergarten-entering 2nd grade in the fall

Schedules are based on these time options:

8-9 AM: Early Care

9-1 PM: School Day

1-5 PM: After Care

Two Day Program: Tuesday and Thursday

(2 day program NOT available for all ages)

Three Day Program: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Five Day Program: Monday - Friday

*Early Care and After Care cannot be enrolled in alone, must be an add on to a school day schedule.

SECTION 4 -ADMISSION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Procedures

The State Department of Social Services and Fullerton Free Preschool require that the following forms be completed and on file before a child may attend. These must be kept current throughout each child's enrollment in the center:

- Child's Pre-admission History Record
- Application for Admission (Three pages)
- Identification & Emergency Information Form
- Physician's Report (completed by child's pediatrician)

- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Administration of Medications
- Parent's Rights Form
- Personal Rights
- Immunization Record (provide a copy)

SECTION 5 - OPERATING PROCEDURES

Arrival and Departure

Parents are asked to park in general parking areas. Do not leave other children unattended in a vehicle while bringing Fullerton Free Preschool children to their classrooms. It is illegal to leave a child unattended in a vehicle at Fullerton Free and emergency services will be contacted if necessary.

WE ASK THAT ALL STUDENTS BE ON CAMPUS NO LATER THAN 9:30 a.m. DAILY.

This allows for your child to be involved in all the day's planned activities. When children arrive late they tend to have a difficult time joining in the activities that have already begun and often times the teacher needs to take a good amount of time to help them adjust. It is not only difficult for the student, but for their teacher as well. If you have an occasional doctor or any other appointment that will not allow your child to arrive by 9:30 a.m, please inform your teacher or the office via Brightwheel.

In order to keep our students safe, gates to the playground and classroom areas must be kept closed. Please help us keep the children safe by closing the gate securely after you enter and exit the playground area. Please do not give your child the code or allow

them to push the security gate buttons. Children and siblings are also not allowed to push the gate open when leaving the facility

Any child under the age of 3 is not allowed to play on the large blue structure at any time, before, during, or after school for safety reasons. Due to the height of the structure, it poses a possibly dangerous situation for younger children.

Each family is given a gate code to enter our campus. Please do not give this gate code to anyone that is not on your emergency pick up list. **If you did not receive a gate code, please message on Brightwheel or stop by the office and we will provide that for you. Just as a reminder your gate code and your BW code are not the same!**

Each classroom uses the Brightwheel app. This app is our primary way we communicate between teachers and parents, and for our Infant/Toddler classrooms, the nap, diaper changes, and feeding schedules. **Parents, family and friends who will be picking up students will be required to download the Brightwheel app on a smart device in order to receive a code specific to you and the child. You can add them to your child's account by accessing your child's profile and adding them under the Contacts section. If you do add family and friends to BW, please make sure they are also an approved contact on their Emergency Card form in the office.** Please do not share Brightwheel codes, they are specific to each approved adult on the emergency card. QR codes for checking in and out are posted at each classroom.

Never leave children unattended in the classroom or on the playground at any time. Allow enough time to ensure smooth transitions for your child at arrival and pick-up times. Upon arrival, parents should help the child bring their backpack to their teacher, or placed outside the appropriate classroom for early care. Upon departure, check for parent notices, artwork, or other projects that are being sent home.

We ask for all who enter our campus to not be on their phones during drop-off and pick-up. Being distracted could cause important steps to be missed during drop-off and pick-up. Also, your child is so happy to see you at pick up and your undivided attention means the world to them!

Children are released only to parents or other authorized adults listed both on the Emergency Card and signed up in the Brightwheel app. All information on the Emergency Card must be kept current. If an adult is unknown to the staff on duty, identification will be requested. Any changes are to be reported to the office immediately.

Children will not be released to any adult suspected of intoxication from alcohol or drugs. Emergency services will be contacted should anyone try to take a child home under those conditions.

Vacation/Illness

Tuition is due the first of each month, regardless of attendance/illness. Parents are requested to notify Fullerton Free Preschool office when children are absent from the center and in advance of any planned vacation.

Part-time children will be given three make-up days per school year (August through May). The make-up day reflects the child's enrolled schedule for pick-up time. Make-up days are not applicable in the summer (June-July).

Withdrawal

Parents will notify the office in writing two weeks in advance of a child's withdrawal from Fullerton Free Preschool. If a two-week notice is given, any unused portion of the last month's tuition will be refunded. Parents who do not give a two week notice, forfeit two weeks of the last month's tuition.

SECTION 6 - FEES

Registration

A non-refundable \$175 registration fee is paid upon the enrollment of each child. Every year in March, the new student registration fee is reduced to \$75. Returning students pay a \$100 re-registration fee each year. Preschool and school age children are charged a \$40 summer activity fee (applies to children attending June and July only).

Tuition

Monthly tuition is due on the first day of each month of enrollment. A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed on all past due accounts if not paid by the 10th of each month. If the account remains unpaid twenty days after the due date, the student may be removed from Fullerton Free Preschool until the account is paid in full or arrangements have been made with the Director.

A sibling discount applies to families with three or more children in attendance at Fullerton Free Preschool. There is a 50% discount applied to the oldest child's tuition. Discounts do not apply to registration, drop in days, additional hours or summer activity fees.

Tuition is prorated on an average annual basis to ensure continuity of our program. Tuition is divided amongst the days of operation and then divided between 10 months to create an average monthly tuition payment. **Therefore, no tuition credit is given for any of the scheduled days when the center is closed, or any days a child is absent due to vacation or illness. The scheduled closures are reflected on our school calendar.

**Our school closures are listed on our school calendar which can be accessed online or requested in the office. We do have various closures and we follow closely along with the Fullerton School District. The only months we offer prorated tuition are as follows: August for repairs/deep cleaning and staff inservice, November for Thanksgiving break, and December for Christmas break. All other months are averaged and are charged the full cost. (This is calculated using the weeks/days students attend each month.)

Late Pick-Up Fee

There is a 5 minute grace period at the 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. pick up times. If your child is picked up past the 5 minute grace period a \$20 fee will be automatically charged to your brightwheel account. The school closes at 5:00 p.m., children must be picked up no later than 5:00 p.m. There will be a \$20 charge for any amount of time a child stays after 5:00 p.m. Parents are asked to contact a person on their emergency list if they are unable to pick up their child in a timely manner. If for any reason your child is not picked up by 5:00 p.m, they will be taken to the office to wait with the Director or Asst. Director. Repeated late pick ups could result in the removal of a child from the school.

Early Drop-Off Fee

Fullerton Free Preschool opens at 8:00 a.m. for early care students. Early care is included for those attending 5 days. If you would like to utilize early care on any given day, you must contact the office via Brightwheel by the close of business the day before your requested early care date, and have it approved. Children not enrolled in Early Care may not be dropped off in their classroom before 9 a.m.

Check In/Out Fee

Checking your child in and out each day is a top priority for the safety of your child. This is a legal matter and all children must be signed in and out daily by the family member or representative dropping off and/or picking up. Please make sure to completely sign them in and out via BW each day. Repeated drop offs or pick ups without accurate documentation can result in a \$250.00 fine issued by CA State

Licensing that will be billed to the parent. Parents who forget to sign their child in will be asked to return to school to sign them in properly.

SECTION 7-HEALTH AND SAFETY

ILLNESSES

****A doctor's note may be required for your child to return to school for the following illnesses. Even though a doctor may clear a child to return to school, the final clearance will be given by the Director.** It is required that each family contact FFP when their child is missing school due to illness.

Symptom: Child Must Remain Home Until:

COVID: An incubation period of five days has occurred, the child is symptom free, and is cleared by the Director/office to return to school.

Fever of 100 or above: Must be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours without fever reducing medication and no symptoms of sickness are present.

Cold/Flu Symptoms: Yellow or green discharge is no longer actively draining from the nose, cough has subsided, and is not persistent.

Diarrhea/Vomiting: Loose stools and vomiting have subsided for at least 24 hours and the child has returned to normal eating without stomach upset.

Ear Infection/Strep Throat**: Child has been seen and treated by a physician and/or symptoms subside, usually after being on antibiotics for 24 hours.

Skin Rash**: The rash disappears or has been diagnosed by a physician as non-communicable and there are no open sores on the child's body.

Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye**: Eyes return to normal, are no longer red and burning, or after being on antibiotic eye drops for 24 hours.

Diaper Rash: The rash is under control and there are no open sores.

Thrush**: The white coating is being treated by a physician.

Head Lice**: Must be cleared of nits with an incubation period of 7-10 days.

Immunizations

As your child gets older and they receive more immunizations, please make sure to always send in an updated copy of your child's immunization record so that we can stay up to date. We also strongly encourage families to schedule immunizations in the afternoon, or on Fridays due to the fact that sometimes children can have reactions such as fevers, fatigue etc. If a child does seem unwell or has a fever perhaps due to immunizations, it is still treated as sickness and they will need to be picked up.

Sick Children Being Sent Home

Children who become ill or injured will be sent to the office to temporarily rest until picked up by a parent or guardian. **Children must be picked up within 30 minutes of parents being contacted.** Parents are asked to contact a person on their emergency contact list to pick up their child if they are not able to get to the school within 30 minutes. Children going home with fevers, rashes, or diarrhea may return only after the child has been free of these symptoms for 24 hours without fever reducing medication or symptom reducing medication. A child must be able to participate in activities as normal to return to school.

Communicable Diseases

The most common infectious diseases are measles, mumps, whooping cough, and chicken pox. Strep throat, head lice, pinworms and impetigo are also considered communicable diseases because they are extremely infectious and children have yet to build up immunities against them.

****If your child contracts a communicable disease, for the health of all children it is imperative that the director be notified immediately in the event a quarantine period is necessary.**

Fullerton Free Preschool Administration reserves the right to make individualized judgment calls based on the health and safety of the entire school.

Medication

Fullerton Free Preschool staff are not authorized to administer medication. If your child needs medication while he/she is attending school, a parent may come and give the medication. With a completed Parent Consent for Administration of Medications form, Fullerton Free Preschool will administer an EpiPen for a child, if needed. EpiPens must

be in original packaging with the child's prescription label attached and medication form attached signed by the Parent.

Always make sure that your child's teacher and the office is aware of any allergies that your child has, and if your child has an epi-pen you would like to keep at school please contact the office so that we can complete the necessary paperwork and store it correctly. Never keep inhalers or epi-pens in your child's backpack for the safety of the children in their class.

Accidents and Minor Injuries

Minor bumps and scrapes may happen. They will be reported on an "Ouch Report," given to the parent when the child is picked up. Parents are called immediately in the event of any serious or questionable injury. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached and an emergency occurs, the Director will seek medical care as needed and as designated by the Emergency Authorization Form. If a child naps at preschool and has a head injury, no matter how minor, we will contact you to get approval for them to sleep here at school.

Napping

Children ages 6 weeks to 3 years are required to nap at school. If a student is unable to nap with their class a meeting with parents may be scheduled to determine if the child should be picked up before naptime.

Playground

The playground shall remain closed before and after school. Prior to the school day beginning, the playground is inspected and sanitized by our staff. Children will be provided daily playground time under the supervision of their teachers.

Cleaning Products

In order to keep our preschool classrooms sanitized, our staff will frequently use Simple Green, Clorox Wipes, Lysol spray, Neutral Disinfectant Cleaner, and/or a Peroxide Multi Surface Cleaner and Disinfectant. Seasonally or as needed, an organic bug spray (giving 24 hour notice to our families before spraying) will be used.

Emergency Procedures/Natural Disaster Plan

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, all children will be kept at the center until they are picked up by an authorized person as indicated on the Emergency Authorization Form. A photo ID is required at time of pick up.

In the event of an emergency that requires us to leave campus, children will be available for pick-up on our North Campus located at 2904 Brea Blvd. Fullerton, CA 92835. Only authorized adults on your child's emergency card with their photo ID will be allowed to pick up your child.

Each child will be required to provide an Emergency Earthquake Kit. A list of supplies will be provided at the time of enrollment which includes a family photo, one 16 oz. water bottle, 2 non- perishable food items, a thermal blanket, and a set of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks). All of these items must fit in an XL ziploc bag and the child's first and last name must be clearly labeled.

SECTION 8 - STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

On occasion, continued inappropriate behavior will require specific action. In all cases, the preferred method will be to redirect the child into other activities. On a rare occasion, and only if redirection does not work, a "time away" will be used and the child will be separated from the rest of the group and from the activity. At no time will a child be left unattended.

At no time will the Fullerton Free Preschool staff use corporal punishment, humiliating or frightening disciplinary methods, or use punishment restricting food, rest or toilet use.

In the event that every effort has been made and a child's behavior becomes harmful or chronically disruptive to other children, the following steps will be enforced:

1. A message describing the child's behavior will be sent to parents via the Preschool Administration.
2. A parent/teacher/director conference will be held.
3. Expulsion from the Fullerton Free Preschool program will occur.

Biting

We know that young children sometimes bite as a means of frustration, lack of communication, or teething. They often outgrow this behavior. However, it is disruptive

to the other children in the program. To ensure that we provide a safe and nurturing environment, we must have a policy in place to minimize biting behaviors. For the safety of all the children in our care, if a child has a continual biting problem, the following steps will take place:

1. Written Warning
2. Parent Teacher Conference & Biting Contract
3. Immediate Pick Up From School
4. Temporary Disenrollment from Preschool for two weeks
5. Final Disenrollment from Preschool

SECTION 9 - NUTRITION

We are a peanut free school. Please do not send food or food products with any type of peanut or peanut butter as an ingredient. Items sent with peanut and/or peanut butter will not be given to students. Please let your teacher know if you send an alternative nut butter product such as almonds, sunbutter etc.

We are a Red Dye 40, Free school. As of the 2023-2024 school year, the school will not provide food items, popsicles, snacks, etc.. with Red Dye 40. All birthday treats sent from families for students to share must be free of Red Dye 40.

Candy is not allowed at school including for breakfast, snacks, or lunches.

A parent must advise the center of any prescribed diet or food allergies of a child. This is required to be included on your child's Emergency Card, as well as mentioned to your child's teacher.

Celebrating your Child's Birthday!

Parents are welcome to send a special treat for their child's class for birthdays or other special occasions. All special treats must be store bought and sealed in the original package. The package must include the ingredient list. Please do not send birthday treats with red dye.

Please notify the child's teacher at least one week in advance so that the schedule may be adjusted to include the event and other parents whose children with allergies can be notified.

Infant/Toddler Meal Plans

The parent determines the diet of infants and toddlers and must provide a feeding schedule to us with written dietary instructions on the Infant and Toddler Needs and Services Plan.

Recommended Infant Meal Pattern (from Community Care Licensing)

	Birth through 3 months	4 through 7 months	8 through 11 months
Breakfast	4-6 fl. oz. formula or breast milk	4-8 fl. oz. formula or breast milk 0-3 Tbsp. infant cereal (optional)	6-8 fl. oz. formula, breast milk, or whole milk 2-4 Tbsp. infant cereal 1-4 Tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable
Lunch or Dinner	4-6 fl. oz. formula or breast milk	4-8 fl. oz. formula or breast milk 0-3 Tbsp. infant cereal (optional) 0-3 Tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable (optional)	6-8 fl. oz. formula, breast milk or whole milk 2-4 Tbsp. infant cereal and/or 1-4 Tbsp. meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, or cooked dry beans or peas, or ½-2 oz. cheese or 1-4 oz. cottage cheese 1-4 Tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable
Supplement	4-6 fl. oz. formula or breast milk	4-6 fl. oz. formula or breast milk	2-4 fl. oz. formula, breast milk, whole milk, or fruit juice 0-½ bread or 0-2 crackers (optional)

Recommended Meal Pattern for 1-12 year olds (from Community Care Licensing)

Food Components	Age 1 and 2	Age 3 through 5	Age 6 through 12
Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup
Vegetables and Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Bread Cold dry cereal Cooked cereal Cooked pasta Cooked cereal grains	½ slice ½ serving ¼ cup or 1/3 oz. ¼ cup ¼ cup	½ slice ½ serving ¼ cup ¼ cup ¼ cup	1 slice 1 serving ½ cup ½ cup ½ cup
Meat or Meat Alternatives Lean meat, poultry or fish Cheese Eggs Cooked dry beans, peas, or peanut butter Yogurt	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 egg ¼ cup 2 oz. or ¼ cup	1-1 ½ oz. 1-1 ½ oz. 1 egg ¾ cup 2 oz. or ¼ cup	2 oz. 2 oz. 1 egg ½ cup 4 oz. or ½ cup

The parent is to supply the daily morning snack and lunch. If your child stays for our aftercare program, an additional afternoon snack is required. When preparing your child's snack and lunch, consider the four food groups. Please send a reusable and refillable water bottle for your child to use throughout the day. We will refill it with filtered water as needed.

SECTION 10 - GENERAL GUIDELINES

Clothing

We ask that students come to school wearing comfortable clothes suitable for active and messy play and craft activities. For safety purposes, we ask that children wear socks with closed-toed shoes. We recommend comfortable shoes that are sturdy and safe for running and climbing. Shoes that have straps on the back are required for children at FFP.

Every child shall have two extra sets of clothing, marked with the child's full name in their backpacks. It is recommended that all clothing be marked, especially jackets and sweaters. Any clothing items that are left and found at school will be brought to the office lost and found. Lost and found is cleared out every other month and donated to our church's clothes closet.

Personal Items and Toys

Our classrooms are well equipped with toys and activities. Therefore, we ask that students do not bring items from home unless otherwise communicated from your child's teacher. Special items from home can be lost or broken here at school. Fullerton Free Preschool is not responsible for lost or damaged items brought to school by students.

SECTION 11 - COMMUNICATION

Parent-Teacher and Director communication will take place mostly through the Brightwheel app. It is required for parents to have daily access to their Brightwheel account to see messages regarding emergencies and/or messages regarding sick children that may need to be picked up. Office communication is easiest through Brightwheel, but you can also contact the office through phone during office hours as well as email anytime. When needed, you can choose to use the Admin/Parent option in Brightwheel to contact the Director's only. Only the Director and Asst. Director can see those messages. Teaching staff will respond to messages as soon as they can. The priority is to engage and care for the children, so when there is down time, either at the end of the day or during nap time, staff can respond. Most staff do not have Brightwheel on their phone and therefore cannot respond to messages before or after school hours. If you need to speak to someone right away, contacting the Directors via Brightwheel or calling the office is the best option. Please know that the Directors are often out on campus and may not be in the office to answer the phone during all

business hours. We do however have devices with Brightwheel on them from 8:00-5:00 and can easily see your messages there.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing this agreement, I/We acknowledge that we have read and understood the measures taken by Fullerton Free Preschool to promote a safe school environment and smooth program. We accept the responsibilities given to us and are ready to do our part to help provide a healthy, happy, and safe preschool program. We agree to notify the school immediately if we are unable to comply with any of the policies by Fullerton Free Preschool.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____