

# ***FULLERTON FREE*** ***preschool***

## Parent Handbook 2025-2026

***Angie Gunter***, Preschool Director

[angie.gunter@fullertonfree.com](mailto:angie.gunter@fullertonfree.com)

714-257-4302 ext. 350

***Tiffany Hoffman***, Office Manager

[tiffany.hoffman@fullertonfree.com](mailto:tiffany.hoffman@fullertonfree.com)

714-257-4302 ext. 359

# 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 non-profit, state licensed child care center, serving children and families with quality education with the child's needs and interests in mind. Today we operate under three separate licenses, infant and toddler, preschool, and school-age and serve over 200 children in our community from ages 6 weeks to 9 years, yearly.

### Our Purpose

Our purpose is to provide an exemplary Christian preschool experience in a nurturing and supportive environment where children can grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, and academically. We are committed to fostering a strong sense of community among students, families, and staff.

We strive to offer a play-based program where children learn through child-led exploration, meaningful play, and a focus on the development of the whole child.

We aim to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment where children feel calm, supported, and inspired to explore. Our staff is loving, kind, and leads by example a Christian life always pointing students to Jesus and His Word. With a joyful and encouraging spirit, our team creates a fun, nurturing space where every child is accepted, valued, and encouraged to become all that God created them to be.

## 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 and encourage curiosity in understanding themselves and the world we live in. 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 prayers. Children will learn Christian values and Biblical truths.

## SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

The basis of this foundation is a sense of belonging, feeling valued and loved, peer interaction, and understanding how the child fits into the world. 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, pre-writing, 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.

## 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: 6 weeks-12 months

Transitional Toddler: 12-18 months

Toddler: 18-24 months

Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten/Transitional Kindergarten: 2-6 Years

School Age (Summer Only): 5-10 Years

\*Must have completed Kindergarten

Schedules are based on these time options:

8-9 AM: Early Care

9-1 PM: School Day

1-3 PM: Naptime/Aftercare

3-5 PM: Extended Aftercare

Two Day Program: Tuesday and Thursday

(2 and 3 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.

#### Nap Policy – Downstairs Classrooms

All children placed in a downstairs classroom are required to participate in daily nap time, as there is no designated “awake room” for this age group.

If a child consistently has difficulty resting during the scheduled nap period, we may need to reassess their schedule to better support their individual needs and maintain a restful environment for the class.

Please reach out to the Director if you have any questions about your child’s nap routine or classroom placement.

### Nap Time Pickup Policy

For children who nap, the earliest pickup time is 2:45 PM to avoid disrupting the rest of the napping class.

If you need to pick up your child earlier than 2:45 PM, please use the 1:00 PM pickup time.

## 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)

### Partnering Together

We believe that consistency between home and school helps all children feel safe, supported, and confident. Open communication between families and staff is essential to creating a successful preschool experience.

If a child is having difficulty adjusting to the school environment, we will schedule a check-in meeting with the Director, your child's Lead Teacher, and you. This meeting gives us a chance to work together to understand your child's needs, explore possible support strategies, and ensure that Fullerton Free Preschool is a good fit for your child and family.

## SECTION 5 - OPERATING PROCEDURES

### Arrival and Departure

Parents are asked to park in general parking areas. Do not leave 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 oftentimes 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 a 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 also are 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. For security purposes, children (those attending our school and their siblings) are not allowed to enter the code and open the gate.

Each classroom uses the Brightwheel app. This app allows faster communication between teachers and parents, and for our Infant and Toddler classrooms, the nap, diaper changes, and feeding schedules. Parents and guardians who will be picking up students will be required to download the app on a Smart device in order to receive a code specific to you and the child. Please do not share pick-up and drop-off Brightwheel codes, they are specific to each approved adult on the emergency card.

Please do not 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 place personal belongings in the assigned area. 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 or pick-up. Being distracted could cause important steps to be missed during drop-off and pick-up.

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 and emergency services will be contacted should anyone try to take a child home under those conditions.

### Vacation & Illness Policy

Tuition is due on the first of each month, regardless of your child's attendance. This includes absences due to illness, vacation, or other personal reasons.

Parents are asked to notify the Fullerton Free Preschool office in the event of an absence and to provide advance notice for any planned vacations.

Families with part-time enrollment are allowed three make-up days per school year (August through May).

- Make-up days must align with the child's regularly scheduled pick-up time.
- Make-up days are not available during the summer session (June–July).

### Withdrawal Policy

Parents must provide the office with written notice at least two weeks prior to withdrawing their child from Fullerton Free Preschool. If a two-week notice is given, any unused portion of the final month's tuition will be refunded. If no two-week notice is provided, parents will forfeit two weeks' worth of tuition from the final month.



## SECTION 6 - FEES

### Registration

A non-refundable \$175 registration fee is paid upon the enrollment of each child. 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 Policy

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis and then averaged into 10 equal monthly payments to provide consistency for families and support the continuity of our program.

This means:

- Monthly tuition remains the same regardless of the number of school days in a given month.
- Tuition is not adjusted or refunded for scheduled school closures, holidays, vacations, or student absences due to illness.
- All planned closures are outlined on our school calendar.

Scheduled Closures:

- Two weeks in August for repairs, deep cleaning, and staff in-service
- One week in December and one week in January for Christmas Break
- One week for Spring Break

To account for reduced attendance during these times, tuition is discounted by 25% in August, December, and January. These discounts are based on the number of weeks the school is open in each of those months.

### Late Pick-Up Policy

To support smooth transitions and respect everyone's time, we have established the following pick-up guidelines:

- 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM Pick-Ups:  
A 5-minute grace period is allowed. If your child is picked up after the grace period, a \$20 late fee will automatically be charged to your Brightwheel account.
- 5:00 PM Closing Time:  
The school closes promptly at 5:00 PM. All children must be picked up by this time.
- A \$20 late fee will be charged for every 10 minutes a child remains at school after 5:00 PM.

If you are unable to pick up your child on time, please arrange for someone listed on your emergency contact form to do so.

Children not picked up by 5:00 PM will be taken to the office to wait with the Director or Assistant Director.

Important: Repeated late pick-ups may result in removal from the program.

### Early Drop-Off

Early Care drop off is from 8:00-9:00 a.m. and only for those enrolled in early care. Students who are enrolled beginning at 9:00 a.m. may not check in until that time.

### Daily Check-In and Check-Out Policy

For your child's safety and to comply with legal requirements, it is essential that all children are properly signed in and out each day using Brightwheel. Every parent, guardian, or authorized pickup person must have their own Brightwheel account connected to the child they are responsible for.

### Important Reminders:

- Children must be fully signed in at drop-off and fully signed out at pick-up every day.
- Licensing authorities conduct unannounced visits to ensure compliance.
- Failure to follow proper sign-in/out procedures may result in a \$250 fine per incident, that will be billed to the parents.

Your cooperation helps keep all children safe and ensures we remain in compliance with state regulations.

## SECTION 7-HEALTH AND SAFETY

### ILLNESSES

A doctor's note may be required for your child to return to school following certain illnesses. Families are required to notify Fullerton Free Preschool any time their child is absent due to illness.

### Illness Policy & Return-to-Care Guidelines

To protect the health of all children and staff, we ask that families follow these guidelines when a child is ill. Children must be symptom-free and able to participate fully in daily activities before returning to school.

COVID-19 - Child may return on Day 6 if symptoms are mild and improving, and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

Fever (100.4°F or higher) - Child must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, and no other symptoms of illness are present.

Cold/Flu Symptoms - Child may return when nasal discharge is clear (no yellow or green drainage), cough is no longer persistent, and the child feels well enough to participate.

Diarrhea/Vomiting - Child may return 24 hours after the last episode and all symptoms are no longer present, with normal eating resumed and no stomach upset.

Ear Infection/Strep Throat - Child may return after being seen and treated by a physician, and has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours, or when symptoms have resolved.

Skin Rash - Child may return when the rash has cleared or has been diagnosed by a physician as non-contagious.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - Child may return when eyes are no longer red or producing discharge, or after 24 hours on prescribed eye drops.

Diaper Rash - Child may return when the rash is under control and there are no open sores.

Thrush - Child may return once treatment has started and they are under physician care.

Head Lice - Child may return once they have been treated and cleared of all live lice and nits. A follow-up check is recommended 7–10 days after treatment.

### Illness During the School Day

If a child becomes ill or injured while at school:

- Children will be taken to the office to rest until they are picked up.
- A parent or guardian will be notified and is expected to pick up the child within 30 minutes of being contacted.
- If a parent is unavailable, a designated emergency contact will need to pick up the child.
- Parents are asked to keep their contact information current and ensure phone notifications on Brightwheel are enabled during school hours.

### Communicable Diseases

Communicable diseases are illnesses that spread easily from one person to another. Common communicable diseases among young children include: Common cold, Flu, Covid, RSV, Croup, Strep Throat, Pneumonia, Norovirus, Hand Foot Mouth Disease, Ringworm, Conjunctivitis, Measles, Mumps, Whooping Cough (Pertussis), Chickenpox, Head Lice, Pinworms, Impetigo.

Because preschool-aged children are still building their immune systems, these illnesses can spread quickly in group settings.

If your child contracts a communicable disease, it is imperative that you notify the director immediately. Prompt reporting helps us determine whether a classroom-wide exposure has occurred and whether a quarantine period or further health measures are necessary.

The Fullerton Free Preschool Administration reserves the right to make case-by-case decisions regarding attendance and health exclusions based on the best interest, health, and safety of the entire school community.

### Medication Policy

Fullerton Free Preschool staff are not authorized to administer medications to children during school hours. If your child requires medication during the day, a parent or guardian must come to the school to administer it.

The only exception to this policy is for emergency EpiPen administration. In such cases a completed Parent Consent for Administration of Medications form must be on file. The EpiPen must be in its original packaging, clearly labeled with the child's prescription. The medication consent form must be signed by the parent and submitted along with the EpiPen.

Please contact the office if you have questions about this policy or need a medication form.

### 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.

### 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 an activity or group. 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 restrict food, rest or toilet use for any reason.

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. 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, soda and popcorn is not allowed at school including for breakfast, snacks, or lunches or birthday celebrations.

Water bottles must be filled with ONLY WATER. It is not appropriate to send your child with juice, water mixed with medication, or tea.

Parents 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 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 ⅜ 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.

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.

For children that attend who are still in diapers, they must be (to the best of your ability) dropped off with a CLEAN DIAPER each morning. We understand that children may soil their diaper on the way to school, but if we suspect that a child has not been changed in the morning since they woke up, a meeting with the Director may be called.

### 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 via phone during office hours as well as call or email anytime. When needed, you can choose to use the Admin/Parent option in Brightwheel to contact the Director or Office Manager only. Only the Director and Office Manager can see the "admin" 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 understand the policies and safety measures implemented by Fullerton Free Preschool for the 2025-2026 school year to maintain a safe environment. We accept our responsibilities and commit to supporting a healthy and secure preschool program. We agree to notify the school immediately if we are unable to comply with any of the policies set forth by Fullerton Free Preschool.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_