

St. Philip's
Early Childhood Center
Parent Handbook



**“Helping children grow
since 1968”**

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Philosophy and Origin

St. Philip's ECC was established in 1968. In February of 1997, our program achieved state licensing as determined by the Missouri Department of Health, Bureau of Childcare Safety and Licensure. Our

program offers experiences in learning and living that supplement what the home and family provide through enrichment programs, weekly lesson plans, choice play, and much more.

St. Philip's Preschool offers a warm, nurturing atmosphere which provides opportunities for each child to grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, academically and physically. We model creativity, discovery, humor, success/failure, honor and respect for others. We provide a non-threatening, positive environment that allows children to grow and learn at their own pace without pressure.

Organization and Staff

St. Philip's Early Childhood Center is operated by St. Philip's United Church of Christ on a non-profit basis. All policy decisions are made by the Early Childhood Center Board, which is composed of six members of St. Philip's Church and is carried out by the director. All programs are "State Licensed" by the Missouri Department of Health.

St. Philip's Staff consists of the Director, lead teachers who have teaching degrees and/or many years teaching experience, and assistants who support the lead teachers. All staff members pass a background screening; have received a physical, the Hepatitis A vaccine and the required TB test. All staff members, as caregivers of children, are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

All staff members receive training at workshops, conferences, or in-service programs that are offered by individuals, agencies, and organizations such as St. Louis Community College, Child Day Care Association and the County Department of Health.

Hours of Operation

The center is open from 6:30 am – 6:00 pm Monday – Friday with the exception of the holidays listed. A child may only be at the center for a total of ten hours. There is an "extended hours" fee charged for the parents whose schedule cannot accommodate our ten hour policy.

The Early Childhood Center will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Our ECC Programs

Full-Day Care: Our full-day program offers up to 10 hours of care per day for children ages 6 weeks – 10 years. Our classrooms are divided up as follows: Butterflies (6 weeks – 8 months), Elephants (6 weeks –

14 months), Hippos (8 months – 14 months), Birds (14 months – 24 months), Bees (14 months – 24 months), Frogs (2 year olds), Fish (3 year olds), Monkeys (4-5 year olds), and Tigers (6-10 year olds).

Per state licensing, all children are required rest or nap periods according to child's age.

In our I-T (infant/toddler program): At 12 months of age, children transition to sippy cups from bottles. Due to sanitation concerns, children 12 months and older may only have pacifier during nap. At 12 months, children will transition to cots and tables in our Haven building.

Frog (2 year old) guidelines: we require your child to be potty trained before transitioning to the Fish classroom. Fully potty trained here is to be considered the following:

- Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go
- Be able to pull down their underwear and pants & get them back up without assistance
- Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet
- Be able to get off the potty by themselves
- Be able to wash and dry their hands
- Be able to go directly back to the classroom without directions
- Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom

Preschool: Preschool is kindergarten readiness program available to 3-5 year olds, September through May. Degreed teachers and their aides provide opportunities for social, emotional, academic, developmental, and spiritual growth. The preschool program meets on set days from 9:00–11:30 am.

Enrichment Programs are offered in the afternoon from 1:45-3:00 pm. Classes include Science Seekers, Creative Corner, and Movement & Motion or Music.

Summer Camp: St. Philip's offers a Summer Camp Program during June and July. Each week focuses on a special theme, which includes songs, games, arts and crafts, stories, snacks, and outside fun. In addition, campers will go on field trips and participate in special events based on the camp's theme. All campers receive a t-shirt.

Enrollment

Children who are 6 weeks through age 10 years may be enrolled. A minimum of 2 days attendance per week is required of all children.

Upon enrollment, parent/guardian must pay annual registration fee as well as deposit of one week's tuition. Deposit shall be used towards last week of care. Annual registration fees are charged every September and due 30 days later. However, if the registration fee is paid from May 1st to August 30 of that year, no registration fee is due in September. Registration fees and deposits are non-refundable. A two week notice is required, in writing, before you withdraw your child AND your account balance must be paid in full by your child's last day. Otherwise, your deposit will be forfeited.

Listed below is all necessary paperwork to complete enrollment:

- St. Philip's ECC Contract
- Missouri Child Care Enrollment Form

- Missouri Child Care Examination Report - need within 2 weeks of enrollment
- Missouri Parent's Specialized Instructions for Infants and Toddlers
 - Only needed for 6 weeks – 2 years old
- Copy of up-to-date Immunization Record - need within 2 weeks of enrollment
- Emergency Contact Card
- Social Media Release Form

Each child is covered by an accident medical policy, which provides for all activities while your child is in our care and includes benefits up to \$25,000 per accident.

Tuition

Payment policies:

1. Fees are paid weekly. Payment for your program (2-3-5 days) must be made on the first weekday that your child attends. Payments NOT received on Friday by 9:00 am will be charged a \$10.00 penalty weekly until the balance is paid in full. If an account is unpaid for 2 weeks, your child will not be accepted for care.
2. Your child may attend only the days you have chosen. Advance notice if required for him/her to attend additional days subject to availability. Parents are then responsible for paying for the original days plus the added days.
3. Full payment is due for all holiday weeks, closures, snow days, etc.
4. A service charge of \$25.00 will be rendered on all NSF checks. The check and service charge must be paid in cash.
5. A late penalty of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for children who are picked up after 6:00 pm.
6. The "extended hours" fee is \$5.00 per day if your child is in attendance of more than (10) hours a day.
7. Parents who qualify for Daycare Subsidy through Division of Family Services need to have full approval in place prior to attendance. Any fees not covered by DFS are the parents responsibility and are payable weekly.

Discounts:

- Parents who pay monthly may deduct 4%. Payments must be received by the 15th of each month to qualify for the discount.
- If payments are received by the 15th of each month, families will receive a 4% discount.
- Families with more than one child qualify for our sibling discount of 10%. The discount is applied to the lower tuition.
- Families who refer a child to our program will be given a free day after the new child officially enrolls.
- Church members of St. Philip's UCC receive a 10% discount.

Vacation:

- Parents are allowed two weeks of vacation, based on the number of days in your program. Two weeks-notice is required. Vacation credits will not be given for absences.

- No vacation credits are offered to Summer Camp only students.
- Vacation credits can only be used three (3) months after child is enrolled. In addition, a child must be actively enrolled year-round; cannot use vacation credit towards last week of care.

Preschool Tuition

Tuition is determined by the number of sessions in our entire school year and is collected in equal monthly payments. Refunds cannot be made in case of absence. Tuition is due and payable at the beginning of the month by cash or personal check. A \$10.00 late penalty will be collected with tuition paid after the 15th of the month. A special envelope is provided each month when Preschool tuition is due. Preschool tuition is included in the weekly fee for children who also attend the full-day program.

Two week's notice is required in case of withdrawal.

Security System

All outside doors remain locked during the center's operating hours. However, a card swipe entry system at the main entrance and Haven entrance allows parents and staff to have access to the buildings. These are the only entrances that shall be used for drop off and pick up due to safety reasons. After you swipe the card, the lock will buzz and you can open the door. When the door closes behind you, it will be locked again. If you forget your card, you can ring the doorbell and a teacher can buzz you in.

Please help us to keep the building safe by not letting anyone in besides yourself. The system records all entries by name, time, and location. All families are given one swipe card. If additional cards are needed, a \$10 cash deposit is required and will be given back when the card is returned.

For your child and our staff's safety and protection, our classrooms, communal spaces, playgrounds, and parking lot are equipped with active security cameras.

Arrival / Departure

Upon arrival, you and your infant/toddler will be greeted by his/her caregiver. Special information and daily report may be discussed at this time. Daily schedules are individualized for each infant and toddler.

Your child may be looking forward to coming to "school" but he/she may be reluctant. If you have been positive in your attitude toward coming, it will be easier for the child to believe that staying is a good idea. Someone will be there to greet your child and get him/her involved in the activities. Linger too long is often upsetting to both child and parent. If your child continues to have difficulty, we will advise you and try to find the best way to help in this situation.

Children become very excited when parents come at pickup time, but parents and teachers must help the children to remember to follow school rules regarding toys, running inside, and using inside voices until they leave the building.

Preschool: For children not attending day care, preschool teachers and helpers are ready to receive children when the class is scheduled to begin at 9:00. Teachers are present prior to that time, but are busy with room setup and cannot supervise "early birds". Please do not leave your child in an unsupervised room.

Preschool classes dismiss promptly at 11:30 am. Children who are not attending the extended-day program should be picked up at that time. If an emergency arises and you will be late to pick up your child, please call the center to let us know. Parents who are consistently late may be subject to a \$1.00/minute late pick up fee.

Signing In and Out

According to state licensing, we must provide daily attendance. Parents or authorized persons dropping off or picking up the child must sign the child in and out. If someone other than the parents will be picking up a child, we must be notified. Staff members will ask for identification from people who are new to them. Authorized persons must be at least 15 years old.

In single parent families where there is separation or divorce, the parent must provide the center with documentation (decree or court ruling) showing the custody arrangements. In the event that a non-custodial parent does not comply with the order, our staff is instructed to call 911 and have the authorities deal with the issue.

Outdoor Play

According to State Licensing, children in the program are provided two 30-minute increments of outdoor play unless prevented by weather or special medical reasons. Please send climate appropriate clothing for your child and always have a change of clothes in his/her classroom.

Accident / Injury

In the event of an accident/injury, the teacher will comfort the child and give appropriate first aid and the teacher will fill out an accident/injury report. And according to state licensing, parents must be contacted by phone or email. The report is signed by the teacher and parent and is kept in the child's records. Parents also receive a copy.

Absences or Schedule Changes

Keep in touch with the center when you or your child has schedule changes. When work, home, or emergency numbers change, please notify us immediately. If your child will not be in school on a given day for any reason, please notify your child's teacher.

Food

Children, 12 months or older, who attend our full-day program will be served breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Baby food may be provided by the family until the child is 12 months of age.

Breakfast is served daily from 8:00 - 8:20 am. Lunch times vary between 11:15-11:45 am.

According to state licensing, breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack menus are posted on the bulletin board each month. Lunches, snacks, and beverages may not be brought from home for the 12 month and older children. All children will be offered a nutritionally balanced meal which includes all menu items. Alternative choices will be provided by the family for children with allergies.

Snack or dessert treats brought in for a special occasion must be commercially baked and individually packaged.

Apparel

Children should wear “play clothes” and sturdy shoes with ties or straps so that play on the floor or outdoors or painting will not soil or ruin special clothing. No flip-flops or sandals with heel straps. Tennis shoes that tie or Velcro are preferred. Please label any jackets or coats.

Please make sure you have an extra change of clothes for your child in case of an accident. If the center provides a change of clothing for your child, these items must be laundered and returned with the child on the next day of attendance.

Personal Belongings

St. Philip’s Early Childhood Center is not responsible for lost or damaged toys, clothing, or valuables/money. Children may bring toys from home only on specified “Show and Tell” days.

Napping Items - We provide each child with a small blanket. However, if you want to provide your child with a blanket, it cannot be any bigger than our cots. If a larger blanket is brought in parents will be responsible for taking these home weekly to be laundered.

Field Trips

Preschool classes and summer campers take field trips during the year. Parents will be notified in advance when field trips are scheduled. A maximum adult to student ratio of 1:5 is used to supervise children during field trips. A first-aid kit and cell phone are brought on each trip along with all parents’ emergency contact phone numbers. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are not toilet trained (as determined by his/her teacher), will remain at the center.

Photos / Social Media

Upon enrollment, a permission slip should have been given to you allowing St. Philip’s ECC to use your child’s photos on our Facebook page. In addition, we take photos in the classroom and may put them on display in the halls or in the rooms. If you do not wish for your child’s photograph to be used in any content, please let our administration know.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Parents may call teachers at school at anytime to discuss concerns or to plan a conference. If the teacher is not available to talk, he or she will call you back as soon as she can. A private conversation by phone or at school, without the child present, will be arranged.

The director is generally available between 8 am and 4 pm to answer questions parents may have.

Preschool conferences will be held for 3-4 year olds in March. Conferences for 4-5 year olds will be held in January and May. Teachers will post appointment sheets for parents to sign.

Weather Closings

During severe weather, every effort will be made to maintain the Early Childhood Center’s normal operating hours. However, if the director determines that weather conditions are too severe to open the center, a decision will be made by 5:30 am. The message on the center’s voice mail will be changed

to say that the center is closed that day. If it is determined that weather conditions warrant an early closure, parents will be notified with a phone call with as much notice as possible. In addition, all closings will be posted on FOX Channel 2, fox2now.com and/or KSDK Channel 5 as well as ksdk.com and Facebook. Full payment is still due.

Safety Procedures

Electrical storms are very frightening to many young children. Caregivers are very sensitive to this and will move the children if the weather conditions suggest possible danger or create anxiety in the children or workers.

According to state licensing, the center conducts monthly fire drills and quarterly tornado or earthquake drills. These drills also help staff and children to be prepared for what to do in the event of an emergency.

Inspections

The local fire inspector and the state fire inspector check our facility annually. Fire safety, escape routes, alarm system, and teacher / student ratios are some of the things that are inspected.

A Department of Health representative, from state licensing and state sanitation, inspects the building, food service, bathrooms, and storage areas, staff training, ratios, equipment, etc. Copies of these reports may be seen or requested online through the state website.

Illness

We strictly adhere to guidelines for ill children as set forth by our state sanitation and licensing regulations. Parents will be notified when their child has a sign or symptom that requires exclusion from school; examples are listed below but may also include a illness that prevents your child from participating comfortably in school activities. You, or your emergency contact, will be required to pick up your child immediately and your child shall not be allowed in attendance the following day.

Fever: A child with a fever of 100 F or more is to be sent home. He/she may return when fever-free (less than 100 F) for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Vomiting: If a child is acting ill and has vomited within a 24-hour period, he/she is to be sent home. The child may return if there has been no vomiting for 24 hours.

Diarrhea: A child diarrhea will be sent home. Diarrhea is considered to be an increase in the number of stools or consistency compared to the child's normal pattern. The child may return to the center when normal stools are present for 24 hours.

Eye infection: Parents will be notified if a child has symptoms of conjunctivitis/pinkeye. The child will be sent home and may return when he/she is discharge-free for 24 hours.

Skin outbreak: If a child develops a rash, (ringworm, impetigo, hives, severe diaper rash, or any other undiagnosed rash), parents will be notified to remove the child and see a physician. Child may return after 24 hours of medication or written clearance from a physician that states the child does not have a communicable disease.

Head lice: A child with head lice will be excluded from daycare and may return when hair has been properly treated and all nits have been removed.

Strep throat: A child with strep throat may only return after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy AND if fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medication.

Ear infection: If a child exhibits symptoms of an ear infection and is acting ill, parents will be notified so that they may take the child to a physician. The child may return after initiation of antibiotic therapy and if cleared by a physician; however, your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Often times a physician will state that the child can return to a group care contrary to our exclusion policies. The ECC reserves the right to exclude the child from care. A written doctor's note will NEVER override the center's 24 hour, fever free or discharge-free policy.

If the parent or the person they authorize does not pick up the child within one (1) hour, a penalty of \$5.00 for each **additional half-hour will be charged**.

Medication

According to state sanitation, prescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instructions, including times and amounts for dosages, and the physician's name. All non-prescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled by the parent(s) with the child's name and instructions for administration, including times and amounts for dosages. A separate state licensing form is needed for each medication.

Discipline

Teachers make a conscientious effort to help every child adapt and to help children learn to resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. Our program works best for everyone when a safe and orderly environment exists.

Teachers consider the following factors prior to disciplinary actions:

- ❖ The age, developmental level, and whether or not the child has a disability
- ❖ The seriousness of the offense
- ❖ The child's attitude or pattern of behavior
- ❖ The child's degree of cooperation

Specific discipline problems will be approached first by talking to the child and using redirection to guide the child back to appropriate behavior. If behavior recurs, the child will be removed from the situations (no more than one minute per year of age) until it is resolved. In the event that a child is unable to conform to basic standards, parents will be contacted. Together, parents and teachers may work out a plan to help the child change his/her unacceptable behavior. Unacceptable behaviors include:

1. Failure to recognize the authority of a supervising adult such as verbal disrespect and/or physical disrespect.
2. Aggressive physical behavior directed against another child or adult.
3. Serious profanity.
4. Destruction of property.

5. Generally disruptive behavior that continues over a period of time, but which doesn't necessarily include one of the above problems.
6. Leaving the building without permission.
7. Having dangerous and/or unsafe articles in his/her possession.

At the direction of the director and the teachers involved, any of the above named situations may result in one or more of the following:

- A letter to parents
- Director, teacher(s) and parent conference
- A call to the parent to pick up the child immediately
- A suspension, with or without a request for the parent to seek outside help for the child. If the behavior warrants an out of center suspension/dismissal, we may move to that intervention immediately. Suspension/dismissal will be treated as an absence and refunds will not be given.

Termination

After attempts have been made to meet a child's individual needs, any child who demonstrates an inability to benefit from the program offered, or whose presence is detrimental to other children, may be discharged from the center.

Care of the child may be discontinued if a mutually satisfactory working relationship cannot be established with the parent(s). No refunds will be given.

Morning Worship.....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday School.....	After children's sermon
Bible Study.....	Ongoing
Adult Education.....	Ongoing
50+ Group.....	Monthly
Women's Fellowship.....	Monthly
Youth Groups.....	Twice Monthly
Adult Choir.....	Weekly Rehearsals
Bell Choir.....	Weekly Rehearsals
Counseling.....	By Appointment
Church Office (Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.).....	843-5100

St. Philip's Church makes its facilities available to groups for a nominal charge.

St. Philip's United Church of Christ is a member of the Missouri Mid-South Conference. It is a church of the United Church of Christ, a 1.8 million-member denomination that was formerly the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian Church.

