

Employee Handbook
A companion document to the Church Personnel Manual
2024-2025 School Year

Overview

Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church Nursery School is a 501(c)3 non-profit neighborhood school that has served Upper Northwest Washington for over 60 years. We welcome 100 to 120 children (ages 20 months to 5 years) of all faiths and backgrounds to a joyful Learning Through Play program each year.

Enrollment: We offer 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day morning classes. We often have numerous international students, many of whom are dual language learners.

Address: One Chevy Chase Circle, NW, Washington DC 20015

Office main phone: 202-363-2209

Director Nicole Page email: wnsdirector@chevychasepc.org

Assistant Director Ami Bawa email: wnsadministration@chevychasepc.org

Administrative staff includes:

Linda Alder, Communications Manger

Trish Boggs, School Support Specialist

Amy Ossi, School Administrator

We are licensed through the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) and have an annual licensing review. Teachers are responsible for maintaining the current licensing standards for Continuing Education and Health and Safety courses. Currently, those classes are available for free online via Quorum Learning. The director registers all employees so they can access this valuable resource.

Programs Offered by CCPC Nursery School	
Program	Core Hours for Staff
Morning Class	8:45am - 12:15pm
Extended Day Class	12:00pm - 2:30pm
Early Drop-Off	8:15am - 9:00am
Summer Camp	8:45am - 1:15pm

Teachers are also responsible for completing the educational requirements detailed on the [For Our Staff](#) page of the CCPC website in order to continue employment at our licensed facility.

The CCPC After School Program (ASP) operates in our building using the third floor classrooms from 2:30-6:30pm on DCPS school days. The program serves PreK through 5th grade students from nearby Lafayette Elementary School. Many ASP staff also work at the Nursery School.

Structure of our School

CCPC Nursery School is an outreach ministry to the neighboring community of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church. We welcome children of all faiths and backgrounds. Our school is operated under the authority of the Session (lay governing body) of the church, with guidance from the Parent Advisory Committee of the school. As such, our program is developed in keeping with the highest standards for Early Childhood Education and in light of the philosophy and principles of Christian Education as defined by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. All program budgets, policies, and procedures are approved by the Session of the church.

Pastor Molly Blythe Teichert leads the church. The Associate Pastor chairs the Christian Education Committee.

Philosophy and Core Values

Our Philosophy: Learning Through Play

Our five core values: Resilience, Creativity, Exploration, Kindness, and Community

All employees should be familiar with our website which contains all important program information (www.ccpcwns.com) including philosophy, our core values, calendar, daily schedules, archived ECE articles, admissions and enrollment information, our parent handbook, the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) filed with OSSE, fire exit maps, and much more. All important staff documents and calendars can be found in the “For Our Staff” section of the website (password: Teach2Learn). Creative Curriculum books and other teaching resource materials are available for your use in the office.

Building Security

It is essential that our facility remain secure at all times. Staff should enter the building through the double doors on the alley and ALWAYS lock it again behind them. **Please check in at the Office each morning when you arrive** and sign in on your timesheet outside the office. Families enter the building through the lobby entrance next to the main playground on Patterson Street. A community access code allows families and regular caregivers access. Visitors ring our doorbell and are connected to the office to gain entrance. **Never** let someone into the building that you do not know.

All staff are issued a set of keys. Please notify the office immediately if your keys are lost. Additional keys to storage/supply closets are kept in the main storage room and can be accessed as needed.

Facilities

We are part of the church and share our space with the Sunday School and various other church programs and outside rental groups. Please be respectful of all church activities. Sunday School (both Adult ESL classes and children’s classes) use most of the building on Sundays and have a dedicated cupboard and bulletin board in each classroom. Please let the Director know on Mondays if your room needs custodial attention or was not left in order.

Shared Spaces

Playgrounds (see appendix):

Our main playground is located next to the lobby entrance. An outdoor play schedule is set at the beginning of the year. Please have your class do a reasonable clean up returning equipment - especially bikes, trikes, scooters, and wagons - where they belongs at the end of your time on the playground daily.

“The Big Room”

Our recently renovated gross motor development space features many elements for our children to explore and challenge themselves. School Support Specialist (Trish Boggs) sets up and rotates the indoor play equipment. An indoor play schedule is set at the beginning of the year. Please adhere to your scheduled time slot, or broker a trade with another Lead Teacher as needed.

Kitchens

We use the kitchen on the first floor for all food and cooking supply storage. Second floor classrooms have individual refrigerators in their rooms as the second floor kitchen is reserved for church use only. There is an oven for our use in the third floor kitchen next to Calvin Hall.

Main Storage and Supply Room

In addition to office, cleaning, and art supplies, a library of books is available for borrowing. See Trish Boggs for help locating any material you can't easily find. All supplies returned to the Supply Room must be returned to their original locations. Teachers and assistants are responsible for keeping this area organized. We have numerous closets including a Teacher Sharing Closet in the Big Room.

Supply Reimbursement

The vast majority of supplies are purchased through the office, but teachers sometimes purchase extra materials and can be reimbursed. Please consult with the Director about your needs in advance of purchasing as we may already have them in storage.

In the unusual case that you have purchased your own supplies, receipts are required for reimbursement and vouchers can be completed in the office. The reimbursements will be processed quarterly. Remember, CCPC is tax-exempt and you should use that information when you shop (copies of the exempt certificates are available in the office).

DC Tax Exempt ID: **8661 19939 02**

MD Tax Exempt ID: **29023869**

Parking Lot

Staff may park in the church parking lot (behind the sanctuary) accessed from Oliver Street off Connecticut Ave. Parking along the chain link fence is reserved for church personnel. Nursery school staff can park in any other space in the parking lot.

Health and Safety

- **The safety of the children in our care is our highest priority at all times. Please contact the Director immediately with any concerns.**
- **CCPC is nut-free (see appendices).**
- Each classroom receives a binder with Emergency Contact and pertinent health, allergy and custody information for the students. The office will update this information as needed.
- Children with approved school-dispensed medications will be assigned a red fanny pack which will follow the child throughout the day. The teachers are required to always have the medication on hand.
- Reports of contagious illness will be sent from the office to the entire class or program level.
- Safety drills (fire, lockdown or shelter in place) are conducted monthly with advance notice of dates and times. Please review the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) on our website for detailed information about proper execution of these important drills. “Go Bags” are placed in each classroom with up-to-date materials for emergency preparedness.

Employee/Payroll Information

Contract documents and job descriptions are provided annually. On the “For Our Staff” section of our website, you can find links to Employee Manuals, Job Description Documents, and all required forms for licensing and payroll.

Direct deposit payroll checks are issued beginning in September and are paid according to our Payroll Calendar every other Friday. Details are included in your employment contract. The Business Office of the church handles all our banking and payroll functions. Please speak to the Director about any payroll questions.

Teacher Support Fund

We have created this fund to provide emergency financial support for teachers when life brings an unexpected challenge. Staff are welcome to apply for the fund by reaching out to the director to discuss their need.

Request Type		Maximum Yearly Amount
Personal Financial Emergency	Approved funds to employee will be distributed through payroll and will be taxed as income.	\$500
CDA Expenses	Approved funds to employee will be paid directly to biller.	Commensurate with current CDA expenses
Other Education Expenses	Accredited programs for education directly related to job description and licensing requirements	TBD

Expectations of Staff

Appearance - You are expected to dress comfortably, but professionally. Please no slogans on shirts. Fingernails should be maintained in a conservative and workable length and shape such that they do not pose a health or safety hazard. See personnel manual for more detail.

Staff Meetings - Attendance is expected at all staff meetings. Monthly full staff meetings are generally held just after dismissal and last about 90 minutes. Sometimes trainings are offered at this time that can run longer. In addition, Lead Teachers meet monthly for one hour just after dismissal time. A full calendar is distributed before the start of the school year. We typically have a staff holiday party one evening in December and a staff year-end meeting and brunch in early June. All staff are compensated for one hour of time as indicated in their contract for full staff meetings. Lead Teacher meetings are compensated as part of the Lead Teacher salary.

Performance Evaluations - The Director reviews all staff semi-annually, one informal and one formal. You should expect frequent observations in the classroom and on the playground. Peer and self-reviews are also sometimes part of our full evaluation process. Teachers and teaching teams will receive coaching and support from the Director and Assistant Director to ensure that classrooms and staff have the best tools to perform their jobs. The coaching will also ensure that CCPC is delivering a consistent and appropriate classroom experience for all attending children.

Communication - CCPC Nursery School is a close-knit workplace, where individuals respect and support one another in our work together. Open communication is encouraged for feedback and problem solving. The Director is always available to work with individuals or teams on cohesive classroom management and challenging family situations. Flexibility and support for our staff is a priority.

Start of School

Set-up Tasks Teachers are expected to prepare for the school year by readying their classrooms, preparing their class communication lists, sending welcome postcards to each child in their class, and preparing and sending a welcome email to families that includes a visiting day schedule.

Class Visiting Days are held the week of Labor Day. Your attendance and participation is mandatory. This is an opportunity for parents and children to visit the classroom and for you to share start of school information in person. Generally, families attend in small groups (3-5) for about 20-30 minutes at a time.

Back to School Night is usually the second week of school in the evening. Your attendance is mandatory. After a presentation in Geneva Hall by the Director, parents go to individual classrooms to hear about your Learning Through Play philosophy and plans for the children around routines, curriculum, learning units, celebrations, etc.

End of School

Yearbooks - Lead Teachers are required to create a class End-of-Year memory book for distribution to each student. Many teachers choose to use Shutterfly with purchasing coordinated through the office. Please come to the office to see an example of the content and format of the memory book.

Final Week - Lead Teachers are paid for the week following the last day of school according to their regular hours. Assistants who work in the classroom at the request of the teacher will be paid their regular hourly rate and should sign-in on the timesheet outside the office. This week is designated for cleaning and organizing the classroom and for preparing the room for the camp teacher if camp will be held in the room. Returning teachers may flex some of these hours to the beginning of next year provided the camp teachers are accommodated.

Parent Involvement/Support

CCPC is known as a place with involved and connected families. We are a “Parent Participatory Program” and have a general open door policy for parents to drop-in and volunteer in a wide variety of ways from chaperoning/driving on field trips, leading story times or cooking projects, or joining our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and leading school community events, etc. Parents of Toddlers and Twos are invited several times a year into the classroom, but do not regularly volunteer in the room. Each teacher solicits parents to join a committee that helps support the school/classroom (e.g. Room Parent, Grocery Helper, Auction Committee, Annual Fund Representative or BBQ Committee). More details are available in the office.

Our Annual Fund is a November fundraiser spearheaded by a parent chairperson. The funds raised have been used capital campaign projects, teacher support, and scholarships. Each year the campaign chairperson works with the Director to choose a fundraising goal. It is hoped that all staff will donate a modest amount to reflect our commitment to the school.

Communication with Parents

Parents love to feel that they are a part of their child’s school day. Documentation and information about our Learning Through Play intentional teaching is important. Lead teachers use email to send weekly updates about general school calendar events, classroom recaps, and recent photos. Current teachers are available to help mentor new staff on successful formats and techniques. The Director sends a monthly newsletter with more educational, enrollment, and event information as well.

Special Services for Children

If a teacher is facing challenges with a child that cannot be managed through typical classroom interventions, the teacher should contact the office to initiate an internal observation and parent communication plan.

It is our goal to partner and support families in identifying each child’s individual needs in order to fully support healthy development. As needed to augment teacher observations, the DC Early Stages program’s assessment tool, Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), can be administered to support teacher evaluations. We offer resources and information about available service options on our website and in private consultation with the Director, as well as through contracted child development specialists. This professional resource (paid for by CCPC) is also used by staff for continuing education workshops, general classroom evaluations, and individual observations and evaluations for children experiencing challenges. Individual evaluations are conducted with advance permission from parents and co-ordinated through the office.

Referral for outside services and assistance in accessing government evaluation and IEP services is provided through the office. **All student information is strictly confidential.**

Conferences

Check-in Calls - In early fall, all Lead Teachers offer “check-in” calls to the parents of all the children in their class. This is typically a 10 minute call with no written component. The purpose is to create a positive, early connection with the parents. Lead Teachers are compensated for an additional 2 hours of time for these calls by adding the hours to their timesheets.

Formal Parent Teacher Conferences - In-person Parent Teacher Conferences are held annually in December for the Creekside PreK programs, and in late January for the Hillside, Blue Sky and Woodland programs. Parents should be reminded that teachers and the Director are ALWAYS available for additional meetings, conversation, etc. to discuss development, behavior or particular family issues as needed. Teachers are required to complete a school provided “developmental profile” form for each student as a discussion guide for their conference. The Lead Teacher will email the form to the parents the night before their conference. A copy of these forms should be submitted to the office to be filed in the student record.

Recommendation Forms - Teachers are required to complete recommendation forms that are requested by parents who are applying their children to other schools. Please notify the office when you receive a recommendation request so that the completion can be tracked. Completed paper recommendation forms will be submitted by the office. A copy of electronically submitted forms should be printed out and submitted to the office to be filed in the student record.

Traditional Events, Field Trips, and Specials

After more than 65 years, there are many beloved traditions at our school. Schedules for all special events and field trips are sent from the office in advance to teachers with full details. Teachers communicate directly with parents about event/trip details after that. Parent drivers provide transportation for out-of-school activities.

- **Grown-Up Visiting Days** - Teachers occasionally plan time for all parents to join the class for holiday celebrations or other special events.
- **Classroom Specials** - for Woodland and Creekside PreK - Teachers invite parents (one at a time) to the classroom to share a special interest, do a cooking project, or read a book to the class. This strengthens the parents bond to our school and underscores our intent to be a Parent Participatory Program.
- **Yoga** - Monthly for all children (Hillside and Blue Sky begin in January) Thirty minutes of mindful fun in Calvin Hall.
- **Gross Motor Special** - Monthly for all children (Hillside and Blue Sky begin in January) A contracted gross motor program will visit us twice a month for 30 minutes for each class.
- **Creekside PreK Trips** - Our oldest classes travel outside of school to a variety of destinations that vary each year from Imagination Stage to the Rock Creek Planetarium.
- **Farm Trip** (October) for Woodland and Creekside PreK - Parent drivers support this trip to visit animals, ride the hay wagons, and pick pumpkins.
- **Visit to Sanctuary** - (December) all classes (scheduled in groups) go to the church sanctuary to learn about the organ and ring bells in the choir loft (30 minutes). This holiday favorite brings an elevated music experience to our children.
- **Holiday Sing-Along** - (December) Children typically learn 3 or 4 holiday songs in their classrooms in December and then parents and family members are invited to join with their children (by program group) for a 20 minute holiday sing-along around the piano in the Big Room. This event is typically the last day before Winter Break.
- **Visit to the Post Office** - (February) for Woodland and Creekside PreK, with parent volunteers, these classes walk to the Chevy Chase post office to mail homemade Valentines home to parents or grandparents. This activity is an opportunity to connect children to their community.

Annual School and Family Events

Fall Family BBQ

Teachers are *encouraged* but not required to attend this Sunday early evening event held in the fall. Led by parents and held on the playground and church lawn, this is a community kick-off to the year with great food and fun activities for the children.

Annual Auction and Party

Parents lead this community building and vital evening fundraiser for the school consisting of a silent auction and an off-site evening event with a live auction. Teachers are invited and *encouraged* to attend at no cost, but this event is not required. The auction items include sign-up parties for each classroom, typically held on a spring Saturday. Teachers are required to plan and attend this sign-up party for the children in their class who purchase tickets. Teachers and Assistents will be paid for an additional 3 hours for these parties.

Family Events

Occasional family Pizza Nights or other gatherings are planned by parents to support the school and build community. Teachers will be asked to help send reminders about events and may attend as they choose. Invitations come from the office/event committee.

Parent Pot Lucks

Lead Teachers are required to help plan and attend a parent-hosted potluck on a mutually agreed upon evening in the fall. Assistants are invited, but not required to attend. Generally these events are scheduled for a Friday and include all the parents, but not children. The purpose of the fall pot-luck is to provide a social setting for parents and their teacher to bond together and start to form a class community. Often a parent wants to host a spring pot-luck as well. This second potluck is optional for teachers.

Staff Events

All staff are invited to, but not required to attend, our Staff Holiday Party, typically a Friday evening in early December, and Teacher Appreciation Luncheon in May.

APPENDICES

The following appendices were developed to be one-page summaries of specific policies.



Playground Use

The CCPC playground is exclusively reserved for use by the Nursery School, After School Program, and Christian Education Programs of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church. The playground is locked after hours.

Due to allergy concerns, **no food is allowed** on our playground except for classroom snacks served by teachers. You are welcome to enjoy food from home at our picnic table outside the playground near our entrance, but please, no NUTS.

We are a nut-free facility in all parts of our property.

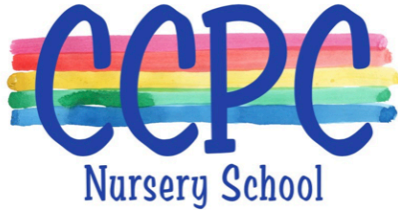
Big Room Use

The Big Room is reserved for use by the Nursery School, After School Program, and Christian Education Programs of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church. The Big Room is used from 8:15-9:00am, Monday - Friday for our Early Drop-off Program children and staff, as is a core part of the curriculum of all of our classes.

This recently-renovated gross motor development space features a climbing wall, giant engineering blocks, balancing equipment, a multi-skill climbing structure, a “crash nook” and many other tools for developing children.

Due to allergy concerns, **no food is allowed** in our Lobby, Big Room, or Library spaces.





We are a nut-free facility in all parts of our property.

Guidelines to Ensure a Nut-Free Facility

Children with allergies require careful control of their environments. Please do your part to follow these simple, but crucial guidelines to keep all our children safe and healthy.



Before you enter the facility (building or playground)

Please make sure that there is no food residue on your or your child's hands or open packets of snacks that may spill on the floors or ground. This will keep our stair railings safe to hold and our play equipment free of allergens.

Before you enter the classroom

Every classroom has a station in the hallway by the door with wipes and a trash can. Children entering the class (and anyone accompanying the child into the classroom) are required to wipe their hands and mouth and dispose of their wipe before entering.

SNACKS, LUNCHES & CLASSROOM COOKING PROJECTS

Food from home might include:

- parent-provided snacks for the class to share
- lunches for Extended Day participants
- parent-provided ingredients for class cooking projects

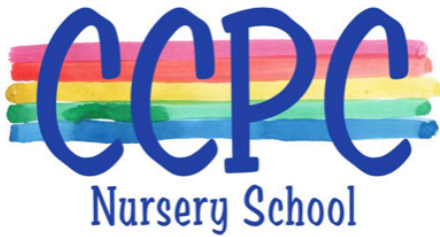
Please carefully read the food labels of all items brought into the classroom to ensure that the food is nut free and **not** manufactured in a facility that processes nuts. Any food sent to school that does not meet these requirements or that is not labelled will be sent home with a note. Homemade items that can not be shared with the entire class are discouraged.

SHARED SPACES

Please remember that even if your child or none of the children in your classroom has an allergy, all of these guidelines still apply.

We share indoor and outdoor play spaces, hallways, and the picnic grove.

Children may only eat food provided by or approved by CCPC staff when on any of the facility grounds.



Healthy Eating Best Practices Policy

CCPC Nursery School has created this policy around best practices laid out by Zero to Three, the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness, the National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

“Feeding and mealtimes are important for children to grow healthy and strong. But they are also about much more than promoting a child’s physical development. They provide rich opportunities to support your child’s overall healthy development, especially social and emotional development. In today’s busy world, the everyday routine of feeding can be a chance to slow down and connect with children. What’s on the table feeds your child’s body, but what happens around the table feeds her heart and mind.”

- Zero to Three, National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families

What we DO:

- Sit down together at the table to model positive social engagement
- Share family-style snacks
- Encourage children to recognize their hunger and fullness cues
- Support healthy food preferences
- Allow children to choose what and how much they eat to develop and exercise their self-regulation skills
- Offer less preferred food multiple times
- Provide healthy choices of food
- Model tasting new foods

What we DON'T DO:

- Force, trick or shame children into eating foods they do not want
- Use food as a reward
- Ask children to eat all the food they have available
- Ask children to eat certain foods before others (even dessert)
- Ask children to have “just one taste” of a food that they do not want to eat
- Ask children to eat a food to please their teacher or parent