

Resurrection Preschool



Handbook 2019-2020

Resurrection Lutheran Church Preschool
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OUR PERSPECTIVE

Resurrection Preschool was created in 1970 by Resurrection Lutheran Church in order to assist those parents wishing to provide their children with a foundation for a meaningful, healthy and productive life. Such a foundation suggests the uniqueness of each child, an understanding and acceptance of cultural and religious diversity, the development of mind and body, and the capacity for love and creativity inherent in each individual.

The preschool program is fully licensed by the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, and meets all licensing requirements.

OUR PROGRAM

Resurrection Preschool is open for a half-day session, four days a week: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Children attend from 9 am-12 noon. There is also an early drop off option from 8 am-9 am, all 4 days.

On Wednesdays, we offer a program for toddlers, 2 years of age, and their parent or caregiver utilizing the classroom space. We also offer a Wednesday afternoon enrichment program for older four and five-year-olds.

The pre-school is licensed for up to thirty (30) children in the session. The staff includes the Pastor, the Director, the administrative assistant, three teachers, an assistant teacher, the business assistant, and a maintenance person.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To provide experiences which promote the development of meaningful, healthy values which will guide the children throughout their lives.
2. To support parents in fulfilling their parental responsibilities in the most creative way.
3. To encourage and promote the development of each child's autonomy and self-esteem.
4. To encourage sensitivity, respect and understanding of each child's rights and feelings, and those of others.
5. To foster curiosity, creativity and initiative in problem solving.
6. To provide opportunities and interest in cognitive development.
7. To provide opportunities for physical development and coordination.

PUTTING THE OBJECTIVES INTO PRACTICE

Program Objective #1: *To provide experiences which promote the development of meaningful, healthy values which will guide the children throughout their lives.*

Young children attain values and learn appropriate ways to act by identifying with the important people in their lives. The preschool staff provides excellent models for the children.

We use various curriculum materials that are geared toward developing an attitude of respect for the existence of varied individuals, cultures and religions. Our materials are of an anti-bias, non-sexist and multi-cultural nature. Resurrection Preschool welcomes children of all classes, races and faiths.

Program Objective #2: *To support parents in fulfilling their parental responsibilities in the most creative way.*

The Director and teachers are available to parents to help formulate answers to their child-development questions. Occasional evening meetings may be scheduled to provide parents and staff with an opportunity to meet and discuss selected topics.

Teachers meet with parents for conferences twice during the year to exchange information about the child's progress. Parents and teachers may request additional conferences at any time during the year. New and returning students have a home visit by the child's small group teacher prior to the start of the school year.

As the early years form the foundation for all later learning and development, parents are strongly encouraged to become involved with their child's preschool education. Volunteering in the classroom is one way to accomplish this. Many parents schedule a special time to assist once a month, while others volunteer on special occasions such as their child's birthday or for a field trip. Those parents who cannot bring their special skills to school often find creative ways to assist from their homes. This involvement helps the preschoolers feel that their parent cares about an important aspect of his or her life.

In order to inform parents of the activities of the past week and of plans for future activities, the *Preschool News* is written and distributed bi-monthly. The newsletter contains a summary of the classroom activities, and useful information

regarding parenting, education, and child development issues. The newsletter also serves as a reminder for upcoming events and as a forum for requesting needed materials. Parents are asked to post the *monthly calendar* at home, as well as to read the newsletter thoroughly, as this provides the opportunity to share in their child's preschool experience.

Program Objective #3: *To encourage and promote the development of each child's autonomy and self-esteem.*

The child's autonomy is encouraged and developed in many ways, beginning with the selection of teachers who respect the child's rights. Each teacher must be a close observer of the child's actions, attitudes and abilities. In this way, the staff can help the child construct knowledge and gain self-reliance through the preschool environment and activities.

The thinking and problem-solving skills which children are developing during their preschool years are enhanced through the activities and experiences the staff provides. A fundamental goal of early childhood education is to promote within each child a positive self-concept. Children who feel good about themselves and their abilities are more open to new learning situations. This goal is achieved by providing stimulating and challenging experiences that the child can master and feel competent in. In achieving this goal we focus on all areas of development. The staff endeavors to provide a rich environment in which the child is free to socialize with other children, and to assume responsibility for his or her own actions. The staff plans program activities which facilitate a comfortable transition between home and school.

Program Objective #4: *To encourage sensitivity, respect and understanding of each child's rights and feelings, and those of others.*

The child learns to respect and understand himself through interactions with other children, and through classroom procedures. The preschool limits are clearly set, and teachers and children discuss the implications of these.

Learning to socialize is a very important skill that preschoolers spend a great deal of time developing. The staff places great value on the development of social skills and your child's mastery of them. When problems arise between children, the teacher helps the children to discover the solutions. The children are encouraged to verbalize their feelings to the other children in reaching a solution.

Program Objectives #5 & #6: *To foster curiosity, creativity and initiative in problem solving; and to provide opportunities and interest in cognitive development.*

Cognitive skills emerge when the child has ample opportunities to predict outcomes, to experiment, to draw conclusions and to test his problem-solving techniques.

Children are given free choice of play in the various areas of interest throughout the preschool environment. In the classroom, the child might explore questions such as: *What happens if...? Which things sink and which things float? How do colors change when mixed together? Which is the biggest, heaviest, longest? Which cup holds the most water? or How should that problem be solved next time?* The children are encouraged to formulate their own answers to these questions through the use of classroom equipment, themes, projects, activities and discussion.

Program Objective #7: *To provide opportunities for physical development and coordination.*

Opportunities for muscular development and coordination are provided through activities such as balancing, throwing, climbing, aiming, and rolling. Indoor equipment includes equipment for climbing, as well as climbers with a tunnel and slide. There are also various balance boards, a variety of balls, a selection of workshop tools, and a set of large wooden blocks. The adjacent outdoor playground provides opportunities for swinging, sand play, various types of climbing, hanging on the horizontal ladder, and running on the path. The cement area provides an open space for bike riding, group games, or ball playing.

Small muscular development and coordination is fostered through projects utilizing art supplies, puzzles, small blocks, games, puppets and play dough in the indoor classrooms, and through sand play in the outdoor area. Cooking activities such as scrubbing, cutting, peeling, spreading and stirring also contribute to the development of fine motor control. Small groups rotate preparing a snack occasionally.

THE STAFF

Resurrection is proud of its exceptionally well-qualified professional staff members who put the program objectives into practice. The staff includes the Director and a teacher/child ratio of 1 to 7.

There is no regular preschool on Wednesdays but we do offer an Enrichment Program for children 4 and 5 years of age. The staff uses Wednesday afternoon to also discuss individual children, to plan classroom activities, and to evaluate teaching methods.

In the classroom and on the playground, each teacher is responsible for a specific area. As the teachers rotate on a weekly basis from one area to another, their specific responsibilities change.

Each week, one of the teachers serves as leader in the large room. Their duties include supervising the climbing equipment and directing the overall movement of the activities. As leader, she/he rings the clean-up bell and conducts the structured Large Group Time. They are responsible for volunteers and the week's theme. On the playground, the leader supervises play on the concrete area and in the sandbox.

A second teacher assists with the “loft” area in the Carpeted Room and can facilitate the use of puzzles, games, experiments, and wood-working. She/he also reads stories to individuals or to small groups of children. Outdoors, this teacher supervises the bridge area.

A third teacher works in the Art Area. She/he sets out a planned activity and supervises the easel area. Children are encouraged to plan and execute their own art projects with a variety of materials which are always available in the art area. Art activities give the children a chance to blend colors, and to practice skills in cutting, gluing, painting, and shaping. The art table is an area of free expressions; an area where there are no right or wrong answers. Outdoors, this teacher watches the climbing equipment--in particular, the horizontal ladder.

Parents may call the preschool teachers and staff during the following times:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday between 8:30 & 9:00 am; 12:15 & 1:00 pm.

HOW THE SPACE IS DIVIDED

The preschool consists of three rooms: the kitchen for the preparation of snacks; the Carpeted Room for puzzles, manipulative toys, books, games, and a "loft" area for dramatic play; and the Large Room for the various interest centers and for special activities such as cooking. During small group times, the Large Room is divided to accommodate two small groups, and the third small group uses the Carpeted Room.

The interest centers in the Large Room include a large building block area, a water/sand/mud table, an art table and easels, a play dough or multi-purpose area, a literacy center, a science area, and a large motor area which includes climbing equipment.

HOW THE TIME IS DIVIDED

Free Play Time: (9:00-10:00 a.m) Children enter the room, remove and hang up their coats, and take part in activities in the various interest centers in the large room and the carpeted room.

Clean-up Time: (10:00-10:05 am) The leader rings the bell and all sing the "Clean-Up Song." Children then put away all materials with teacher guidance.

Large Group Time: (10:05-10:20 a.m) All the children gather on the large rug for a structured large group activity. This is a time for theme discussion, introducing new games, songs and movement activities.

Small Group Time: (10:20-11:20 a.m) This time includes teacher-planned projects, games or stories, and a snack. The children are grouped chiefly by age. Each small group has up to nine children and one teacher.

Outdoor Time: (11:20-11:50/55 a.m) All children dress for the weather and go outside to enjoy the playground area.

Dismissal: (12:00 noon) All children gather their belongings and sit on our large rug and wait to be called to the door to a parent or other authorized person.

Occasionally, special activities will alter this schedule.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

THE PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Preschool Committee functions as an advisory board to the Preschool Director and to the Resurrection Lutheran Church Council. It serves as an arm of the Resurrection Lutheran Church Council to act as a liaison among preschool parents, faculty, administration, and the church. The Committee meets at least once a month and is composed of the Preschool Director, four to six preschool parents, one toddler parent, and a Church Council member. Specifically, the Preschool Committee forms sub-committees to provide concrete assistance with 1) the coordination of volunteer efforts; 2) financial and budgetary matters; 3) fundraising; 4) public relations; and 5) property acquisition and maintenance.

Committee meetings are open to all parents of children currently enrolled in the program. Minutes of these meetings are available to all who request them.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a very important aspect of parental participation and is vital to the on-going operation of Resurrection Preschool. Each year, the parents of Resurrection preschoolers sponsor a major fundraising event., The Apple Bash, as well as give a donation to the Annual Fund which began in 2013. To insure success, total participation on the part of the parents is required. Proceeds from the auction and donations to the Annual Fund are needed to maintain the operating budget, and in the past have also been used to purchase special items such tables for our outdoor playground, room renovations, and classroom equipment. We count on everyone's participation and enthusiasm to reach our fund-raising goals.

DONATIONS

Besides the Annual Fund, donations to the preschool can be made in many ways. Monetary donations are always appreciated, but the preschool also welcomes supplies, snacks, equipment and donations of time and talent. Both the monthly calendar and newsletter list specific requests for the classroom activities. All monetary donations are tax-deductible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HEALTH OF CHILDREN

Children are very generous about sharing their illnesses with one another and with their favorite teachers. Please keep your child at home when there are signs of a cough, cold, rash, sore throat, or head lice. As children will make daily use of the outdoor play equipment, please keep your child at home if he or she is not well enough to play outside.

In case of sudden illness or medical emergency, the preschool will attempt to reach parents. The children will be taken to the nearest hospital should the staff feel the condition merits such attention before the parent arrives. The "Authorization for Release" form allows for emergency care in the event that parents cannot be located.

If a child become ill but does not require emergency care, the parents will be asked to pick up the child. If a child will be absent for several days, parents should inform the staff.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

As a new requirement by the Dept. of Children and Family Services, all children enrolled in our Preschool program will go through a short screening for vision and hearing. This will be done in the late winter/early spring at school. Letters informing parents about the screening as well as the date will be distributed at least 2 weeks prior to the screening date. If there is a flag regarding any issues noted by the screenings then there will be a re-screening as well as parent notification to check in with the child's doctor.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the preschool curriculum. A trip to see a children's play, a trip to the fire station, or a trip to a bakery shop are examples of theme-related field trips. Parents give permission for trips away from the classroom by signing the "Authorization for Release" form. The monthly calendar lists all planned field trips. On rare occasions, spontaneous trips to the park are taken if the weather is especially nice or when special opportunities arise. The group will wait five minutes for a late child before departing on a planned field trip.

NEWSLETTER

The preschool staff jointly compiles a bi-monthly newsletter. The letter gives information about the events which transpired at preschool during the month. Announcements of upcoming activities, as well as requests for supplies and snacks, are listed in the newsletter. Fliers and information from other groups which may be of interest to parents are often attached.

PRESCHOOL CLOTHING

To assure safety during climbing and other active play, children must wear rubber-soled shoes. When shopping for children's clothing, please avoid articles which require teacher assistance: sashes, bib overalls, one-piece jumpers, zipper boots, etc. When winter comes, boots which are amply large are generally the easiest for the young children to manage. Try to locate a jacket with a large zipper. One-piece snow-suits are difficult for some children to manage. Please label all coats, hats, mittens, boots and shoes in order to avoid mix-ups. We request that each child bring a labeled school bag or backpack to school each day for carrying home art projects and other school work. Bags should also be labeled.

BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

Please help your child to remember to keep toys at home! Small toys which find their way to school may be lost or broken.

We welcome the loan of special theme-related toys, books, and other resources. These items enrich our program and bring joy to the children who share them. Please label the items carefully. Do not send things which are fragile or valuable. We will do our best to return them in good condition.

SNACKS

The preschool endeavors to serve unsweetened juice, milk, fresh fruit, raw vegetables, graham crackers and other nutritious snacks. We require parents to sign up to bring one or two full weeks of snacks. All individual snack treats must be pre-packaged, store bought items (state law prohibits us from serving snacks made at home).

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT SCHOOL

Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays at preschool by bringing in a special snack to share. Suggestions include mini-muffins, frozen yogurt bars or mini-ice cream cups. Please note that birthday invitations for parties outside of the preschool should include all children in your child's small group (8-10 children). Inviting all in the small group sets a great example in how to be inclusive.

ADMISSION TO PRESCHOOL

REQUIREMENTS

Admission to Resurrection Preschool is open to children who meet the following requirements:

1. The child must be at least three years of age by September 1, 2019. Children who will be turning three in the fall may apply, and their application will be considered if an opening remains after the selection process for the 3-5 year-olds is completed. **A copy of the child's birth certificate must be included in the contract upon acceptance.**
2. Children should be toilet-trained before the start of preschool.
3. All required application information and medical reports must be completed and filed with the preschool office by September 1, 2019. Please allow ample time if mailing your forms.
4. The preschool and applicant must be able to work out arrangements for tuition payments.

HOW CHILDREN ARE ACCEPTED

In accepting children, Resurrection strives to have a balance of boys and girls aged 3, 4, and 5. Although the range of ages varies somewhat from year to year, ideal group composition is planned more according to natural developmental levels vs., chronological age.

Priority acceptance is given to: 1) children of staff of Resurrection Preschool and Resurrection Church; 2) second-year Resurrection preschoolers, 3) siblings of Resurrection preschoolers, 4) children of members of Resurrection Lutheran Church, and 5) children who are currently enrolled in the Toddler program, 6) New families. All other applications are placed in a lottery which is conducted by a member of the Preschool Parent Committee.

Director and church discretion is also given for up to two slots per school year.

PROCEDURES

Prospective parents are encouraged to observe the classroom facilities and to meet the teachers. Dates for visiting the school may be arranged by calling the Director.

1. Application forms can be obtained during the visit, or from the office (phone: 773.525.0605). The application forms should be completed and returned with the \$80 application fee to the office: Resurrection Preschool
3309 N. Seminary
Chicago, Illinois 60657

The application fee is not refundable, nor does it apply toward tuition. Siblings of current or former Resurrection students, toddler program children, children of church members, and students currently enrolled in our program will be given preference in placements and we strive to enroll as many new children as possible every year.

2. Priority acceptances to Resurrection Preschool will be mailed out around March 8, 2019. At that point, parents will be notified of acceptance into the morning session.

Upon acceptance, each family must return a signed contract along with a check for \$2300. This is due by March 22, 2019 and will assure their spot in the program. **YOUR TUITION CONTRACT DEPOSIT OF \$2300 IS NON-REFUNDABLE FOR ANY REASON.**

In the event that there are no openings, parents will receive notification that the child's name has been placed on the waiting list. Persons on the waiting list are only notified should an appropriate opening occur.

3. Upon acceptance, parents will receive a medical form. All children (new students as well as returning students) must be examined by a doctor not more than two months prior to the first day of school in the fall. Take the medical form to your physician, who must complete the immunization record and sign the report indicating that your child is in good health.

IMPORTANT: State licensing requires that all children whose medical reports are incomplete by September 1, 2019 be excluded from the program until such time that the report is completed and on file in the preschool office. **NO EXCEPTION CAN BE MADE TO THIS RULE!**

4. A completed copy of the "Authorization for Release" form must be completed by the parents and filed with the preschool office by September 1, 2019. Upon acceptance, all families are required to submit a copy of their child's birth certificate.

5. Upon acceptance, all families will receive a Guidance and Discipline Policy statement which needs to be read and signed.

6. Before school begins in September, a staff member will visit the families of new and returning students. The purpose of this visit is to provide an opportunity for the teacher, parents, and child to get acquainted and for the parents and teacher to discuss their mutual goals for the child's preschool experiences.

TUITION

Resurrection Preschool is a not-for-profit organization. The income for the preschool is derived from tuition paid by the families and from special fundraising events planned by the parents. Tuition is set at \$950 per month for the morning session.

Tuition may be paid in two-month increments, on a monthly basis, or by the year. If paying monthly, tuition is due on the first of the month. Checks should be made out to Resurrection Preschool. Tuition can also be paid online at the church's website at rlclakeview.com/preschool. Please note that when using a credit card for payment online, there is a processing fee. Direct deposits via a bank account can also be set up online if that is preferred.

Absenteeism, for any reason, does not reduce tuition. It is the parents' responsibility to pay tuition on time. **A late fee of \$20 per month will be assessed after the 5th of the month.** This fee will be imposed by the Director for any unexcused payment. Tardiness in payment for more than two months may result in the family being dropped from the program. September 2019 tuition is due by September 1, 2019 at the preschool office.

SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited fund is available for scholarship assistance. Applicants requesting tuition reductions may request a scholarship form through the Director. The Director will then evaluate the family's finances and will make a decision on the amount of

scholarship requested based upon the preschool's ability to meet its expenses. All information is kept strictly confidential.

LATE PICK-UP FROM SCHOOL

If a parent or other authorized person is going to be late in picking up their child, please call the school at (773) 525-0605 and let us know. One of the teachers or assistant teacher will remain with the child in the classroom until pick-up. Regular dismissal times are 12:00 noon for the morning session. If there is no message about a late pick up and it is 15 minutes past the regular dismissal time, then every effort will be made to contact one or both parents by telephone. If contact is not made, then the staff will call the emergency numbers as stated on the authorization for release form.

WITHDRAWALS FROM PRESCHOOL

Families withdrawing their child from Resurrection Preschool during the school year must confer with the Director as soon as possible. The preschool requires a one month notice of withdrawal. If the preschool can fill the child's slot, the family withdrawing will forfeit only their deposit. If the space must go unfilled due to the preschool discretion or any other reason, the family will be responsible for the balance of the year's tuition.

Because of occasional mid-year withdrawals from the preschool program, it is sometimes necessary to move a child to another small group in order to fill an open slot in one of the three groups. Because only a small portion of the preschool day is spent exclusively in small groups, the children quickly get to know all the children and feel comfortable with all three teachers. Since the children are grouped by age, this will be the determining factor in moving a child to the next group. Although this situation rarely occurs, when a shift in groups is necessary, the Director and teachers take great care in making the moves gradually over a period of one to two weeks, depending on the adjustment of the child.

Occasionally the staff, after consulting with the parents and interacting with a child, may feel that a particular child is not benefiting from the program, or is disrupting the program for others. The Director and staff shall make every attempt to work with both child and parents to rectify the problem. However, should this not be possible, the staff may recommend that the child be withdrawn from Resurrection Preschool.

