

PARENT HANDBOOK





I. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Fees for the coming year are based on a nonprofit budget. See Admissions Agreement or Tuition Schedule for full tuition payment or monthly fees.

No credit on tuition is given for scheduled school holidays and vacation periods or for student absences. The tuition is based on a yearly tuition fee. You may pay the total tuition or pay it monthly. If paid monthly, the cost is divided into equal monthly payments (except the first and last payment).

Tuition Payments

Kirk House tuition for the regular school year is calculated on an annual basis. For those families not paying the full tuition in advance, tuition will be divided into ten equal payments. The first payment is due July 1 prior to the start of the school year. The remaining 9 payments are due monthly, from September through May. Statements will be sent home on the 1st of the month and are due by the 15th of each month. Payments not received by the 15th are subject to a \$10.00 late fee. Summer School tuition is calculated separately as not all students attend.

Registration Fee/Waiting List Fee

A waiting list fee of \$50.00 is payable when you place your child's name on the waiting list, and a registration fee of \$200.00 is payable upon enrollment. For returning students the registration fee is \$175.00.

Payment in Case of Withdrawal from Program

Each child is enrolled for the entire school year (from the beginning of school until the middle of June). One month's prior written notice is needed to receive any refund from an annual payment. One month's prior written notification is also needed to be released from the monthly tuition obligation.

Overtime Charge

There will be an overtime charge for children not picked up at their regular dismissal time. The morning program ends at 12:00 P.M., the MWF "Lunch Bunch" program ends at 2:00 P.M. Please be on time! Any parent who is habitually late will be charged \$15.00. This will be added to your next statement. Continued abuse could lead to grounds for dismissal from school. In an emergency situation, we will be flexible. However, we require that you phone us if you will be more than 5 minutes late.



2. THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. Before enrollment you must file with us an identification/emergency form and a medical report signed by a physician. We also require that the child have certain standard immunizations unless you have a medical exemption and a medical release form on file. A brief visual health assessment is given upon each child's arrival at school.

Your child may be sent home if any symptoms of illness appear during the day. In such cases, your child will be isolated from the other children, and you will be contacted.

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF HE OR SHE:

- Has a fever or has had one during the previous 24-hour period.
- Is taking an antibiotic, unless it has been determined by the physician that the child is not contagious and is well enough to be in school.
- Has a cold that is less than 3 days old.
- Has a heavy nasal discharge.
- Has a constant cough.
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea.
- Is fussy, cranky, and unusually out of sorts.
- Is very tired. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness.
- Has a symptom of a possible communicable disease. Please notify the school at once if your child does have a communicable disease.

Minor Scrapes and Bruises

Our staff works hard to provide a safe environment for your child, but with children, scrapes, bumps and bruises are a part of growing up. If your child falls and scrapes himself/herself, we will wash off the wound and cover it with a band-aid. We are not permitted to use antiseptic creams or cleaners, so we suggest you clean it again when you get home. If the injury is the result of a head bump, we will give you a call and let you decide whether or not you would like to pick up your child from school.

Disagreements between children are normal at this age. The children are beginning to learn how to share and play together cooperatively. We work to give children verbal skills to get their needs met. Sometimes a child might hit to get what he/she wants. We will handle this kind of situation during the class period. However, if your child bites or injures another child causing a bump or bruise, we will talk to both families about the incident.

We send home a note anytime there is an injury at school. It will let you know what happened and what the teacher did to care for your child. Please talk with us if you have a concern about something that happened at school. We will follow up and get back to you.

Emergency

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If we cannot reach you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. The director or an assistant will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of the child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by our insurance. The school will maintain a parents' signed consent form agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date with current phone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information. Please do not use another school or childcare facility as the person to call in an emergency.

Fire and Earthquake Drill

Periodically Kirk House has practice drills (licensing requirement). In September, we go over our emergency procedures and teach the children what to do in case of a fire (safely get out of the building and stop, drop and roll if their clothes are on fire) and in case of an earthquake (get under a table).



3. AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. We must have written or verbal authorization for changes in this respect.

4. ASSISTANCE BY PARENTS

Parents or guardians, if you have a special talent, hobby or interest (musician, artist, gardener, fireman, storyteller, or puppeteer) and would like to present your area of interest to the children, please see the director to set up a time which is convenient for you. We would also enjoy having you in the classroom to help us. A calendar will be placed on the red sign-in counter, and we will have one day a week available for your assistance. Activities will be set up for you on the day that you participate. Thanks in advance for your help. Please do not bring siblings.

In order to volunteer in the classroom, parents must have completed Menlo Church's Volunteer Application and Background Check process. This is to ensure the safety of all children at the school. To start the process, please go to our website (www.kirkhousepreschool.org). On the left side of the "home page", you will find a link, "Volunteers", which will take you to our Volunteer Application.

Kirk House Preschool has a Parent Committee which plans events, organizes mission projects and offers support to the school. The committee meets three times during the school year on Monday nights. We would appreciate your participation. We also need and urge your voluntary assistance with parties and baking cookies.

5. WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY BE OF HELP TO YOU

When you enroll your child in our school, we assume the responsibility of giving you assistance with special needs in relation to your child's school adjustment, growth and development. Conferences in relation to your child's development will be arranged upon request. You will be referred to persons who provide special services if we feel that your child needs evaluation.

6. WHAT TO WEAR TO SCHOOL

PROVIDE SIMPLE CLOTHING THAT IS:

- Free of complicated fastening - especially pants that are easy for the child to manage themselves.
- Washable. (Play clothes that can get dirty with paint, dirt or sand.)
- Sturdy shoes that are designed for running, climbing and jumping. (No sandals without backs or shoes that slip off easily, please.)
- Appropriate for our changing California temperature. (Cool in the mornings, warm in the early afternoons.)
- No bracelets, necklaces, scarves or other items around the neck.
Please label all outer garments.

7. DIAPERS, TOILET TRAINING AND EXTRA CLOTHING

We will enroll children who are still in diapers, but we only change a child who has a bowel movement or is wetting through his/her diaper. Therefore, we ask that you change your child's diaper right before coming to school and place beside your child's name a "D." If your child is newly potty-trained, place a "P" by his/her name. Usually midway through the morning, a staff member will check the roster for the "D" and "P" notations. They will then check the diapers of the "D" children. They will ask the "P" children if they need to use the restroom. We will assist your child using the restroom (except for wiping the child), but we will not take them to the toilet on regular time intervals. If your child is out of diapers, but prone to having toilet accidents, please have your child wear pull-ups to school. For the children in pull-ups or diapers, we ask that you bring a change of clothes and an extra pull-up or diaper. These clothes can be brought in a small backpack. Clearly mark the outside of the backpack so we can find it easily. Please take them home with you at the end of the class. (Do not store or leave clothes in the cubbies overnight.)

8. PARKING

We have a small parking lot and only 10 designated drop-off parking spaces for the preschool. These parking stalls are only for 10 minutes. If you are planning on staying longer, please find another parking space. The church also has ongoing classes in the mornings and afternoons which contribute to our parking congestion, so if you cannot find a parking space in the lot, you may use a handicap space for the time it takes to drop off or pick up your child. You may call us if you need occasional assistance (sleeping baby, etc.) to bring your child into school or return them to you at the end of the day. However, we cannot do this on a regular basis.

9. NUTRITION

Parents provide the snacks we serve the children at mid-morning. These snacks are from two food groups. You will be assigned dates for which it will be your responsibility to provide a specific snack or the ingredients for a snack for the class. A snack list calendar for the year will be given to you at the beginning of school (at the start of the year, the school will provide the snacks). An additional snack list will be posted in the entryway. Please note your assigned snack and dates as we do NOT give reminders. Generally, the dates will be close to your child's birth date but please review the entire calendar. If you would rather have us provide the snack or if you forget to bring it, there will be a fee of \$20.00 per snack (each day). Please do not send any snacks (birthday treats included) or lunches with any kind of nuts. Please let the school know if your child has any food allergies. If your child has an EpiPen for food allergies, we require the child to bring his/her own snack. You will not be assigned snack dates.

10. BIRTHDAYS

Kirk House celebrates children's birthdays with a special "Birthday Trail Mix." When it is your turn to provide snack for your child's birthday, we will send home a special birthday bag with a list of items that can be brought for their special snack. Your child may choose two items to bring. Please bring something that fits in the bag, and they will be added to Cheerios and raisins which the school provides. The teachers will give your child a card and a birthday sticker. Your child's name will also be pinned to our birthday banner.

11. TOYS FROM HOME

Except for comfort items that are needed in the opening days of school to help ease your child's transition from home to school, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. If an item is brought to school (no guns or other weapons please), we cannot be responsible for it. It must be left in the child's cubby, and it must have the child's name on it. If you have a book that may be of interest to all of the children, we would appreciate this being shared with the class, but we ask that it be left for several days.



12. ARRIVAL AND PICKUP

ARRIVAL

- Class hours start at 9:00 A.M.
- The front (blue) door will be locked until class begins at 9:00 so that the teachers can prepare their classroom without having to supervise children.
- We ask that you do not bring your child much later than the appointed time. A child may feel uncomfortable about arriving after everyone else has become involved in activities.
- Cubbies have been designed for your child's jackets, sweaters and change of clothes. Your child's cubby number is the same number as your child's placement on the sign-in sheet. Please do not use cubbies for overnight storage.
- Sign your child in and out at the red counter. Please put the time which appears on our clock, your name and who will be picking up your child. Full signatures are needed upon arrival and pick up. This is a licensing requirement, and the licensing agent will fine the school if we are in violation.
- If your child is in diapers or is being potty trained, please put a "D" or a "P" by your child's name.
- The director or a teacher will greet you and your child at the door. We will do a brief visual health check so please do not leave your child on the playground.
- Our entryway can get congested so please do not stay and chat with friends in the hallway. You are welcome and encouraged to chat elsewhere.
- After you have signed your child in, please take him/her to the bathroom to wash his/her hands and use the toilet if necessary.

PICKUP

- Please pick up on time, 12:00 P.M. for the regular class, and 2:00 P.M. for the "Lunch Bunch" extended day on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- If you know you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we can reassure your child, and we can make arrangements for a teacher to remain with your child.
- If you want to chat with a teacher or the director in regards to your child's day, make sure you arrive on time or possibly a little early to pick up your child. Please be sensitive to the fact that the teachers are supervising the playground and keep your conversations short. If you would like to set up a conference to talk with a teacher or the director, we would be happy to meet with you to discuss your child.
- Make sure you sign your child out (your signature and the time). This is a licensing requirement, and the licensing agent will fine the school if we are in violation.
- No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent or guardian to pick up the child. If your plans change and you need to have someone other than yourself or an authorized person pick up your child, please call us. This is important; we will not let that person take your child unless we talk to you. We will ask that person for some identification, so please be sure they bring their Driver's License or other form of photo ID.
- Art work and/or any parent notice will be on the red table by the exit door. Please check your child's cubby and the red table every day.
- Do not let older or younger siblings run free in the school. Most of the toys and equipment are not designed for them and can pose a safety hazard. The teachers already have a challenging job of watching the gate, greeting parents and supervising the children in the program. It is an added strain if they have to watch siblings.
- Make sure that you latch the gate after you go through it. (If it is sticking, please inform one of the teachers.) This is very important to ensure the safety of all the children.



13. BABYSITTING

WE STRONGLY REQUEST THAT PARENTS NOT ASK STAFF FOR THIS SERVICE BECAUSE OUR INSURANCE DOES NOT COVER STAFF OFF PREMISES. WE WOULD LIKE OUR TEACHERS TO GIVE THEIR ENERGY AND FOCUS TO THEIR IMPORTANT JOBS HERE AT SCHOOL.

14. DAILY PROGRAM

Beginning each day for an hour and a half, the children enjoy activities which the staff has planned to help your child grow socially, emotionally, creatively, physically and spiritually. This includes, but is not limited to art projects, science projects, music/movement activities, dramatic play, creative toys and outdoor play. The play-based curriculum offers a different theme each week. The goal is for the child to start exploring and then move to developing, building and integrating the skills and concepts needed for Kindergarten. The children are provided a nutritious snack followed by a small-group experience. At this time, the children are introduced to the letter of the week, enjoy stories, sing songs, learn finger plays and play fun games. Once a week, we will present a Bible story. The 4-year-olds will also spend time working on their Handwriting Without Tears Notebook called My First School Book. There is a \$10.00 book fee which will be collected at the beginning of the school year. This curriculum prepares children for Kindergarten in a developmentally appropriate way. It will help them develop the phonemic awareness and fine motor skills needed for later reading and writing. This will happen either during the morning time or during the extended-day "Lunch Bunch" time. The younger children will also start the program by using Wood Pieces for Capital Letters along with other multisensory tools that lay the foundation for the notebook.

This carefully-designed program provides a flexible, enriching environment that promotes individual growth, social interaction and school readiness skills. The children are supervised at all times by our loving, experienced staff.

15. EXTENDED DAY "LUNCH BUNCH" FOR 4'S AND 5'S

The extended day program is offered to any child attending the Monday, Wednesday and Friday class. The children bring a lunch that is nut-free. There is outdoor playtime from 12:00 P.M. until 12:30 P.M. The children then come indoors to have lunch with one of the teachers. When they are finished, the children come together to work on their Handwriting Without Tears notebooks. Pick-up time for this class is 2:00 P.M.

16. EVALUATIONS/DEVELOPMENTAL PROFILE

Simple evaluations are sent home in December and May to the parents of our 3-year-old children. In December, we also send home this evaluation to 4 year-olds new to our program. This evaluation explains your child's adjustment to Kirk House and some of the activities he/she enjoys doing while here. We also have a two-year program of observation and assessment which we call our Developmental Profile Notebook. Each teacher has a small group of children whom he/she will observe and documents their progress over a two-year span (some children will switch teachers for the second year). Each week the teachers meet with their small group for snack and group time. The teachers document each child's progress with photos, anecdotal records, samples of the child's work and a checklist of observed activities. This Profile Notebook goes home the spring of your child's last year at Kirk House.

These notebooks are not only creative memories of your child's first school experience, but they also help us track your child's development and plan curriculum to further their growth. In some cases it identifies areas where a child might need some professional intervention to help them get ready for Kindergarten (for example, delay in speech development may need speech therapy). In such cases, we will communicate with you if we are seeing an area of delay and refer you to your child's doctor or the local school district for evaluation. For your child's future success in school, it is important that these be identified early.

17. DEVELOPING SELF-DISCIPLINE

One of our primary goals is to help children develop inner self-control so they can make appropriate and effective choices about their own behavior. As children recognize that consequences occur from the choices they make, they will have more control over their lives and learn to make better choices. Children who learn to accept responsibility for their words, feelings, and actions get into success cycles because they are learning from the choices they make.

SETTING LIMITS TO:

- Assure each child's safety.
- Prohibit the destruction of property.
- Teach each child to accept responsibilities.
- Teach each child to respect all people.

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING SELF-DISCIPLINE:

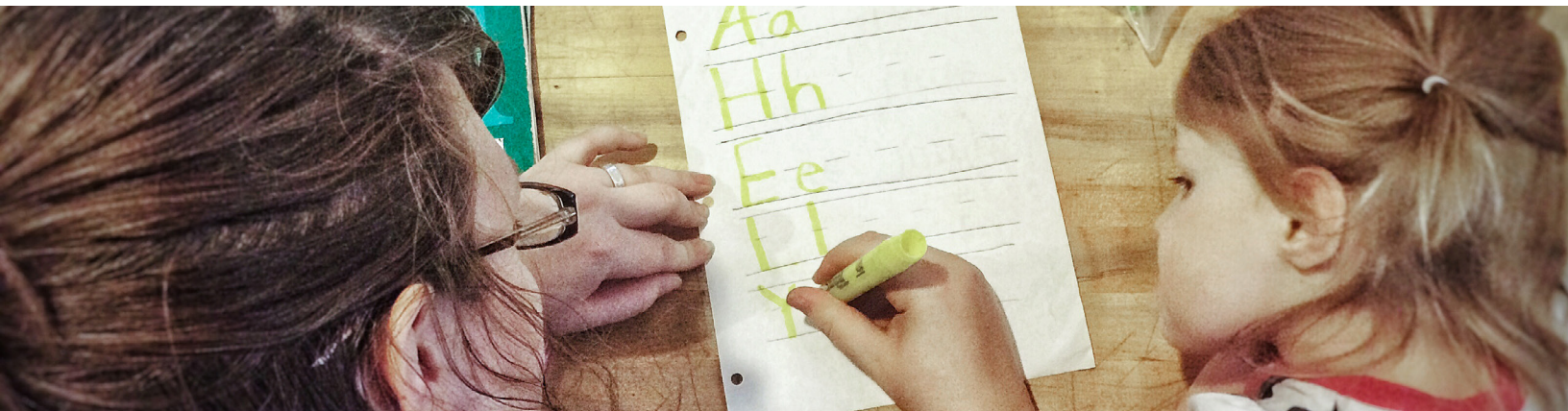
- "I" message is a three-part message that states our feelings, what's happening, and why we are concerned.
- Giving information lets the child know about the problem.
- Natural consequences allow the child to change their behavior by experiencing the results of their own actions.
- Logical consequences teach children what follows after their choice to misbehave.
- Choices allow the child to choose between two fairly equal options.
- Contingencies let the child know what should be finished before he/she can start something else.
- Last resort is to remove the child from the situation but give him/her the choice to return when he/she feels ready to cooperate.

At Kirk House, we try to use the “Love and Logic” approach. We give clear instructions (“Only safe drivers can ride our bikes.”). If the child has trouble following the instructions, we use empathy and consequences to teach (“Oh, so sad for you! Only safe drivers may ride our bikes. You will need to get off the bike.”). Then we offer them a chance to follow the instructions at a later time by saying (“You will have another chance later to be a safe driver”). We don’t preach, scold or raise our voice. However, we do follow through and let the consequence do the teaching. All the teachers work hard to be consistent and follow the same rules so the children do not get confused.

If the child needs to be removed from the classroom or playground to get control of his/her emotions, he/she will work with a teacher or the director to be given the opportunity to calm down and talk about what is going on. This is not a punishment. We want to help him or her by listening, asking questions, and offering advice on how to handle the situation in a more positive way. Once the child

has gained control, he or she is encouraged to go back in the classroom or playground and choose an activity. If it is a dispute between children, we help them develop the verbal skills needed to solve it themselves. With the 3-year-olds, we give them the words to use and with the 4- and 5-year-olds, we encourage them to attempt to solve it themselves and only bring an adult into it when their attempt has not been successful.

Parents are notified if we are experiencing an ongoing behavior problem that is affecting the child’s relationships with others and his or her participation in the program. We will work with the child and the parents to bring resolution to the problem. If it becomes a situation that affects the safety of the child, the other children in the program or the teachers, we will request that the child no longer attend our school. However, we will do everything in our power to bring a resolution before we come to this conclusion. We want Kirk House to be a positive school experience for everyone attending.



18. RAISING A READER BOOK BAGS

At the end of September, your child will bring home a Book Bag filled with wonderful books for your family to enjoy. The Book Bag Program is a project of the Raising A Reader Campaign, sponsored by the Peninsula Community Foundation. Each week your child will bring home a different bag. The bags for the Tuesday and Thursday class will go home on Thursday to be returned on arrival on Tuesday. There are three books in the bag, and each book has a Raising A Reader sticker. The bags for the Monday, Wednesday and Friday class will go home on Wednesday to be returned on arrival Monday. There are four books in these bags. They also have a Raising a Reader sticker on them. If you forget to bring your bag in upon arrival of your return day, we ask that you keep the books for another week.

19. VISITING THE SCHOOL

You are always welcome to observe our classrooms and see your child at work/play. If you have questions about your child or our program, please feel free to talk to the director. We want you to feel a part of the program. Together we can make your child’s first school experience a success. Thank you for choosing Kirk House Preschool.



KIRKHOUSEPRESCHOOL.ORG

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