

# Parent Handbook

Revised 3/21/2018



## **Foothills Preschool**

**19211 Dodge Avenue**

**North Tustin, CA 92705**

**714-573-7723**

**info@foothillspreschool.org**

**website: www.foothillspreschool.org**

**Department of Social Services**

**Facility Number**

**300600222**

**Tax I.D. 95-2261803**

Dear Foothills Preschool Families,

Welcome to Foothills Preschool! Our teachers are very excited about working with you and your children over the next school year to explore a beautiful and exciting world together. If you are new to our school, we look forward to getting to know you, and if you are a returning family, we are looking forward to continued growth in our relationship.

Over the course of the school year, our students will learn through experiences in our classrooms, on our playground, and in our community.

We are blessed here to have many wonderful parents who have unique talents that are willing to share with our students. If you would be interested in sharing your special talent or interest with your child's class, we'd love to hear from you. There are also plenty of volunteer opportunities we have available.

Please be sure to read through this Parent Handbook in order to acquaint yourself with the school's policies and procedures.

Sincerely,

The Foothills Preschool Staff

Marci Carey  
Program Director  
Marci@foothillspreschool.org

The Foothills Preschool Governing Committee  
Church of the Foothills  
714 - 544-1319

## **Foothills Preschool – Philosophy**

At Foothills Preschool, we believe in the child centered learning philosophies of the Reggio Emilia preschools of Italy and the revered child psychologists Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget, who all agree that the best way for children to make life-long learning connections is through play, especially when children are engaged in activities of their own choosing. Therefore, we believe the best approach is to focus on each individual child and their interests to help them develop their personal physical, emotional, cognitive, and social skills. We use developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) with an emergent curriculum and play based learning to accomplish those goals. Many of these experiences are presented through plenty of free choice and play activities, a lot of outdoor time, and enrichment programs such as gardening, language arts, STEM activities, cooking, yoga, music & movement, performing arts, art, etc.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), our field's professional organization, has countless resources and provides the researched based practice that we follow and implement. We urge you to visit their website at [www.NAEYC.org](http://www.NAEYC.org) to learn more about the guidelines and curriculum we follow.

### **School Information and Contacts:**

Address: 19211 Dodge Avenue, N Tustin, CA 92705

Preschool Phone: 714-573-7723

Website: [www.foothillspreschool.org](http://www.foothillspreschool.org)

License No. – 300600222

Tax I.D. 95-2261803

Umbrella Organization: Church of the Foothills

The Foothills Preschool Governing Committee at Church of the Foothills may be reached by calling the church office at: 714-544-1319

### **Admission Requirements:**

Children ages 30 months (at time enrollment) through 5 years old are eligible for enrollment. Children must be fully toilet trained and able to:

- Recognize the need to use the bathroom on their own
- Attend to all their toileting needs including dressing, flushing and wiping
- Not have more than 3 accidents a month
- Be able to change their clothes and clean themselves up after a potty accident

### **Hours/Months of Operation**

#### School Year:

We are a 10 month program and follow the Tustin Unified School District Calendar school year and holiday schedule.

#### Daily Schedule

8:00 - 9:00:	Early Drop Off (play outdoors or indoors)
9:00 - 12:00:	Core Preschool Program
12:00 - 12:30:	Dismissal or Lunch for children who stay past 12:00
12:30 - 1:00:	Outdoor play for children who depart at 1:00pm
12:30 - 2:30:	Nap for children who stay until 3pm
2:30 - 3:00:	Outdoor play

## **Summer Camp**

Our school usually runs a Summer Break camp contingent upon enrollment. Camps are not included in the school year tuition and are available at an extra charge. Camps generally run shorter hours than the regular school day. Summer Camp may or may not run the full duration of the Summer Break and is not guaranteed to be offered every summer.

## **What to bring on the first day of school**

- A change of clothes in a gallon ziplock type bag labeled with your child's name. Please label clothing as well if at all possible.
- An emergency kit consisting of some of your child's favorite non-perishable snacks and a comforting note from you. We have water for three days on site.
- A lunch box if your child is staying for lunch. Please include an ice pack if it needs to stay cold. We cannot heat or refrigerate food for children.

## **What NOT to bring to school**

- Toys or other personal belongings from home
- Backpacks (they do not need them and do not fit in our cubby storage)
- Snacks or food from home unless your child has an allergy or dietary restrictions. We serve vegetarian (not vegan) snacks.

## **Tuition**

Tuition is one annual fee. You may pay the yearly tuition in one lump sum at the beginning of the school year or via 10 monthly payments throughout the year. Guidelines for tuition are:

- Regardless of the number of days a child attends each month, the full month's tuition is due.
- Tuition is due on the first school day of each month.
- **Tuition is non-refundable**

## **Late Tuition Fees:**

- Tuition not paid after the 10th of the month for which it is due will be assessed a late fee of \$20.00 per child.
- If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month for which it is due, the child will not be able to attend Foothills Preschool until the tuition due is paid in full.
- If tuition is not paid by the last day of the month for which it is due, the child will be permanently expelled from Foothills Preschool.

## **Graduation Fee:**

If your child is leaving Foothills Preschool and going to Kindergarten or Transitional Kindergarten at the end of the school year for which you are enrolled you will be billed a \$10 graduation fee on your last (June) invoice of the year.

## **Forms of Payment**

Foothills Preschool accepts checks, bank transfers, credit cards and cash for payments. Checks may be dropped in the tuition box on the inside of the office door. Bank transfers or credit card payments may be made online via the invoice you will receive via email at the beginning of every month. **We prefer bank transfers (automatic clearing house) payments as they do not charge us a fee.**

## **Make Up Days**

We do not offer make up days due to child illness or family vacations/emergencies.

**Registration**

A non-refundable annual registration/materials fee in the amount of \$100.00 per child is due upon enrollment/registration at Foothills Preschool. This fee will hold your child's spot for the upcoming school year and is used to upgrade and buy materials for the classrooms.

**Admission Packet**

An admission packet must be completed for each child and turned in to the office prior to the child's first day of school. The packet contains forms that are required by the State of California Community Care Licensing Division. A copy of the child's immunization records must also be included with the forms.

**Returned Check Policy**

A \$30.00 fee will be assessed for all returned checks. Replacement tuition and fees must be paid in cash or money order. After two NSF checks, all further payments will be required in cash or money order.

**Vacation and Holidays/School Closure Dates**

Our dates and times of school closure for holiday observations are at the discretion of the school and may change from school year to school year. Generally we follow the Tustin Union School District holiday schedule. Please see the school calendar on our website for the most current dates. We will observe the following holidays each year:

- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving (1 week)
- Winter Break (2 weeks)
- Martin Luther King Holiday
- President's Days
- Spring Break (1 week)
- Memorial Day

**Holiday Celebrations**

Foothills Preschool maintains a secular, inclusive environment. Celebrations of common holidays for our student's cultural demographic, such as Halloween, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Eid and others may be celebrated during the school year at the discretion of your child's teachers. We encourage all families to share their own cultural celebrations throughout the year with your children's teacher and classmates. The gift of your time as a classroom guest to introduce your cultural traditions to your child's classmates is an invaluable contribution to our school and is welcome and encouraged!

**Staff Development Days**

Up to twice a year we may close the school for staff development. No reduction in tuition will be made for these days.

**Staff Qualifications**

Our Lead and Assistant Teachers meet the requirements set forth by the State of California in Title 22 licensing requirements. All staff members have completed a vigorous background screening, which includes screening for criminal records. In addition, all staff members have had a health screening and T.B. test. All staff meet the college education unit requirements set forth in Title 22.

**CPR & First Aid**

All staff members are certified in Pediatric CPR and First Aid. First Aid supplies are stocked and ready

at all times. Injury assessment and treatment will be given under the supervision of the Teacher or Director. If further treatment is deemed necessary, the parent, guardian or emergency contact person will be called. All accidents are recorded on an Injury Report form.

### **Medicines**

We may not apply or give any medication to any child without a prescription from their pediatrician. This includes antibiotic ointment, sunscreen and lotion. Prescription medication must be clearly labeled with pharmacy label showing the child's name and dosage. Prescription medications are kept in a locked and labeled box in our preschool kitchen cabinet.

### **Confidentiality**

All student records are confidential. All records are subject to on-site review by officials representing Community Care Licensing, the California State Department of Education, the Health Department, U.S.D.A., or local police authorities in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect. Written permission from parents will be obtained for the release of confidential information and for permission for photographs or videotapes taken of the children while they are in the school if these will be either published or used in public.

### **Signing In & Out**

Children must be escorted to and from the classroom each day by a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian must sign the child in and out with a **legible, legal signature** each day. This is required by law by the Department of Social Services. The parent or guardian is transferring authority to Foothills Preschool and so it is imperative you remember to sign in and out.

### **Release of Children**

Children will be released only to an authorized adult (must be 18 years old or over). Authorization must be in writing, signed and dated by a parent or guardian. For safety reasons, photo identification will be required from all persons not known by the staff. Your child will not be released to anyone who is not on the emergency form. There will be no exceptions.

### **Drop off and Pick Up**

Drop Off: After children are signed in, the child must be escorted to the teacher(s) on duty. For early drop off between 8:00 and 9:00 that teacher is usually on the playground. From 8:30 – 9:00 is our teacher prep time, so we ask that the regular classroom teachers not be disturbed during this time. No child should ever be left unaccompanied in a classroom or on the playground. For safety, liability and licensing purposes we ask that parents leave promptly after they have signed their children in and escorted them to the teacher on duty. Children transition to school much easier if parents just give a quick goodbye, hug and kiss, then leave. **Children may not be dropped off earlier than their scheduled start time.**

Pick Up: Please come to the classroom (unless the children are outside) to pick up your children. Children will not be released to the parking lot or to the playground from the classroom. For safety, licensing and liability purposes, we ask that you leave the preschool grounds with your child promptly after you have signed them out. If you need to speak with a teacher, please keep your child with you. Please be aware that once you have signed your child out, you are responsible for their safety.

### **Late Pick Up Policy and Fees**

Our school pick up times are 12:00, 1:00 and 3:00. Parents have a 5 minute grace period from their scheduled time to pick up. **If you are more than 5 minutes late you will be billed a \$20 late charge.**

We staff based on how many children we know we will have at any given time. When you are late picking up, you may create a licensing violation that would result in a fine to the preschool. Also, many of our staff are parents as well and when you are late, that makes our staff late to pick up their own children. Alerting the staff that a parent will be late is always appreciated and helps relieve your child's anxiety, however, late fees will not be waived. In the event that a child is not picked up by ½ an hour after the school closes, and the parent or guardian has not called or is unavailable by phone, Child Protective Services may be called to pick up the child from the school, per Title 22 regulations.

### **Emergency Contact Change Notification**

Parent/guardian is to notify, in writing, any changes, additions or deletions of phone numbers, addresses, family status, emergency contacts or physician.

### **Photograph Release**

Unless you complete and submit the Picture Release form from your Admissions Packet informing us otherwise, all photographs of students of Foothills Preschool taken by the Foothills Preschool staff or their designees can and may be used in Foothills Preschool marketing materials including print advertising, social media and our website, [www.foothillspreschool.org](http://www.foothillspreschool.org)

### **School Directory**

Unless you complete and submit the School Directory release form from your Admissions Packet informing us otherwise, all students and families will be listed in our school directory that is distributed to the families of students at the preschool.

### **Email**

Our primary form of communication with parents is email. Please list the email you will be checking regularly on your admission forms and let us know if you update it after registration. We will be communicating upcoming events, school policy changes, and other important information via email, so please make sure we have your correct address

### **Invoices and Payments**

Invoices for tuition will be sent via email at the beginning of the month to the email address we have on file for you. Please look for them. Unless you notify us that you need a paid invoice receipt we will not routinely send them.

### **Meet and Greet/Orientation**

We have an orientation day each year during the week before school begins for the parents and children. We encourage all families to attend so that we can answer any questions the parents may have about the school and the children can meet their teacher and their classmates during a low-key event in the school surroundings.

### **Parent Involvement**

#### Visitor and Volunteer Policy

We love our preschool families and love to have visitors and volunteers! That said, due to California State law and Community Care licensing, there are guidelines we need to follow to ensure the safety and health of all of our enrolled children and avoid licensing fines. Here are the guidelines for volunteers and visitors at our school:

On site volunteers:

- Anyone who volunteers or has interaction for more than a few minutes with enrolled students during our school day (8am - 3pm) must submit a copy of their proof of vaccinations from a licensed physician showing up to date measles, pertussis and influenza.
- The influenza shot needs to be dated between 8/1 and 12/1 of the current year.
- Only adults over the age of 18 may volunteer on site during preschool hours.
- Siblings not enrolled in Foothills Preschool may not be on the grounds while their parents are volunteering during school hours.

Visiting and pick up/drop off times:

- Our campus will remain closed to the public except for pick-up's and drop-off's between the hours of 8am - 3pm.
- If you bring a child not enrolled at the school with you to pick up or drop off a FPS student, they must wait with you outside the classroom door for the teacher to open the classroom or dismiss the children. They may not co-mingle with the preschool children or use the school equipment.
- Children that start school at 9am must remain with their parents and wait near their classroom door until their teacher escorts them into the room. Per community care licensing, they may not co-mingle with the children who arrive at 8am on the playground or in the classrooms.
- After the school closes at 3pm, you may use the playground at your own risk.

### **Snacks**

We will serve a nutritious mid-morning snack each day. Each month's snack menu is posted on the information board above the sign in table at the beginning of the month. We use the USDA smart snacks in school guidelines when planning our snacks. The snack menu is subject to change.

### **Lunch**

Lunches will be provided by the parents of the children that are staying for our lunch time program. We suggest providing your children with a small array of several healthy food choices. We would greatly appreciate it if you do not send candy or other treats in your children's lunch, as those are not part of a healthy school meal as defined by ChooseMyPlate.gov. The teachers and staff supervising the children during mealtime will not be responsible for making sure the children eat their food in any specific order. The staff will not be responsible for the amount of food the children eat, or require them to eat a certain amount before being excused from the table. These are developmentally appropriate practices and give the children the control to decide when they are full and what sorts of food their body needs. If food needs to be kept cold, please provide an ice pack in the lunch since we cannot provide refrigeration. Please do not send meals that need to be heated.

### **We Get Messy!**

Preschool is a time to explore and use all our senses when doing so! Therefore, there are often times, your child will be using a variety of materials to help them discover as much as they can, such as paint, mud, bubbles, water, or anything else sticky or gooey. Since it's impossible to explore these things without getting messy, your child should **wear clothing that is able to get dirty or soiled**. We recommend they do not wear their best outfits. Your child may also come home in wet or muddy clothing. The choice to change (provided extra clothes are available) will be offered to the child, but it is their decision as to whether they want to change their clothes or not. Most times, we save water or mud play until the end of the day right before the children go home, so rarely would children be in wet clothes for more than 10 minutes. **Children must wear closed toed shoes to school.**



## **Birthdays**

If you would like us to celebrate your child's birthday please let your teacher know in advance. You are welcome to bring in a treat on that day. If you are planning a party outside of school, please mail your invitations unless every child in the class is invited.

## **Rest/Nap Times**

Children under the age of 6 who are at school for more than 5 hours are required to be provided a two hour afternoon rest time per licensing requirements. If your child is under the age of 6 and will be staying for our extended day program, please provide the following in a pillowcase to store in the resting room:

- Regular sized crib sheet
- Blanket
- Small Pillow (optional)

Your children's items will be stored in the resting room Monday through Friday. On Friday, all items will be sent home to be washed and returned on Monday.

## **School Animals**

A wonderful part of child development at our school is learning to care for and handle our school pets. Although our staff is always with the children and supervising the handling of our animals, accidents may still occur. At the end of this document is an Animal handling acknowledgment form, which we would like you to sign and return, which will give your children permission to be involved in the animal care here at school.

## **Guardians or designees suspected under the influence**

The safety of your children is of the utmost importance to us. Therefore, if a parent or parent designee arrives to pick up a child and appears to be (based on the observations of our staff) impaired or under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the point of it being a perceived hazard to the safety of the child, our staff will try to contact an alternate guardian or designee from your child's Emergency Contact Card. If another suitable adult is not able to be contacted, our staff will contact Social Services (Child Protective Services) or the local Police or Sheriff's Department.

## **Student Withdrawal and Expulsion Policy**

All children are enrolled on a trial basis. If at any time the Director feels our school is not best suited for the personal needs of a child, the parent may be asked to seek other arrangements for care.

The Director reserves the right to terminate the Admission Agreement and expel a child from the program for any of the following reasons:

- Parent/guardian is deemed to be verbally or physically abusive to the staff, children or other persons on site;
- Child exhibits excessive unacceptable, aggressive, or inappropriate behavior that may endanger him/her, other children or staff. This includes, but is not limited to: biting, hitting, and kicking;
- Non-payment of tuition;
- Child is unable to adjust to the school's programs;
- Parent/guardian is consistently/excessively late for drop-off/pick-up;
- Parent/guardian shows general disregard for school policies.

Parent/guardian may withdraw a child from school at any time by giving written notice to the Director. A two-week notice is requested. Tuition must be paid in full for the final period of attendance.

## **Guidance and Student Behavior**

Behavioral expectations and classroom rules are made clear to the children. Some general guidelines are as follows:

- Return all materials to their special place on the shelf, ready for the next person;
- Each student has the right to work undisturbed;
- Each student has the right to be treated with respect and dignity;
- This is a safe place and each student has the right not to be hurt;
- Play fighting (karate, guns, knives, etc.) is not allowed at school.

### **Steps of Guidance:**

All staff members are trained in positive guidance techniques to solve behavior problems at school. There are set ground rules that are necessary to guarantee a quality education for each child and to ensure a happy, safe environment. At times it becomes necessary to guide a child's behavior as a way to foster a child's self-control so that they will be able to incorporate it into their daily lives. Learning self-control will allow the child to interact responsibly with others in a predictable, mutually satisfying way. If a restriction must be imposed, it is firmly set and consistently applied. A clear statement of the reason for the restriction is always given to the child. Rules, limits and expectations for conduct are modeled by our staff and clearly stated to the children. No corporal punishment, time-outs, humiliation or any kind of discipline that would impair a child's self-respect will be used. In the case where a child needs guidance in learning to control his/her behavior, the following steps will be taken. In the event that a child's behavior is unusually dangerous, some of the steps below may be bypassed and the child may be removed from the program immediately:

**Step 1:** Children will receive a thorough explanation of rules, requirements and consequences.

**Step 2:** The teacher and child will work together with their peers to resolve the issue/conflict.

**Step 3:** The child will be removed from the area of the offense and redirected to work in another area.

**Step 4:** Meeting with Teacher and Director: If the behavior continues and is disruptive to the classroom environment, parents may be asked to meet with Teacher and Director to develop a behavior management plan for the child.

**Step 5: Parent called to pick up their child.** If the staff deems that the child's behavior is dangerous or unusually disruptive to the other children, a parent may be called to pick up their child immediately.

**Step 6: Removal from the program or shadow option (below).** If the child's behavior continues to be dangerous or unusually disruptive following the implementation of the behavior management plan, the Director may request the child to be removed from the program. This is usually determined by the parent having received at least three incident reports from their child's teacher.

**Shadow Option:** In lieu of removal from the program, the parent also has the option of providing a shadow for their child. The shadow will follow the child through their day in the program to ensure the safety of the child as well as the other children at the school. The parent of the child will be responsible for locating a suitable shadow for their child that specializes in their child's specific behavioral or medical issue. Some suggested ways to find suitable shadows are via the child's pediatrician, Orange County Regional Center or the school district in which the child will attend public school.

### **Immunizations**

All children entering preschool are required by California law to show proof of immunization. The Director must see an original record stamped and dated by a health clinic or the child's physician. Children not fully immunized are not eligible for admission to preschool.

## **Food Allergies**

Parents must be sure to notify the school, in writing, of any food allergies. Allergy notices are posted in the preschool office and in the kitchen.

## **Illnesses**

We are licensed to care for healthy children only. For the safety and protection of the children, each classroom will follow the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) by providing each child with a health check prior to his/her entering the group. Each child will be checked for the following:

- Fever
- Swollen neck glands or very sore throat
- Unexplained rash or skin eruption
- Any communicable disease (chicken pox, pink eye, tonsillitis, strep)
- Head lice
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or severe nausea
- Acting listless, excessively drowsy, headache, flushed or clammy, or show any unusual behavior
- Nasal discharge that is thick yellow or green

The school must be notified of all communicable diseases such as chicken pox, head lice, impetigo, strep throat, hepatitis, etc. These require posted notices of possible exposure for other children.

Students who become ill at school will be isolated in the Director's office and parents will be notified for immediate pick-up. If a parent cannot be reached, the director or Teacher in charge will decide the next step according to the circumstances and seriousness of the situation. Any of the following may apply:

- Call emergency contact person listed by parent
- Call doctor listed by parent
- Call paramedics/emt's

The child may return to school when:

- Fever-free for 24 hours or more;
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours or more;
- Child has been given at least 4 doses of antibiotics over a 24 hour period for any type of infection.

## **Medications**

We will dispense prescription medications only, in their original packaging. Medicine must be in its original container, properly labeled with the child's name, dosage, expiration date, physician's name and name of pharmacy. Antibiotic ointment, sunscreen, lotion and food supplements are considered medications by Social Services and, therefore, we cannot apply them to your child.

## **Child Abuse**

The staff is required by California State law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

## **Department of Social Services**

California law mandates that the Department of Social Services have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility record without prior consent. The Department has the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate

abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child(ren). [Title 22, Division 12, Chap 1, #101200, (b) & (c).]

**Disaster Plan**

Due to the possibility of earthquake or other disaster, we have implemented the following plan:

- The staff will be responsible for all children until a parent or authorized adult arrives to get them.
- During an earthquake or other act of nature the children will be instructed to shelter in place until the weather/earthquake permits. When it is deemed safe, children will be evacuated to our parking lot and held there until it is safe to return to the buildings.
- In case of other safety concern such as threats from outside the grounds, children will shelter in place and the doors to the classrooms will be locked until the threat is over.



Thanks for taking the time to review our Parent Handbook. If you have any questions or concerns that were not answered in this document, please feel free to contact the director or any teacher. Thanks for your interest in Foothills Preschool!