



Parent Handbook 2011-2012

Dear Parents:

The staff of The Creek is excited to teach your children this school year! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to partner with you to make a difference in the lives of your children. We thank you for trusting us with your children. It is our goal to provide them with a nurturing and fun first school experience, and that we will show them God's love each day!

Have a wonderful school year!

*Mrs. Kacie
Minister to Children
Director of The Creek
Preschool & Kindergarten*

Important Contact Info

School Phone: (714) 633-0402

After Hours Voicemail: (714) 497-0581

Email: info@thecreekpreschool.org

Web Site: www.thecreekpreschool.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheCreekPreschool

Fax: (714) 633-6496

Billing Questions: Wendy Folkes, bookkeeper
tuition@thecreekpreschool.org

Pastor Kacie's Email: kacie@thecreekpreschool.org

School Address:
250 S Prospect St.
Orange CA 92169

Theme for the 2011-12 School Year

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called children of God”.*

1 John 3:1

Mission & Ministry

The Creek Preschool is an extension of River47, serving the community around us, offering a Scripture-based curriculum that blends developmental and academic techniques.

The preschool provides hands on learning experiences that prepare each child for his/her future schooling and most importantly to prepare him/her to give God the glory that is due Him by choosing to follow Him.

Worship Opportunities

We would love to invite you to attend our weekly worship service, small group Bible studies, and Sunday school classes here at River47.

Sunday Service runs from 10:00am - 11:15 a.m.

Discipleship classes for adults start at 9am

Nursery care and Children’s Church classes for children 6 weeks old – 5th grade are provided during the worship service.

Additional programs and activities will be noted in the church newsletter. Further information about the church is available through the church office at (714) 633-6464 or on the web at www.river47.org.

Philosophy Statement

Teachers are the builders of this country. We are responsible to provide the population of this country with the correct tools to get them through life. It is through education that we plan to facilitate growth that will enable children to evolve into good citizens that participate in life. We will seek to teach children how to make decisions for themselves through self-discovery.

It is important that the children not only learn from the teachers, but also from each other. To accomplish this, we will seek to provide a non-threatening atmosphere where we will encourage the children to take chances and explore unfamiliar concepts. It is through collaboration in small and large groups of children as well as independent and whole class work that the children will develop the ability to think and make decisions for themselves, as well as to work well with other children.

We will teach critical thinking and problem solving questions that are developmentally appropriate. We will connect the real world to the classroom so that the children understand how their knowledge can be used. We will provide hands-on experiences with the help of manipulatives in order for the students to take abstract information and make it more concrete.

Our staff will provide a preschool whose basic Christian experience, beliefs, and practices are consistent with God’s word concerning the education of young children and the teachings/educational philosophy of the church and school. Our program makes Christ preeminent in all that we do. In light of this, we hope that the weekday staff, other church staff, lay leadership, and other church members will view our preschool programs as a ministry of the church deserving the necessary support to be successful in its mission.

Entrance Requirements

Enrollment in our school is open to children 2.5 years through Kindergarten.

Preschool: Children must be 2.5 years of age. Our 2's and 3's Rainbow Room class is allowed to be in pull-ups. Please see the potty training section in the handbook for more information.

Pre-Kindergarten: Children must be 4 by Dec. 2011 and potty trained.

Kindergarten: Children must be 5 by Dec. 2011 and potty trained.

School Calendar

We do our best to make sure that the dates on our calendar do not change. Please keep these dates with you throughout the year as they will keep you informed of many important events.

Calendars are also posted monthly in each classroom and on the outside bulletin board located next to the office. They're also available for download on our web site.

Our preschool does not have a prescribed number of days in its school year. We follow as closely as possible the Orange Unified School District traditional calendar.

First Days of School

Orientation Day:

The first time your child comes to school is not a full school day. We begin at 10AM and while your child has a shortened school day you will attend the parent orientation meeting.

This is a chance for you to meet other parents, ask questions, and learn more about the school year to come.

At about 11:30 we will be done and it will be pick up time—do not go early to pick-up as other children will think their mommy is 'late' and panic.

MWF & 5 Day Orientation: Mon Aug. 29 10am

T-Th Orientation: Tues Aug. 30 10am

Parking

It is a matter of safety that all children be walked to their classrooms from the SOUTH parking lot. Please do not park in the fire lane adjacent to the school.

In addition, please **do not leave children, purses, or other valuables in the car** when you are going in to drop off or pick up your child. We have had opportunists break into vehicles in the past.

Necessary Paperwork

The school is regulated by the State of California through the Orange County Department of Social Services. In order to meet state licensing regulations, it is mandatory that **all forms be completed and returned to us before the first day of school.**

If you move, change phone numbers, or need to modify who is allowed to pick up your child from school please come into the office and update the forms. We use this information to reach you in an emergency and to keep your child safe—it is important that we have accurate information at all times.

If your child has need of medication during the school day please stop in at the office to sign off on a medical release form.

Potty Training

All children in our pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs must be fully potty trained.

However, we do have an option for our 2 and 3 year olds who are not potty trained to be able to join us in pull-ups if needed.

We recognize that potty proficiency is a developmental skill.

Children who have a regular pattern of needing to be changed at school 1 or more times per week are considered not potty trained. They will need to come to school in pull-ups in our Rainbow Room.

Children who sign up as potty trained on their registration form but are not meeting the potty trained criteria after starting the school year will be transferred to our Rainbow Room for the remainder of the school year. The adjustment period from the first day of school attendance is 2 weeks.

There is an additional \$30/month fee for non-potty trained students. You must provide your own pull-ups and wipes.

Your child can graduate out of pull-ups at school when they are able to be in big kid underwear and have successfully used the potty for two weeks at home and at school without accidents (excluding night & nap time).

We recommend that you start this process when you've seen a successful pattern of attempting the potty while your child is still in pull-ups. Our teachers will continue encouraging our pull-up clad children to use the potty at school if they need to go.

If you are starting to work towards potty training graduation, please make sure to have extra clothing in the buckets and let your child's teacher know so she/he can help you track your child's progress.

Your child will complete the school year in the Rainbow Room.

Successful completion of the potty training process is something to celebrate! Once your child has successfully graduated out of pull-ups, your next billing will not include the potty training fee.

Communication

Our teachers and staff members are here to help. We want to hear from you, whether you have a question, a problem, or just need to talk to someone.

The office sends out the monthly reminders for the school by email, including updated monthly calendars for you to download. If you are not receiving our emails, or need to add a family member's email address, please check in with us so we can add you to the list. We're also on Facebook, so find The Creek and you'll get updates in your news feed!

In addition, each teacher sends home their monthly newsletter detailing classroom specific events and lesson plan objectives for the month.

Buckets: Communication between school and home is facilitated by the use of a bucket. We use it to send home notices and artwork and your kids keep their jackets, lunch, share toys, etc. in it.

Please keep a full change of clothes (including socks and shoes if possible) in your child's bucket at all times. Even children who are potty trained may still have accidents, spill their juice, or step in a puddle and need a change of clothes.

All "Share Toys" must be able to fit inside your child's bucket. Unless it is Share Day, please do not bring toys to school. Your child's special blankie, bear, etc. is the exception, but be aware of the dangers of a special one of a kind security item in an active preschool environment.

Check the bucket daily for newsletters, calendars, and notes home, and empty the bucket of all the goodies that were sent home.

Arrival & Dismissal

Regular School hours are:

Kindergarten	8:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Preschool/Pre-K	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Extended Day Care	8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

(Extended Care Hours start Wed August 31)

Note that 7am Drop Off and 3-6pm care is available through Andrew's Athletics on site at the Creek

Arrival

Children should not arrive at school earlier than 5 minutes before the regular start time. Children arriving earlier will be charged the Early Bird fee for the day.

All children must be brought to school and picked up from school by a person **18 years** or older. The state requires that you enter the classroom and sign the child in on the class list each morning, using **full names**. Parents may not leave the child if the teacher is not present in the classroom.

Arriving on time is very important. The first ten minutes set the tone for the whole day.

Please do not visit with your child's teacher before class. He or she needs to prepare for the start of the school day and for this reason we do not open the classroom doors before this time. Teachers are available most days after school, and by appointment.

Dismissal and Pick Up

It is very important that children be picked up on time as many children experience anxiety when they see other mommies picking up but their own is not there.

Pick-up times are:

- 12:00** **Preschool/Pre-K/Kindergarten**
- 1:00** **Lunch Bunch**
- 2:00** **Extracurricular Classes**
- 3:00** **Extended Day**

Children will be brought to the office if the parent is 5 minutes late picking up. A late ticket will be given to you, the value of which will be \$1 for every minute after 5 minutes that you are tardy.

If it is necessary to pick up your child prior to the end of school, you must come to the office and an aide will bring your child to you in the office. Please cooperate with us on this, as the teachers find it very hard to be interrupted during class as it can make other students worry that their mommy is 'late.'

Your child will not be released to anyone (other than a parent or legal guardian) who is not listed on your emergency information sheet. Please make sure you update the list in the office, or send a **written note** for the days a new person is to be authorized to pick up your child.

If the teacher does not recognize the adult who is picking up your child the teacher will ask them to stop in at the office to be verified. They will need to show ID. An office staff member will then walk the adult back to the classroom to confirm their approval. If a non-custodial parent is not to pick up your child we must have an official restraining order or other legal paperwork in our files.

Parent Visitors

Parents are always welcome on campus.

During the school year we schedule many special events for you and your family to be involved in and visit the school— Grandparent's Day, Christmas, Daddy N Me Night, Open House, Graduation, Mommy & Me Tea, and of course the class parties for the many holidays throughout the year. We also love having parents and grandparents attend chapel with us.

However, the first few days of school are not the best days for parents to stay and observe. It's best to say a loving "goodbye" to a tearful child and then leave. We know that sometimes separation is just as hard on you as it is on them: you can always come into the office and we'll send someone to check on your child, or we can call you if your child is still struggling.

Even if your child is fine with separating from you, your presence on those first few days can make it difficult on the other children who wonder where their mommy is.

Financial Information

Tuition for 2011-2012

Yearly fees:

	9am-12pm	8am-3pm
T-Th	\$2300	\$3100
MWF	\$2900	\$4200
M-F	\$4500	\$6300

Kindergarten 8:00-12pm: \$4500

Kindergarten with Extended Care (8-3): \$6300

There is a \$30/month additional fee for non-potty trained students in our 2's and 3's class.

- Payment of your year's tuition in full by September 1, 2011 results in a 5% discount.
- River 47 church members receive 10% off their monthly tuition payments.
- The second sibling receives 10% off their monthly tuition payment. (taken off lowest tuition rate)

Payment Plan: We realize that not everyone can pay the full tuition at once. For your convenience we have divided the year's tuition into ten equal monthly payments due on the 15th of each month starting August 15 and ending May 15.

Payments not made by the 1st of the following month are late. You will be assessed a late charge of \$20.00.

If you are two months or more behind on your payment plan, we reserve the right to cancel your enrollment.

Returned checks are assessed a \$20 fee.

Registration

In-house registration begins the first week in February for the coming school year. This gives our preschool families the first opportunity to reserve a place for fall.

Registration opens to the public March 1st.

Preschool/Pre-K registration for 2011-2012 is \$175 per child (\$125 early registration discount for sign ups by April 1, 2011).

Kindergarten registration for 2011-2012 is \$275 per child (\$225 early registration discount for sign ups by April 1, 2011) and includes a book fee in addition to the regular new school year related expenses.

Registration helps cover expenses for curriculum, materials, field trips, and disaster kits.

The registration fee is non-refundable.

Cancellation Policy:

Refund of tuition is based on the time of notification of withdrawal from the school.

A 30 days written notice is required, so that any monies prepaid over that amount can be refunded. Include your child's last day on the notice. We also have withdrawal forms in the office.

If your child's last day falls between the first and 15th of the month, the full month's payment is due. If it falls between the 16th and the end of the month, half month's tuition is due.

Withdrawal after April 1st will require full payment of tuition through May 15th.

Adding Mid-Year:

For students that add after September 1, we use the following setup to calculate the first tuition payment:

Starting between the 1st-14th = half month's tuition payment

Starting between the 15th-31st = full month's tuition payment

After this, regular billing will begin due on the 15th of the month.

Schedule Changes:

Should you wish to change your child's schedule mid year to a different class, we will do our best to accommodate your needs as long as there is room in another classroom.

If you need to move your child from the half-day 9-12 program to our full day 8-3 schedule and they start between the 1st and the 14th of the month, their tuition increase would be half of the difference between the full day and the half day tuition rates.

If your child will start between the 15th-31st of the month, the full amount of the full day tuition rate is due.

Absences and Vacations:

We do not refund tuition for time missed due to illness, family vacations, or other absences.

Curriculum

Our school is a mix of academic and developmental approaches to learning. We believe in introducing academic concepts to the children at their appropriate developmental level. Our experienced teachers will often supplement the curriculum materials provided to tailor their lessons to their classes interests and skill levels.

We believe in integrating biblical learning throughout the school day. We have a “Spark Bible” full of wonderful age-appropriate devotionals that we will be working through over the course of the year.

Preschoolers: Our three year olds use Mother Goose Time, a fun program that integrates academic concepts into the monthly theme exploration. Children use their senses to learn about colors, numbers, and letter concepts as well as art, imaginative play, music and movement.

Pre-K: Our four year olds use Zoo Phonics, a great phonics based program that uses sight, sound, and movement to teach letter concepts. This language development program also has math, science, art, social science, music and movement components that engage children’s minds and bodies.

Kindergarten: Our Kindergarten class works with ABEKA, a Christian academic curriculum that meets all the state standards for education in reading, math, language arts, social studies, science and more but also has a Bible Based learning component too.

Snack

All children must bring a snack to school each day.

As I am sure you are well aware, children can be very finicky in their preference and some may have an extremely serious food allergy. By sending a snack to school with your child each day you are able to ensure that he/she will have something to eat that he/she will enjoy, which will make for a more pleasurable snack time for everyone.

Teachers will have a “Snack Basket” outside of their classroom door. Simply place your child’s snack, clearly marked with his/her name, inside the basket at the beginning of the day.

We are required by the state to have two healthy food groups represented in the snacks. Suggestions include 100% juice and crackers, string cheese, fruit or yogurt. Please do not send foods with your child that require a microwave or other special heating instructions.

If we are in violation of the snack requirements, we are fined by the state. For this reason, we especially ask your cooperation in finding healthy foods that your child will enjoy.

We do not stock snack items at school.

Failure to provide a snack with two healthy food groups will result in a ‘snack attack’ reminder card being sent home with your child and a \$5 fee added to your monthly bill.

Music

Our school also has a music program that comes in every other week. Mrs. Karen brings us new songs to learn, as well as teaches us finger plays and movement activities. She also will bring in puppets and instruments for us to touch and play with.

Each class attends music as part of their regular day. There is no extra charge; it is included in your tuition.

Chapel

It's important to us that the children are learning about God and starting to develop a personal understanding of who He is and what He can do in their lives. To this end, we go through child-friendly stories that they can identify and empathize with.

Chapel Services are held twice a month—the whole school goes to chapel on chapel days. Regular chapel time is 11:40am in the sanctuary. Parents are always invited.

Each class takes turns leading the chapel service. Their teacher will read the story, and they will often participate in acting it out. The children will showcase a song they learned just for that chapel day.

It's a great time to gather together as a school and we'd love to have you join us.

Parties

Each class will have parties. We will have party days to celebrate Harvest, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and the last day of school. We invite you to participate by attending and or donating party goodies.

Birthday parties are encouraged; please notify the teacher a week ahead of time so plans may be made for the celebration. This is especially important as we have children with food allergies who may need an alternate treat to be available on that date.

Field Trips

Our preschool and pre-kindergarten students never leave the campus. Our field trips come to us.

We encourage the kids to wear their Creek T-Shirts on field trip days, just for fun. Parents are always welcome.

Kindergarten students will have the opportunity to attend several off-campus field trips in addition to our on campus events. We travel through parent carpool (sign up in the classroom for each trip) and always need a few extra parent chaperones.

Appropriate Dress

Here are a few things to keep in mind regarding dress:

- Only closed-toe shoes are allowed. Tennis shoes are great for play. Remember, we spend part of our day outside in the sand and wood chips of the playground so wear play shoes! Sandals or any shoe that has open toes are not permitted.
- Try and choose school clothing that allows your child to take care of their bathroom needs independently—we're here to help but the children take pride in being able to "do it all by myself"
- Wear clothing that can stand the wear of school: painting, sandboxes, markers, etc. can be messy!
- Jackets and sweaters are needed many mornings. Please make sure to label them with your child's name so we can get them back to you.

*Please check for all the clothing your child had in the morning before you leave school for the day. Things are more easily found on the day they are worn than they are the next day or week.

Label your jackets, sweaters, and lunch pails. Any items not picked up by the last day of school will be donated.

After School Enrichment Programs

The Creek offers several enrichment programs after school from 1pm-2pm on campus as an alternative to our extended day program. Payment for these programs should be made directly to the provider.

Sports: Join Coach Joel for sports sessions geared especially towards preschoolers. As he introduces them to the different sports (soccer, baseball, basketball, golf, hockey, and more) the emphasis is on team play and cooperative challenges, not on keeping score. Contact Joel Andrews (714) 728-3237 for more info.

Dance: Stardreams Dance and Gymnastics comes to teach music and movement classes. This fun blend of ballet, jazz, and creative movement also includes some tumbling. There is also a yearly recital that the children can participate in! Contact Carol (562) 595-6676 for more info.

Extended Hour Programs

Payment for Extended Programs

You are welcome to attend our extended care classroom program whenever you have need of additional care. Simply purchase the appropriate amount of extra hour tickets in the preschool office, and indicate on the clipboards just outside the office which programs your child will be attending.

The cost of each ticket is \$5 and gives you up to one hour of extended care time. You can stock up on tickets or purchase them one at a time.

Note that there is no such thing as a “half ticket.”

Early Birds: Early Birds is available Monday - Friday and begins at 8:00am.

The Early Bird teacher may not be your child’s usual teacher, so prepare your child for staying with another teacher for this time. When you drop your child off at early birds, hand over one Early Birds ticket and sign your child in on the clipboard.

Our staff will pick up the children from early birds and sign them in to their classrooms at 9am. (8:30 for Kindergarten).

There is no discount for early bird tickets for Kindergarten students. However, siblings of Kindergarteners can join early birds at 8:30 at no extra charge.

Lunch Bunch: Lunch Bunch is available Monday - Friday. It is held from 12:00 - 1:00 on the playground. (Location varies on rainy days).

The cost is one ticket for the hour, dropped off in the ticket holder in your child’s classroom.

Children attending the Lunch Bunch program need to bring a lunch from home. Please do not send foods that require cooking, as there is no access to a microwave on the playground.

The teachers will bring the children to the playground after class has been dismissed.

After you purchase a ticket from the office, put your child on the Lunch Bunch List located on the clip board outside the office. Put your child’s information on the ticket and then turn it in to the teacher so he/she knows that your child will be attending Lunch Bunch.

If your child is also attending extended day make sure to add him/her to the extended day clipboard and include the extended day tickets in the classroom ticket holder as well.

Extended Day

Extended day is available Monday - Friday and is held from 1:00 - 3:00pm. The cost is one ticket per hour.

After you purchase your ticket(s) from the office, put your child on the Extended Day List located on the clip board outside the office. Put your child’s information on the tickets and then turn it in to the teacher so he/she knows that your child will be attending Extended Day. Don’t forget the Lunch Bunch ticket too.

After lunch bunch children come into the classroom for some cool down time with afternoon circle, story time and finger plays. They’ll go from there to the main activity of the day: an art project, science experiment, cooking activity, etc. There will be free play, maybe another trip out to the playground, and a lot of fun!

Medicine & Illness

Your child's health is important to us. We want to protect your child and all the children in our program. State law requires that we have only healthy children in attendance.

By keeping your ill child at home, infections are not being spread to others and your child is not being exposed to something new while his or her resistance to infection is low.

Do not bring your sick child to school. Children who appear ill when they arrive will not be admitted.

Please let us know if your child has a contagious disease so that parents of other children in our facility can be alerted, if necessary.

Your child will need to be kept at home if he/she:

- Has a fever or has had one in the past 24 hours
- Has vomited in the last 24 hours
- Is taking antibiotics and has not been on the antibiotic for 24 hours
- Has had diarrhea, even if caused by taking an antibiotic, in the last 24 hours
- Has eye discharge or crust. Must wait 24 hours after starting medication for conjunctivitis (pink eye) and eye must be free of redness or discharge before returning to school.
- Has croup. Your child must stay out until the fever and cough are gone.
- Has a constant runny nose.

- Has an undiagnosed body rash. Doctor's note is required to return.
- Has symptoms of a possible communicable disease: sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headaches, body aches, fever.
- Has a doctor's appointment for a suspected illness. Please do not bring your child to class prior to the appointment.
- Has head lice. Child must remain at home until treatment is completed and lice and nits are gone.
- Has ringworm. Unless completely covered by clothing, child must remain at home for 48 hours after beginning treatment.

Administration of Medicine:

If your child is on medication for any condition or illness and it will need to be distributed during school hours, please contact the office. State law requires a release form to be signed for each and every day that medication is to be given.

Prescription medicines must be in the bottle in which the pharmacist dispensed it.

Teachers and aides can not distribute medication. It can only be distributed by a parent/guardian or office staff with a permission note.

Do not leave medicine in your child's bucket. It needs to be kept in the school office.

Allergy Alert

We are not a peanut free campus.

If your child has food allergies, be aware that there is a potential for them to come in contact with foods that may cause an allergic reaction.

- **Snack:** Children bring their own snacks, and snack is not to be shared.
- **Cooking projects:** if your child's class has a cooking project planned, double check with their teacher if you have a concern. We can help with substitute ingredients with guidance from you.
- **Class Parties/Birthday Parties:** If your child can't have items on a pot-luck style event, you can always send a substitute from home that you know is safe. We will do our best to let you know about birthday parties ahead of time.

Emergency Procedures

The many forms that you have filled out after registering for the school year have an important purpose. They're part of our back-up system in case of an emergency.

Copies of the disaster cards are stored in several secured locations on campus in case something should happen to the main building. In addition, the teachers keep their classes emergency information with them at all times—this is why they carry the sign in book with them everywhere they go: one copy of your disaster card is secured in that book.

In the event of a serious emergency happening, the children will be held in the safest area on campus until an authorized person comes to pick each child up.

In preparation for any sort of extended emergency situation, outside each classroom is a large trash can equipped with emergency supplies. We also keep supplies of emergency water on hand.

In the event of an emergency, the staff have been assigned various emergency responsibilities.

If the school facility should become unsafe in the event of a disaster, our off-campus meeting site is Grijalva Park located at 368 N. Prospect Ave. just up the street from us past Chapman Ave.

Discipline

The children are taught to respect the rights of others, to obey, and to cooperate with the teachers. We believe that socialization and interplay with children of the same age is one of the most important aspects and benefits of the preschool experience.

We believe in using positive reinforcement and verbal praise to highlight when children are doing things RIGHT to encourage the continuation of pro-social behavior.

The staff understands that children will meet new frustrations at school that they must learn to handle. We are experienced in helping children learn through these new challenges. We believe in helping children verbalize their needs and frustrations to their friends and assisting in problem solving so that the children learn how to compromise and emphasize with others.

However, hitting, kicking, and other acts of violence against another child will result in a "time out."

When a child is placed in time out, they are told that they are going to sit out because of the behavior, and then they sit for 2-5 minutes, depending on their age. If at the end of this time period, the child has calmed down enough to discuss the bad choice they made and what they could do in the future to make better choices, they will be allowed out of the time out to go make amends with their friend and continue in their day.

While time outs are usually serious enough consequences, a child who continues to act violently against his or her classmates may need to be sent to the office for the time out and a talk with the director.

Should the dangerous behavior continue, a teacher will conference with the parents so that home and school can work together to solve the problem.

Biting will not be tolerated; if your child should bite another, they will immediately be sent to the office and you will be called to come and pick them up.

Bullying of others will be a sure subject for an immediate parent and child conference with the director.