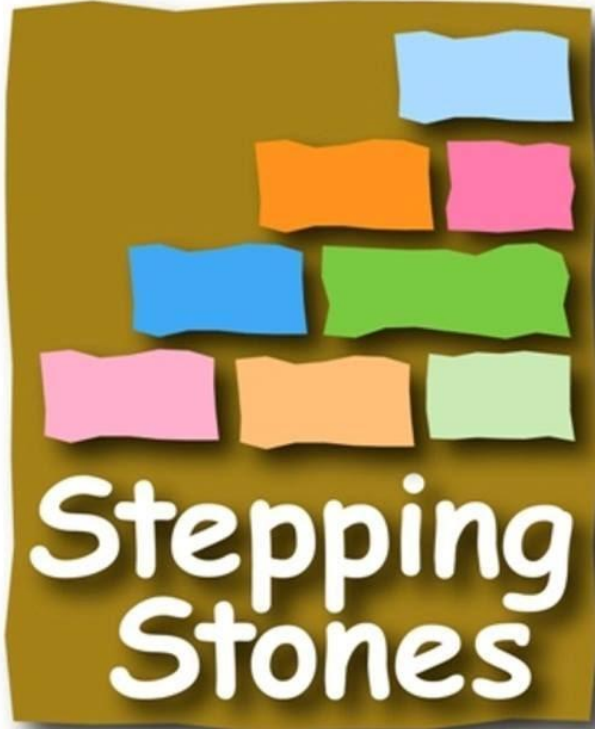


Ministry of Cornerstone Church of Broadway



Preschool & Daycare

Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Laying A Strong Foundation

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for choosing Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare (SSPD)! We provide quality childcare and early childhood education in a safe and nurturing environment. We value partnering with families to prepare their children to have a love of Christ and learning.

Stepping Stones is a non-profit religious institution with licensing from the Virginia Department of Social Service. We are located at Cornerstone Church of Broadway, 265 W.Springbrook Rd. The school's physical facilities provide an excellent educational environment. They comply with all laws and regulations concerning health, sanitation, building codes and fire safety regulations.

The administrations and staff are experienced in working with young children and are dedicated to seeing that your child receives loving care and instruction.

This manual will help answer questions you may have about our school and its policies. Please take time to read it carefully. If any further questions

need to be addressed please contact the SSPD Director.

MISSION

“Jesus said, Let the little children come to Me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like these children.”
Mathew 19:14

At Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare our mission is to give children a knowledge of Christ's love for them and establish a foundation in knowing God. We walk alongside families in mentoring and nurturing their children by providing a safe and loving environment. Our Mission is to teach the children about God’s love for them along with giving them a love for learning.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Preschool:

Stepping Stones offers a 2-year-old, 3-year-old, and Pre-K class with some full day/part time options.

We use a Thematic and Literature approach to preparing children to enter Pre-K and Kindergarten. Pre k is preparatory for kindergarten so we require that children turn 4 years old as of September 30 to enroll in this class.

Open Door Policy & Staff Conferences:

Anyone interested in learning more about our program can contact the director to schedule an appointment.

For the safety of the children, we may limit or choose to have a visit when children are not present in the class. Please send your requests to steppingstonespd.office@gmail.com so we can set up an appointment for you.

Non-discrimination Policy:

Stepping Stones accepts applicants for enrollment without regard to race, religion, color, sex or national origin.

Facilities:

Stepping Stones Preschool & Daycare is located at:

Cornerstone Church of Broadway

265 West Springbrook Rd.

Broadway, VA, 22815

Staff Information

Qualifications:

Childcare lead teachers hired by Stepping Stones must meet specific criteria concerning academic training, work experience, and personal character. Preschool lead teachers must have previous experience working with children in a daycare or other academic environment. Staff members are CPR/First aid certified.

Health Requirements:

Stepping Stones requires all staff to be certified annually by a practicing physician or nurse practitioner to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Enrollment Capacity:

In order to provide the best care possible and comply with state regulations, Stepping Stones will have no more than 40 children enrolled during regular operating hours. (7:00a.m-4:30 p.m.)

Educational Program

Curriculum:

The lessons and activities at Stepping Stones are fun, yet challenging. Our curriculum weaves biblical principles of Jesus's love, kindness and sharing. Our various subjects are literature based with lessons in mathematics, science and art integrated into thematic units that are age appropriate.

Our music curriculum for those who attend music is Prodigy.

We value outdoor play and the freedom it brings. It develops both gross and fine motor play. Weather permitting, children are outside twice a day.

Forms:

The following forms must be on file before entering our Stepping Stones Program.

Enrollment forms:

The following forms must be on files within 30 days of enrollment:

Copy of child's birth certificate

Copy of Immunization record

Pick up Authorization Form

Parent handbook receipt

Legal custody/copy of final judgment of file when applicable.

Tuition/Fees and Attendance

Registration/enrollment fees:

A \$50.00 non-refundable fee is due at time of enrollment. The fee must be paid before a child can attend Stepping Stones. Children are expected to attend the days they are enrolled. Any parent may not decrease the days of enrollment for their child once the school year begins. (I.E. Full-time Students may not decrease to Part-Time). Parents may increase days, if space is available in a class the child is already enrolled in. Due to limited space, we are only accepting full time enrollment for our two-year-old class at this time.

Supply Fee:

At the beginning of each month, Parents will be billed a \$20.00 fee if your child attends full-time and \$10.00 fee if your child attends part-time. This fee covers the cost of learning materials, consumables (crayons, papers, art supplies, etc...)

Tuition Policy:

Parents will be billed for the days their child is scheduled to attend. It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to let the director know if their child will be absent. If the director is not informed by 8:30a.m either by email or phone on the day of or the day before, parents will be billed regardless of the child's attendance.

Parents will receive a credit for four the first (4) absences within the school year, after that parents will be responsible to pay regardless if the child attends or not. However, parents will not be billed for days Stepping Stones is closed.

Payments are due on the first day of the week the child attends. **There will be a \$10.00 late fee applied to past due accounts.**

Payments may be made through Bright wheel, or check/cash. There is a fee to pay through Bright wheel. Place checks or cash in a box outside the Director's office.

Any child whose tuition is delinquent by one month will not continue in school until the parents/guardians make payment. If no payment

has been made, the invoice will be turned over to the elder team for review and follow-up. If a child is absent when tuition is due, payment is due when the child returns. Parents/Guardians may pay with cash or check. Parents/Guardians will be assessed a \$20.00 service charge for returned checks. This may result in the account being reverted on a cash-only basis.

Attendance:

The SSPD Director/Lead teachers will take attendance each day. Each school day begins at 8:25am., unless otherwise announced. If a child is sick, will be absent, late due to an appointment, or planned event please let the Director know as soon as possible.

Late Pick- Up Charge:

A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged when a child is picked up after 4:30 p.m. Additionally for every 10 minutes an additional \$10.00 will be added to the total late charge. If a parent continues to pick up the child after 4:30 p.m making this a habitual infraction, then further action will be taken. This may result in dismissal of our program. **Children**

attending half day will need to be picked up by 12:30p.m. Late fees also apply for Part-time students after 12:30p.m.

Holidays & School Closings:

Stepping Stones will be closed for all major holidays.

- Labor Day: Monday, September 4th
- Thanksgiving Break: Wednesday to Friday, November 22-24
- Christmas Break: December 22nd to January 1st
- Spring Break: Monday to Friday, March 25th-29th
- Easter: Monday, April 1st:
- Memorial Day: Monday, May 27th

For any SSPD closures or delays, notifications will be sent through Bright wheel App notifications, email, and posted on Facebook. If we close early, parents will be notified through the Bright wheel App notification and Facebook. Additionally, we will follow up with phone calls.

Parents will not be charged for days that Stepping Stones is closed. If parents have already paid for any given day that we have an unplanned closing, then they will receive a credit to be applied to the following week/month invoice. **Policies are subject to change.**

Arrival & Departure

All arrivals and departures will be through SSPD main entrance on the East side of the building in the presence of a staff member. Children may be dropped off between 7:00 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. **Full time Pre-K classes please arrive by 8:00 a.m.**

All children will wash their hands before entering their class or fellowship hall. Staff will escort your child to their classroom. Children enrolled for half days must be picked up by 12:30p.m. Children enrolled for full days must be picked up between 3:00p.m and 4:30p.m. Whoever picks up your child must sign him/her out before leaving or log them out from Bright wheel. Children are to remain with their parent/guardian when leaving the facility to help ensure the safety of the child in the parking lot.

Authorized Persons:

We only allow parents, guardians and those designated by the child's parent or custodian to pick up their child. In custody cases, the registering parent is to provide a copy of the legal document indicating custody of the child during the enrollment process.

Lunch & Snacks

Parents/Guardians must provide a morning and late-afternoon snack for Full-Time students and a morning snack for Part-Time Students. Additionally, every student should have lunch packed each day. Lunches should be self-serving and containers easy to open as we encourage independent activities. We do not provide refrigeration, please consider using ice packs. However, each class has a microwave for warming meals. All lunch boxes and containers should be labeled with the child's name and/or initials.

Clothing Policy

Active activities are a major part of our day, clothing should be practical and comfortable. Clothing should not restrict participation in the daily activities such as playground recess times.

Shoes: We prefer children **NOT** to wear open toed shoes, flip flops, sandals or cowboy boots. Sneakers and supportive shoes make running and other activities on the playground safer. We ask for comfortable and playable clothes for outdoor play. We value this time as an important aspect of their development. Please label jackets, coats and other items that might be removed during the day.

Illness Policy

The health of Stepping Stones Preschool is designed to best meet the needs of our children, parents, and staff. Viral illnesses such as colds, flu, and other contagious diseases can be common in preschoolers. To protect the children and help contain these illnesses, we will not accept a child at the center if he/she is exhibiting any of the following:

1. Any nasal discharge that is yellow/green
2. Discharge from eyes or ears
3. Complaints of ear pain

4. Severe throat and/or cough
5. Unexplained Rash
6. Diarrhea and/or vomiting
7. Temperatures over 99.8 Fahrenheit-children will be sent home.
 - a. **Children must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication before returning to school.**
8. Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)- Children will be sent home if there appears to be an unusual amount of discharge or irritation from their eye(s)
 - a. **They must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school, they will need a doctor's release.**
9. Infectious/Contagious Disease (Hand/Foot/Mouth) Disease, Chicken Pox, Fifth Disease, Strep throat, Covid 19 etc.
 - a. Parents must notify the Director if a child is diagnosed with any of these diseases. The school will notify parents via email of all communicable diseases while protecting the identity of the child.

Parents should exercise every precaution and keep their child home should other unusual symptoms occur.

Illness: Pick Up

If any symptoms from the preceding list are observed during the day, parents will be called/notified immediately and request that the child will be picked up as soon as possible. In the best interest of the children, we also reserve the right to inform parents that the child is exhibiting unusual behavior such as tiredness, excessive irritability, or complaining of pain.

We may request that parents have them checked by the family healthcare provider.

Child Injury:

Stepping Stones makes every effort to provide the safest environment for all children. Should injury occur, the teacher will take immediate first aid steps, which may include contacting the Director and calling 911. Parents will be immediately informed and staff will follow through further instructions from emergency personnel depending on the severity. An injury report will be filled out.

Parents must review, sign and return it to the school. Parents will receive a copy while the original report will be kept for SSPD files. Please notify the Director should the child see a health care provider after an injury at school.

Medication:

Stepping Stones Preschool is not licensed to administer ANY medication-that includes prescription and over the counter. **The exception is an EPIPEN for medical emergencies.**

Discipline Policy

Stepping Stones discipline involves the use of positive reinforcement and a “Break Chair” if necessary. We are implementing a strategy of “first time” obedience. Please speak with the director for more information on this.

If a child does not respond appropriately to our “Break” or natural consequences we give, we may need to contact a parent to come and remove the child from the classroom for the remainder of the day. If there is a repeat of this behavior, we will

schedule a parent/teacher conference along with the director to discuss further action.

Here is a list of behaviors that are not allowed at Stepping Stones Preschool:

- Hitting other children/staff
- Using offensive language
- Aggressive behavior-tackling, bullying etc.
- Spitting or biting other children/staff

Physical punishment will never be used.

Director's Discretion & Best Fit Policy

Once the children have been attending for a month, they will be assessed to determine how best to meet their individual needs, at which time, the director reserves the right to recommend other options or placement for the child if necessary.

The director of Stepping Stones also reserves the right to use discretion at any time to deny admittance or revoke enrollment of a child due to situations that would jeopardize the positive environment the school deeply values. This could

be on a permanent or temporary basis, based on SSPD director discretion. Reasons can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Non-Payment
- Inability to provide the school with required documents
- Child's repeated disruptive behavior
- Child's violent behavior
- Lack of respectful cooperation with staff by student or parent
- Developmental or health needs which cannot be met by Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare without fundamental changes to or an undue burden on our existing program and procedures.

Toys Policy:

Toys from home have a tendency to get lost or misused by other children. They are not permitted **unless specified by the teacher** for show and tell or other class projects. If a child comes into the building with a toy, they will be asked to place it in their backpack. **The exception is a comfort toy for rest time.**

Birthdays/Party Information:

We love celebrating birthdays at Stepping Stones!! Parents are welcome to send cookies or cupcakes to share with classmates for birthday's or for a class "holiday party". Some classrooms may have strict allergy guidelines. Please inform the lead teacher in advance about what kind of treat the parent/child plan on bringing. We encourage parents to ask the lead teachers for suggestions.

If a birthday party is to be celebrated away from school, invitations can be given to the child's teacher. The teacher will then place the invitation in the childrens folder and will send it home at the end of the day. **Our center does not distribute mailing lists or phone numbers.**

Covid Guidelines

Should a child be diagnosed with Covid, we ask that parents notify the school immediately. The child will be removed from the school for 5 days. We will also require a note from your child's healthcare provider stating they may return to school. We will contact both the Virginia Department of Health and the Department of Social services for further steps

if needed. This could potentially result in the entire class being closed for the 5-day quarantine time.

If a child or family member has direct contact with someone who has tested positive with Covid, the child will be removed from the class for 5 days. If the child has been vaccinated and is not experiencing symptoms, they may return immediately wearing a mask.

All Covid cases both students and staff, will be reported to the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Parents/Guardians will receive an email notification of a case in our school. That would be a staff or student in the facility that has tested positive for covid. These policies are subject to be updated.

Contact Information

Director Joni West Phone: (540) 251-4433
Email: steppingstonespd.office@gmail.com

Mailing Address:
Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare
265 West Springbrook Rd.
Broadway, VA, 22815

Website: [Stepping Stones Preschool & Daycare](#)

Senior Pastor: Benjamin Benavides
benjaminbenavides385@gmail.com

Cornerstone Church of Broadway:

Church Office: (540) 901-2569

INSURANCE

Stepping Stones Preschool & Daycare maintains public liability insurance to cover any unforeseen accidents that may occur on the school grounds.

