



# The Purposeful Preschool Handbook

Welcome to the Purposeful Preschool family!

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the policies and procedures under which we operate.

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**CLOSING STATEMENT**

**Dear Parents,**

Welcome to The Purposeful Preschool program! Our goal is to provide a warm, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child. In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about the program. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the program's policies, procedures, and to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with the program.

We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communication and a sense of trust between parents and teachers are essential. Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this we depend on parents to be responsible and active child care consumers.

We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program itself. We understand that nothing is more important than your child's early education and strive to be the best providers for that experience. Given the nature of an ever-changing quality early education and care program, this handbook is a "living" document. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year via a written policy notice. In addition, the handbook will be updated as needed.

## **PART I**

# **PROGRAM**

### **Mission Statement**

The Purposeful Preschool believes children learn best when their imaginations and intellect are engaged, and when they are empowered to be active participants in their own learning. Together we co-construct our learning experience through observation, intentional planning, creative environments, and exploration of materials. Our goal is for each student to emerge as a socially capable, creative child who loves the process of learning. By partnering with children, families, and the Encinitas community we can accomplish our mission of inquiry-based education.

### **Philosophy**

Our philosophy - a blend of theory and practice, is based on the recognition that young children have many ways in which they can express themselves, and as educators we must tap into those ways and engage the child in their learning. This is our guiding principle which is achieved in the following ways:

- We encourage children to discover the world around them and further stimulate their natural curiosity, independence, self-confidence, and feelings of self worth.

- Through child-centered activities, attractive and interesting natural materials - these are executed in a carefully organized and thoughtful manner based on the current stage and development of each individual child.
- Our play-based curriculum discourages rote memorization and worksheet type activities in favor of hands-on activities that allow children to develop true understanding of a concept.
- Through incorporating the cultural experiences and ethnic values of the individual into the teaching tools for each child.

## **Goal and Objectives**

### **The teacher will:**

- Promote a sense of self-worth in each child.
- Encourage self-reliance.
- Provide a variety of materials that children are interested in, and that they can succeed with and master.
- Be sensitive and patient with the needs of each child.
- Encourage children to continue to express themselves verbally and through a variety of media.
- Demonstrate problem solving and coach children to solve problems appropriately and independently.

**The children will:**

- Identify themselves as important people who are loved and who have an impact on their relationships and surroundings.
- Arrive at a realistic concept of their personal strengths and limitations.
- Make thoughtful choices based on respect for self and others.
- Recognize that all choices have consequences.
- Find pleasure in being with others.
- Further a sense of self-discipline.
- Further develop a sense of humor, to find humor and to make humor.
- Continue to develop social and academic kindergarten readiness skills.
- Begin the understanding of what it means to be a global citizens.

**Curriculum**

The Purposeful Preschool's program uses an integrated, emergent approach to curriculum that capitalizes on the strengths of the individual child as well as develops areas that need improvement, is developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate, and acknowledges and embraces diversity. Emergent curriculum is an approach that permits learning activities to arise out of each child's interests, actions or unanticipated events. Our curriculum is designed to be child-centered, reflect the

philosophy and goals of the program and to include the developmental domains that represent crucial areas of early learning and development that contribute to young children's readiness for Kindergarten.

Teaching is the art of providing young children with an environment which encourages active exploration and discovery. Projects are planned, yet responsive to individual needs, ideas, desires, and level of interest. Children's positive feelings of self-worth must be the foundation of all curriculum development in early childhood. Each child's learning is filtered through his or her unique screen of self-concept. Each child brings his or her own world to us each day.

## **Environment**

As you know, colors play a role in emotion, communication, productivity, and learning. While the research is varied it is conclusive; the use of color can have a significant impact on emotion, which can ultimately influence an individual's ability to learn and play. Over stimulation can be caused by large amounts of bright colors which typically blanket the setting of a "traditional" preschool environment.

Our beautiful classrooms and outdoor environments were designed and constructed with intention, specifically to meet the needs of young children. In addition to the pleasing natural color palate, children have access to dramatic play, block building,



sensory play, exploring science and math materials, literacy materials like books and writing tools, inviting art areas, large floor spaces, and children are encouraged to co-mingle materials from different centers.

We create the school's indoor and outdoor environments and program children's activities in response to each child's developmental needs, interests, and learning styles. As children grow and their interests evolve and change, so do the materials and activities offered, giving each child the tools, scaffolding, and encouragement to reach his or her own unique potential.

## **Assessment**

The Purposeful Preschool is strongly committed to authentic assessment of each child in our program. Throughout the year, we will be busy overseeing your child and documenting his/her progress. As teachers, our knowledge of each child helps us to plan appropriately a challenging curriculum to tailor and meet each child's strengths, needs and interests. Assessment is defined as the process of observing, recording and documenting what children do, know and understand. All information collected is held in a confidential manner.

### **We use these steps in our assessment process:**

- Collect facts-all information secured in file folder
- Analyze and evaluate the collected data on a weekly basis.

- Collected data includes but is not limited to, information put in child's portfolio.
- Use what we learned to plan for individual child or group
- Results are used to support curriculum goals and individual learning
- Results may be used to identify children in need of referral services
- Results may be used to communicate with families.

**Assessment information includes:**

- Children receive a developmental inventory within one month of enrolling.
- Assessment tools are used to inform parents meeting their family culture, experience and language needs
- Project work – documentation panels
- Children's portfolios – includes sample work of writing, drawings, paintings, block play constructions, stories, poems, etc.
- Photos included to support their work – parents are welcome to view their child's portfolio at any time
- Parents, specialists, and consultants are given the opportunity to contribute to the progress report.

## **PART II.**

# **ENROLLMENT**

## **Enrollment Process**

Registration is by appointment only. Registration forms can be downloaded from our Web site or provided in person. All forms must be completed in full when submitted at registration. All forms must be complete and on file before any child can attend. All payments are due upon signing of contract.

All children are required to visit the preschool with their parents before their first day. The best time to visit is a half hour before registration. To schedule a visit and to register, parents can use the contact page of the website, email me directly, or call.

[Admissions@ThePurposefulPreschool.com](mailto:Admissions@ThePurposefulPreschool.com)

[Colleen@ThePurposefulPreschool.com](mailto:Colleen@ThePurposefulPreschool.com)

919-414-8166

## **Holding fee**

A holding fee of half the tuition cost will be applied to save a space for your child until the agreed upon start date, full payment will be due upon signing the contract. The fee will not be applied to the cost of tuition once your child is enrolled. This fee is not refundable if you decide not to enroll your child at the end of the holding period. You

must contact TPP two weeks before the end of the holding period to confirm your child will begin as previously scheduled.

### **Late Pick Up Fees/Early drop off fees**

You will pay \$1 per minute if you are late for the scheduled pickup time. There will be no late fee for the first 10 minutes after the scheduled drop time. If you notify me of an early drop off or late pick up the night before, there will be no fee applied. If you notify me of a late pickup at least one hour before the scheduled pickup time, there will be no late pickup fee. However, I reserve the right to start charging for early drop-off and late pickup if you overuse these privileges.

### **Late payments/Insufficient Funds**

You will pay a fee of \$25 per week if you fail to make a payment on the scheduled day. The fee for the insufficient funds check is \$20 plus any bank charges to the account.

### **Advance payment of last two weeks of care**

Payment of last two weeks of tuition are due at time of contract completion to cover the last two weeks of your child's attendance. If child's attendance has changed the advance payment will be adjusted to reflect new rate. All Payments are non refundable.

## **Tuition**

Monthly tuition is to be paid a week before the 1st of every month. You may also choose to pay the tuition yearly in which all payments are due at signing of contract.

## **Trial Period**

The first two weeks in my program are an adjustment trial period. During this time, either of us may terminate this contract immediately without written notice.

## **Termination after trial period**

After the two week trial period has been completed you must give me a two week written notice if you wish to terminate this contract. I may terminate the contract at will without giving any notice.

## **PART III.**

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **Ages Served**

We are a developmentally appropriate preschool and kindergarten readiness program for children ages 3 to 5 years or until entering kindergarten. Enrolling children must be turning 3 before December 31st of enrolling year.

## **Inclusion of All Children**

TPP values diversity and welcomes all children without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, disability or handicap. Children are accepted into TPP's program as long as we are able to provide a program and atmosphere that meet the needs of the child and the other children enrolled; the child must not be a danger to himself or other children or adults. Each child admitted must be determined to be ready for the preschool group experience and able to benefit from the program offered.

## **Days and Hours of Operation**

The Purposeful Preschool is open year round from 9-3:00. We are closed for state and federal holidays. If the holiday falls on a Saturday TPP will be closed the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday TPP will be closed the following Monday. The school will be closed for winter break and an additional week for our family vacation. The vacation week is planned before the next calendar year giving families ample time to plan alternative care.

Summary of days we are closed: January 16th-Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, May 29th-Memorial Day, July 4th-Independence Day, September 5th-Labor Day, November 11th - Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, December 18th-January 1st Winter Break, Feb 17-Lincoln holiday, Feb 20-Washington Holiday, additional week for family vacation

## Schedule

Your child would find that each school day includes a rich combination of indoor and outdoor activities: art, sand and water play, science, language and literature, math, music and movement, dramatic play, block building, large motor play, and self-help and care activities, including lunch, snacks, and nap. Children spend time in both group and individual activities.

9:00	Drop off
9:00-9:45	Classroom exploration
10:00-10:30	Group discussion/Snack*
10:30-11:45	Indoor/outdoor classroom exploration
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30	Pick up or transition to nap
12:45-2:30	Nap
2:30-3:00	Wake up/outdoor play
3:00	Pickup

## Food Policy

Lunch and snack are provided everyday and included with your tuition fee. Everything is homemade, organic, and will always include the vegetables and fruits grown from our gardens whenever possible. We grow 3 varieties of tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, squash, zucchini, red peppers, herbs, peaches, clementines, lemons, nectarines, bananas, and look forward to the children adding their own choices. We ask that no outside food be brought into school. Vegan options will be available daily and all dietary restrictions will be met! Below are samples items that you would see on our weekly rotating menu.

**Snack:** crackers, granola bars, popcorn, cheese, hummus, vegetables, smoothies

**Lunch:** chicken or veggie tacos, Thai noodles in peanut sauce, grilled cheese, Israeli couscous, various fruits, various veggies, black bean quesadillas, quinoa noodles in homemade tomato sauce

## **Sick Days**

As strong as our immune systems has become over the years, we unfortunately still get sick from time to time. It is for this reason we have an account in place with Child Care Something Recruiters for last minute substitute teachers. CCC does extensive screening and background checks on all of their teachers. To be a candidate they must obtain criminal clearances, health screened, TB tested, verified their transcripts and E.C.E. coursework, and verified employment record. All CCC substitutes are also required to carry with them the necessary documents to prove they fully satisfy all licensing requirements.

As for my own continuing education classes, I schedule those on the weekend to keep the week free for the children as much as possible.

## **Birthdays**

The first part of our birthday celebration involves a “Me Box” which will contain 5 to 10 special items for them to share on their special day. A week before the child’s birthday (or designated celebration day), we will send a note home to explain how to prepare the



“Me Box.” We encourage a variety of items – not *just* toys –. And essentially want a few things that the child can talk about and that are special to them.

Second, each year we work with the children to create a birthday tradition for that year.

Each student’s celebration will be different, but the common element is that the children are equal in the planning and the carrying out of the traditions. Some previous years included empty picture frames all over the wall, “reserved” with the name and birthdate of each child. On their birthday they painted a piece of art to go inside the frame.

Another year the children decided to have a natural wooden letter denoting the first letter in their name, on their birthday they decorated those!

Children enjoy sharing their birthday celebrations with their friends at school, but we ask that you not bring in presents for your child to open during these celebrations. We celebrate the birthdays of the children on or near to the date of their birthday.

## **Holidays**

Holiday curriculum and celebrations are handled in response to child and family input.

We invite families to share seasonal and holiday traditions that have personal meaning to them. Children may bring items from home and talk about their family’s special celebration.

## **Other celebrations**

Children will bring celebrations to our attention that they have learned from books, tv, other cultures and their desire to celebrate them with the class. We happily foster this interest and have had very memorable experiences doing so. Parents have also brought cultural celebrations that have been important to their family into our community. Family Traditions, Cultures or Customs – We welcome all of it.

Our goal is to ensure that children learn about various cultural traditions in developmentally appropriate and educational ways. We encourage parents to share a special story, song, musical instrument or food preparation activity with the children

## **Nap/Quiet Time**

This is an opportunity for children to sleep or simply relax and recharge for the afternoon activities. Naptime is regularly scheduled between 12:45 and 2:30 PM. Each child is provided with his/her own cot or mat. Please bring a small blanket (or large towel) that is familiar to your child and a fitted crib sheet. It is important that the sheet and blanket be small cot size. At resting time white noise is played, curtains are drawn, backs are rubbed, and everything possible is done to make this a relaxed and comfortable time for the children. For children who do not sleep they will relax on a rest mat for a short time and then are given books to read until the other children wake up. The children who are sleeping after the completion of naptime will be left to do so until they feel they are ready to wake up and play!

## **Toilet Training**

Children attending the preschool are required to be potty trained. Having said that, accidents happen! We require that you provide your child multiple changes of clothing ensure any soiled clothes are taken home each day.

## **Connection Corner**

A camera is set up in the corner for the children to connect with their parents during any part of the day. Children can take a photo of their work, themselves, a note to their parents, or any of the 100 languages they've choose to communicate. That photo will then be emailed to the person or people set to receive the photos. This helps children and families stay connected through the sometimes difficult transition into preschool.

## **Clothing**

Dress your child comfortably for active messy play, in clothes you and your child are not worried about getting a little dirty. Children will be digging in dirt and sand, painting, working with clay, water, glue, and sliding, climbing and more! Remember, learning to do things for themselves is important to children, and clothing that buttons and zips easily facilitates the teaching and learning process. Please bring a set of extra clothes to be left at school. Please mark all clothing with your child's name with permanent ink.

## **Behavior Management**

Children are encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self correcting.

They are given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior.

We assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behavior. I use positive reinforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors.

Children are redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior is inappropriate.

An example is when a child is doing something that could hurt others, themselves, or destroying property and choosing not to use problem-solving techniques.

We will continue to be an active listener and support the child with conflict resolution.

Parents will be notified of the behavior management strategies used and receive an incident report. If a child's behavior is unmanageable within a group setting, parents are required to be involved in developing and implementing an individual behavior plan for the child. Parent cooperation and participation and support of the behavior management plan is crucial to the success of the plan. It is important that the messages the child is receiving at home and school are consistent.

## **Open Door Policy**

We maintain an open door policy. All parents who have a child enrolled have unlimited access to their child(ren) and to all written records concerning their child(ren) during normal hours of operation and whenever the child(ren) are in the care of TPP.

## **Confidentiality**

TPP maintains all personal information in strict confidence. TPP understands that in the course of caring for your child, you may share confidential and private information with our staff. We respect the privacy of all of the children and families we serve. We hold any information you share with us, to enable us to better meet your family's needs, in the strictest confidence. This applies to information you share with us in writing or verbally.

## **Responsibilities of the Program**

The Purposeful Preschool is licensed and complies with all applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standard related to the school, staff, health, safety procedures, nutrition, child ratios, and record keeping. We believe that these standards are in the best interest of the children and their families. Our home is subject to unannounced inspection by state and city health, fire, and Community Care Licensing.

## **PART V.**

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## **Emergency Preparedness**

We practice both fire and earthquake drills on a regular schedule so children become accustomed to the procedures for exiting the classroom to a safe location. TPP has emergency food and water to last 72 hours for all children, First Aid kit, and fire extinguisher. I am CPR and First Aid certified every 2 years to remain current on all lifesaving procedures. All teachers who enter the the school must be as well. We maintain a complete, up-to-date listing of children, emergency numbers, and contact people for child.

## **Authorized Persons to Pick Up**

TPP maintains an Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form for every enrolled child. Persons (in addition to the parents) you authorize to pick up your child must be listed on this form. At the end of the day, a child will not be permitted to leave the center with anyone who has not been previously given authorization by the parent. If it becomes necessary for someone else to pick up your child and they are not on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form, then written advance authorization must be provided by the parent.

In the event you are unable to provide written notification, you must call me to authorize new pick-up plans. Anyone who is authorized to pick up your child must bring photo identification that lists his or her name and address (such as, a driver's license).

## **Current and Updated Emergency Contact Information**

It is essential that each child's Emergency Contact/Parental Consent be kept up to date, including phone numbers, addresses, and a list of authorized adults who may be contacted in case of an emergency. If there is a change in your contact information please notify the center promptly

## **Custody Issues**

I cannot prevent any parent from removing his or her child from the center if there is no court order on file. If there is a court order restricting a parent from visiting or picking up their child, then a copy of the court order must be provided to me, which will be placed into the child's confidential file.

## **Safety and Security**

Your child's safety is a top priority at The Purposeful Preschool. Children must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure, with the exact time and a full signature as required by Community Care Licensing and the California Department of Education. Children are counted before and after each transition within the classroom and the transitions from outside to inside. The front door will be locked at all time during the day

with the children only having access to the backyard which is secured by a 10 foot fence and gates. We don't not advertise our address for the same security reasons and our house is one house removed from the street.

## **Illness Policy**

Each day, upon arrival, your child will be asked to wash their hands before joining the classroom activities. It is very important to us that each child be healthy and happy at school. We cannot admit or retain in care, any child whom:

Is diagnosed as having a contagious disease only upon written instructions of a licensed physician or certified health care provider and/or the health department. Has one of the following symptoms, or combination of symptoms of illness within the past 24 hours:

- Fever over 101.0 Fahrenheit
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)
- Vomiting in the past 24 hours
- Nausea or severe stomach cramps
- Severe cough
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- Draining eye (pink eye or sinus infection)
- Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping or puss filled
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing



- Complaints of severe pain
- If a child is notably tired and / or irritable and needing constant one on one care

If your child has exhibited any of the symptoms above you must keep your child at home for a minimum of 24 hours, even if your pediatrician has given authorization for your child to return. If your child exhibits these symptoms at the center we will contact you immediately. You must pick your child up within 1 hour of notification. We regret any inconvenience these policies may cause but it helps us keep all of the children and staff healthy. Parents are strongly encouraged to arrange back-up child care for the inevitable days when their child will be too ill to attend the program.

## **Immunization records**

For each child enrolled, we are required by the State of California to maintain accurate, up to date, immunization records. Immunization records are required prior to your child's first day of attendance and need to be updated whenever your child receives a new immunization. Children who require updated immunizations after initial enrollment will be denied admittance to the center if proof of the updates are not submitted by the required due dates. If your child has not been immunized due to health reasons and an outbreak occurs at the center you will be notified and you may be asked to keep your child home until the outbreak is over.

## **Physician's Report**

Community Care Licensing requires all children have a Physician's Report, completed by a physician, on file within 30 days of enrollment. Children who do not have a completed Physician's Report on file after the first 30 days of enrollment will be denied admittance to the center until a completed Physician's Report is received.

## **Head Lice**

TPP follows recommendations from The American Academy of Pediatrics and The Center for Disease Control regarding head lice. We have a no-live lice policy. The essential components of a no-live lice policy are the following:

1. Early detection of head lice infestations through routine screening by caregivers.
2. Treatment of children found to have live lice.

If lice are found on a child, the child's parent will be called and asked to pick their child up. This policy allows the parent to treat overnight. The day following treatment the child will be re-examined and admitted if no-live lice are present.

## **Injuries**

Even though every effort is made to avoid injuries, sometimes they still happen. In case of an injury, your child will be given immediate attention including first aid if necessary. If

an injury is significant, an accident report will be made and placed on the child's daily attendance sheet. In certain situations CDA staff may contact parents and if necessary emergency medical personnel. If an injury is life threatening or emergency medical personnel deem it necessary to transport the child they will be called without prior approval of parent. I will remain with the child until the parent arrives or Emergency vehicle takes them to the hospital. In the event neither parent can be reached, the child's physician will be contacted.

## **Medication**

TPP provides incidental medical services which includes administering prescription medications, inhaled medications and Epi-pens. Should your child need medication, TPP needs written authorization from you and the doctor on the required forms. If you have not completed the required and necessary forms I will not be able administer the medication. Medication must be brought in the original container. The doctor's and parent's authorization must be on the forms supplied by TPP.

## **Where to Report Health and Safety Issues**

If you have questions or concerns about any health or safety issues please report those directly to me. I encourage your feedback and appreciate your interest and ideas on how to make our community a safe and healthy place for all children. If you feel your concern has not been adequately addressed please contact CCLD's San Diego regional office at (619) 767-2200. If you feel TPP has violated any Community Care Licensing

regulations you may file a complaint at the Centralized Complaint Information Bureau (CCIB) at 844- 538-8766.

## **Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting**

I am a state mandated reporter of suspected physical or sexual abuse of children. This means if I have reason to suspect abuse or mistreatment or are told by a child they have been abused in any way, am required by law to call and report this to Child Protective Services (CPS). I am trained in what steps/measures should be taken in such a situation. Parents should understand that filing a report is considered a request for an assessment of the concern. A report does not established fact, but rather is the beginning of a helping process for children and families.

## **PART V.**

# **CLOSING STATEMENT**

A strong home and school environment is essential when building a good environment for young children. We will try to do our very best to keep you informed and involved in our preschool program. Clearly, ongoing communication and support from both families and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. Please share with us information about your child and report any changes especially during a

major crisis. Anything you share with us will be held in confidence. We hope to nurture mutual trust and respect at every opportunity. We look forward to getting to know you and your family!