

Parent Handbook
St. Paul's Academy
Little Epistles' Preschool
2009-2010 Edition

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Mission Statement

The Mission of St. Paul's Academy is to provide academically capable and willing students a rigorous course of instruction, emphasizing leadership, achievement and moral and spiritual development in the Episcopal tradition.

Association Philosophy

Small class sizes, superb teachers, and a rigorous but nurturing learning environment foster: Students who interact with their classmates and teachers with kindness, inclusion and generosity; Individuals who make rational, ethical and intentional decisions; and citizens who lead joyful and productive lives.

Goals

The following goals are accomplished through our creative and innovative instructional methods and challenging curriculum, which encourage students to utilize their seven modes of intelligence:

- To produce students who read, write and communicate effectively in English and who demonstrate proficiency in the sciences, math, civics, history and foreign language.
- To offer students opportunities for physical fitness.
- To produce students who appreciate and have knowledge of the fine arts: art, music and drama.
- To produce students who think critically, analytically and creatively when solving problems and making decisions.
- To produce students who take pride in their work and successfully apply their academic and artistic talents to produce quality work.
- To raise social awareness and broaden students' outlooks through participation in a wide range of experiences so that they learn to cooperate with and learn from people of diverse backgrounds and life situations.
- To produce students who are lifelong learners who successfully apply their knowledge and skills to pursue further education or prepare themselves for the world and workplace.

- To produce students with strong spiritual and moral values who recognize that they are serving God by serving others.

Non-discrimination Statement

St. Paul's Academy does not discriminate on the basis of religion, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship or other school administered programs.

A Brief History

St. Paul's Academy (SPA) is an independent Bellingham day school combining educational excellence with the warmth of a family environment. Approximately 190 full-time students are expected in September 2008 for kindergarten through fifth grades and another 140 part time students in Little Epistles' Preschool. The upper school expects 60 students in sixth through ninth grades.

Founded in 1973 as the Little Epistles' Pre-School, we have a long reputation for distinction in the community. In 1995, St. Paul's Church constructed a new Parish Hall. St. Paul's Primary School opened that winter in the Hall's lower level with a kindergarten class of 11 students.

Growing steadily ever since, SPA added a grade level per year and classes as demand required. A successful \$1 million capital campaign led to the purchase of a 17,000 sq. ft. building just eight blocks up Walnut Street in December 2002. This modern North Campus can be used for up to 240 students, with three 14 to 16 student classes per grade level. The Pre-School uses the South Campus Parish Hall lower level location.

In the fall of 2006, the SPES board formed St. Paul's Academy, a separate corporation for the middle and high school program. Demolition of the old hospital occurred in the spring of 2007 to begin the process of constructing a new middle and high school on E. Victor, across the street from SPA. In the fall of 2007, the two boards merged to form St. Paul's Academy as one school with a lower and upper school division. The name was formally changed to St. Paul's Academy.

Education in the Episcopal Tradition

St. Paul's Academy provides an excellent education that integrates faith and reason to build the whole child in body, mind, and spirit. Families from other faiths make up around 80% of our school, in part because Episcopal schools model and teach the value of religion without attempting to convert their children. This is best stated by the National Association of Episcopal Schools:

“A distinguishing characteristic of these schools is that they seek to integrate religious and spiritual formation into the overall curriculum and life of each school community. Episcopal schools are clear, yet graceful, about how they articulate and express their basic identities, especially in their religious curricula and traditions. They invite all who attend and work in them – Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians, Christians and non-Christians – both to seek clarity about their own beliefs and religions and to honor those traditions more fully and faithfully in their own lives. Above all, Episcopal schools exist not merely to educate, but to demonstrate and proclaim the unique worth of all human beings as creations of a loving, empowering God. By weaving this vision into the very fabric of the school's overall life, Episcopal schools ensure that their missions are built on the sure foundation of a Christian love that guides and challenges all who attend our schools to build lives of genuine meaning, purpose and service in the world they will inherit. – *NAES Strategic Plan 2001*.

To provide a foundation for faith, our students participate in age-appropriate chapel services, which follow the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. Our chapel services and our curriculum instill Christian values and develop Christian character. Our chapel teachings, through knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, encourage spiritual growth and foster ethical and moral maturity. Our curriculum, which includes religion in history, literature, the arts and science, gives our graduates a balanced education respectful of faith and reason and religious diversity in a way that is unavailable in secular schools.

Participation with spiritual integrity and respect for diversity are characteristics of our worship in chapel. When Holy Eucharist is celebrated, for example, it is not restricted to Episcopalians: any baptized child may receive communion with parental permission and a non-Christian child may participate by receiving a blessing in the

name of God, the God of Abraham, which does not conflict with Islam or Judaism.

The School Chaplain leads our chapels and teaches our religious curriculum. Both the Chaplain and the rector (senior pastor) of St. Paul's Episcopal Church would be pleased to answer questions concerning chapel services and education in the Episcopal Tradition. They also would be delighted to speak with other religious leaders concerning a non-Episcopal child's participation in the life, worship and classroom studies of St. Paul's Academy.

The Students

SPA and LEPS carefully consider each applicant for admission. The Admissions Policy and Application Form can be found on line at SPAnet.com or can be obtained from the office. In all instances, the interests of the child and the School are considered in equal measure. Students are expected to evidence good manners, tolerance, personal responsibility and a commitment to hard work. Grade placements are made in accordance with age and ability.

In addition we seek families who appreciate being part of a close-knit community and who value developmentally appropriate learning that nurtures academic excellence, social responsibility, and creativity. We do not admit children whose special needs exceed the capacity of SPA and LEPS staff to provide appropriate and equitable instruction. Students with significant special needs are redirected to the appropriate public school resources by the administration.

Adjustments and modifications may be made at the discretion of the staff and the Head of School. Students accept and support policies pertaining to:

Non Discrimination Statement - SPA and LEPS admit students of any race, religion, gender, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. SPA and LEPS do not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, hiring policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and school administered programs.

St. Paul's Academy seeks students and families who share and support the school's educational philosophy, academic goals and spiritual foundation. We are committed to diversity in ethnicity, culture, economic status, religion and family structure. Our admissions decisions and financial aid program support this commitment.

Siblings of students currently attending the school and families returning to St. Paul's Academy or Little Epistles' Preschool enjoy some priority in our admissions process. However, all admissions decisions are at the discretion of the Head of School and the Admissions Committee, and are intended to support our conviction that a broadly diverse peer group is one of the most vital assets that we can give to our children.

Families of current LEPS and SPA students also recruit students to our program. Word of mouth is probably our best advertising for future students. Current SPA families also earn a tuition stipend if they bring in a new student to SPA that has never been enrolled in either program.

Security:

- a) Students enter the school via the front door adjacent to the playground by the appointed time each morning and afternoon. Parents of toddlers and three-year-olds are required to sign students in when they arrive and out when they depart. Parents of four-year-old students should accompany their children to the classrooms and greet the classroom teachers. At dismissal, parents pick their students up at the classrooms unless a note has been sent making other arrangements or the individual picking up is on the emergency release form.
- b) During the day a student will only leave the school by prior arrangement with the teacher and the office, and only under the supervision of an authorized adult.
- c) During the day, in and around the school, students do not engage in conversation with visitors unless a teacher is present.
- d) Fire and earthquake safety and evacuation procedures must be recalled and followed.

- e) Students do not interfere or compromise any of the school's security arrangements and must make reasonable effort to remain familiar with expectations and procedures.

Curriculum

The curriculum, grounded in thematic study, reflects the school's desire to offer students a blend of traditional and challenging learning. Teachers use innovative practices and procedures to instruct students and develop curriculum units. The curriculum follows and exceeds the requirements of Washington State's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The implementation of the school's curriculum is the responsibility of the professional staff. Our teachers employ a myriad of programs to ensure that the students master the expected learning outcomes and develop a life-long love for learning.

Field Trips

Apart from occasional celebrations, the purpose of a field trip is to support the curriculum and learning. Students travel by private car, by licensed bus operators or they are required to walk. For all field trips, the organizers are required to follow school policy. Parents or guardians must give signed consent for each trip. Parents driving students must have a valid driver's license, a record of driving history and a record of insurance on file in the office.

Communication

School Newsletter

The SPA newsletter appears every other Friday. Articles are submitted by the staff, clergy, parents, students and members of the community interested in our school. The newsletter contains a wealth of information and viewpoints. Important dates and calendar information appear in each edition. Parents are encouraged to request the e-mail version of this newsletter. Classroom and LEPS newsletters are sent home every month and contain information about special events, birthdays and curriculum.

Progress Reports

Parents of three and four year olds receive two formal reports describing the progress and performance of the student each year. These reports may be combined with scheduled conferences per teacher or parent request. The reports are part of the student's permanent record. Parents of toddlers receive verbal communication daily upon delivering and picking up their children.

In addition, during the year, parents may expect more informal letters, notes, e-mails and telephone calls, keeping them apprised of the student's progress.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Creating positive, trusting partnerships with families is a vital component of a quality early learning program. Ongoing communications are necessary for learning about children's individual needs and to ensure a smooth transition between home and program.

We know a lot about toddlers and preschool-age children in general but families are the experts when it comes to their own children. Together, we make a great resource for young children. The following are the ways we try to get to know parents, communicate with families and establish regular, on-going communication.

Daily Interaction or "Doorway Conferences"

Teachers make time to connect with family members, greeting each parent and child at the beginning of each day, helping them to settle into the classroom or to begin the transition from school to home. At the end of each day, teachers share information with family members about their child's day. In most cases this might be an anecdote from the playground. Other times it will be necessary to follow up with an accident or an incident or to explain classroom rules, expectations, and routines. Parents are encouraged to seek out the classroom teacher with specific questions or concern.

While it is expected that staff members welcome opportunities to maintain personal contact with families, staff should not neglect the needs of the children. Teachers are responsible for supervising all children by sight and sound at all times. Therefore it is not appropriate to engage in conversation for more than a few minutes

making arrangements with the Lead Teacher, who can schedule a meeting if necessary.

Parent-Director Communications

The Director is available to talk with parents during the day from 8:30 until 12:30, or by appointment. If the Director is unavailable at the time, please leave your name and telephone with Mrs. Lee and the Director will contact you.

If parents have expressed a concern to a teacher or other faculty member and they do not feel that the issue was resolved, they have the option of talking to the Director. The Director will work with the parent to clarify the issue, develop possible solutions and decide on a solution that may resolve the issue. Then the Director will talk to the faculty member about the issue. The Director will attempt to convey the parents' concerns and suggest possible solutions. It may be necessary to bring the parent in to develop solutions that meet the needs of the student, teacher and parent. The parent has the option of going to the Head of School if there is no resolution.

Parent Grievance Policy

On occasion parents have questions and concerns about their children's classroom curriculum or social life. We expect that all such concerns will first be expressed to the child's teacher directly. Though this is sometimes difficult for parents and teachers alike, it is far more productive than relying solely on administrative intercession. In the event that a concern persists, parents should contact the Director. The Director and the Head of School will facilitate resolution of the problem.

The Director and Head of School will be pleased to help parents and guardians confer with teachers about sensitive issues.

Concerns about the Director's decisions should be expressed to the Director first, and then to the Head of School. If concerns persist, parents should notify the Board of concerns about the Director's and Head of School's policies or decisions. In all cases, our Code of Conduct should be respected and the privacy and professionalism of the staff and families concerned honored.

All parties have an obligation to protect the image and the reputation of the School.

Constructive criticism in the interests of improvement is always welcome. A formal grievance policy with procedures is on file in the office and a copy may be requested from the Head of School.

“We are proud of the relationship we have with our students and families. We are always available to meet with you to answer your questions and discuss your child’s education.”

Stephanie Sadler, Head of School

Student Assessment

Student performance at the School is measured both formally and informally. Our teachers continually assess the performance of their students on an informal basis. Their observations are recorded, and are used to guide instruction and as the basis of reporting to parents and the administration. Teachers keep samples of student work on file to document progress and achievement. Normal referenced and standardized test are not used at Little Epistles.

Student Discipline

Students are expected to exhibit self-control and exemplary behavior. Students are required to uphold the image and reputation of their school at all times. Discipline problems are rare. Visitors frequently comment on the positive atmosphere and safe environment that they invariably encounter.

Basic School Rules

1. Students are to respect each other and adults. This includes using respectful language and behavior.
2. Students are to respect the rights and property of others.
3. Students are expected to comply with adult requests.
4. Students are expected to do their work.

Discipline Goals

The goal of the discipline policy at SPA is to develop self-discipline in every student. Students are taught to be responsible for their own actions. The school-wide rules are simple and few in number. The system is designed to

reward appropriate student behavior as often as possible and to provide fair, uniform and consistent disciplinary action when necessary. It serves as a diagnostic tool to illuminate problem areas and help change behavior.

When a discipline issue extends beyond the particular classroom policy and it is necessary to remove the child, the following will occur:

1. The child will be sent to the office to talk with the Director. The Director will then confer with the teacher. After an appropriate amount of time, the child will be sent back to the classroom. Parents will be notified about the incident either by a phone call or direct conversation.
2. If a second incident (not necessarily related to the first) happens within the same quarter, the parent(s) will be called. Depending on the severity of the incident, a parent, teacher and Director conference may be held. At the conference specific behavioral expectations and consequences will be established.
3. If a third incident happens within the same quarter, a parent(s) is called and the child is sent home for the remainder of the day. At this time the parent(s), child, Director and teacher (if available) will discuss the issues involved in the dismissal and the consequences of further violations.
4. If the discipline problem persists, the child may be dismissed from school permanently.

Prohibited Items

- Any item that constitutes a weapon (violations must be reported to local authorities according to state and Federal law)
- Items of considerable value
- Chewing gum
- Fireworks, matches and lighters
- Electronic devices (unless cleared by the administration)
- Offensive publications, software or games.
- Other items which, in the sole discretion of the Director, would disrupt the orderly operation of the School.

Student Records

St. Paul's Schools maintains academic and behavioral records on all students. These include admission applications, records from previous schools, report cards, attendance, standardized test results, health records and general correspondence that pertains to the student. Student records are used by the school in the interests of the child. Students' records are handled with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with Washington State Law.

Health Records

Documentation regarding immunization and health are components of the student's records. Washington State Law requires that the school have on file proof of immunity for measles, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, rubella and hepatitis B, or a signed waiver from the parent or guardian. The school regards the student's application as incomplete until their immunization documentation is complete and on file.

Additional documents pertaining to health must be on file at the office. These are:

- 1) A health report form
- 2) A health information sheet
- 3) Authorization / consent to treat a minor.

The staff is available to assist with all of these requirements.

Privacy

Student records are confidential to protect the rights and privacy of both students and parents. Federal law requires parental permission before disclosing information, other than directory information, from student educational records.

Directory information is not covered by the privacy law and includes a student's name, address, phone number, photo, date of birth, dates of attendance, participation in activities, awards received, parent's name, and similar information. Information and photographs are sometimes released in school, church, and community newspapers or on broadcast media when students receive awards or participate in school activities. Information may also be shared with parent groups when they publish their school student directories.

In most cases, parents have the right to refuse to permit a school to release information about

their children. Notification of special restrictions can be indicated on the Registration Form and submitted to the School office.

Parents have the right to review any or all student records with the Head of School. Appointments for conferences with the Head of School should be scheduled through the School secretary.

School Health and Medication at School

In the interests of everyone, children must refrain from attending school if fever or other signs of sickness are apparent.

The guidelines for dispensing medication to students are specified by Washington State law. Medication in the hands of students is not permitted at the school. If a child is required to take medicine during school hours, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that they deliver all medication to the office in original containers together with the proper forms completed.

The student's doctor and parent must fill out the proper forms which can be obtained from a physician or the school office and the medication must be in the original container from the pharmacist. The dosage on the container and the dosage on the doctor's directions must match. The child must come to the school office to take the medication.

The school will never dispense medication of any kind (including cough drops, ointments, Tylenol, cough syrup, etc.) without written directions on the school's form that are signed by the child's physician and parent (both signatures are required).

Medical equipment that is specific to a student, such as Epi pens and inhalers, must be in good condition and available to the staff of the school. Detailed instructions on the use of such equipment, together with follow-up instructions must be provided. **It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that medication has not exceeded the expiration date.**

First Aid

In compliance with State law, most school staff are trained and certificated for first aid and child CPR. For occurrences of relatively minor injury, such as scrapes and bruises, the child will be taken to the office and attended to by first-aid personnel. The child's medical records are

checked and treatment given. In more serious cases, the school will immediately attempt to contact parents or authorized persons, including physicians or emergency medical services.

Illness

If a child contracts a communicable disease such as measles or chicken pox, the LEPS secretary should be notified at once so that other parents can be informed. No child should come to school with any of the signs or symptoms of illness listed below.

3 Main Guidelines of Illness for which a Child Should Remain out of School:

1. The child has a condition that is communicable.
2. The child requires medication.
3. The child is not able to participate in typical activities.

If a Child Becomes Ill at school

- If a child becomes ill while at school, he or she will be separated from others while the parents are called and asked to take the child home.
- The teacher or the Director will consider the child's symptoms, ability to deal with the LEPS environment, his/her general comfort, and our staffing abilities, before calling parents to pick-up.
- If necessary, the parent or, if unavailable, an emergency contact person from the child's registration form, will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- While at LEPS the child will be made comfortable in the office or other designated area where he or she can be supervised until pick-up.
- Parents are expected to inform LEPS immediately if their child contracts something contagious. The Director will then distribute and post a notice to alert other parents. Children's names will not be posted. The Director must report communicable diseases to the local health department.

IMMUNIZATIONS

State law (WAC 388-150-220) requires each child have an up-to-date "Certificate of Immunization Status" form showing immunization for measles, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, rubella, hepatitis B, Haemophilus Influenzae B and Varicella (chickenpox) or exemption on record at LEPS before starting.

ILLNESSES FOR WHICH A CHILD SHOULD BE KEPT AT HOME:

- Fever of 100 degrees of higher and one or more of the following: diarrhea; earache; irritability; sore throat; rash until medical evaluation indicates inclusion.
- Signs of possible severe illness, including unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing.
- Uncontrolled diarrhea, defined as 3 or more loose stools; an increased number of stools compared with the child's norm pattern, with increased stool water and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use or any blood in the stool.
- Vomiting 2 or more times unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's physician or local health department authority states the child is non-infectious.
- Rash with fever or behavior change until a physician or local health department authority states the child is non-infectious.
- Purulent conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids.
- Head Lice/Scabies, child is not permitted until 24 hours after treatment was begun and **all nits are removed**.

- Streptococcal pharyngitis, until 24-hour treatment has been initiated.
- Pinworm (enterobiasis) or Ringworm infection until 24 hours after treatment was begun-area should be covered with a loose bandage.
- Varicella (chicken pox) until 6 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted. Health Department will be notified.
- Pertusis, which is laboratory confirmed, or suspected based on symptoms of the illness, or suspected because of cough onset within 14 days after having face-to-face contact with a laboratory-confirmed case of pertussis (currently, erythromycin) has been completed.

Support Organizations

Our students come from some of the most supportive families in any community, anywhere. This is manifested in countless examples of support, generosity and direct help to the school.

Volunteers

Our school actively encourages and welcomes volunteers. We believe that the experiences of the students are greatly enhanced through the wide variety of skills and knowledge that are forthcoming through voluntary support.

PACS

Parents Assisting Classrooms (PACS) actively assist the teacher by organizing events in the classroom. Every teacher is assisted by an active group of class parents.

PALS

Parents Actively Lending Support (PALS) is the parent group that oversees our volunteer program and certain fundraising projects. The president of the group serves on the School Board, and is liaison for the activities of PALS and those of the trustees.

The goals of PALS are to:

- Support the activities, goals and objectives for the school as described in this Guide,
- Plan and implement activities and events that promote a sense of community at the school,
- Promote volunteerism and increase parent participation,
- Support fundraising, and
- Promote the image and the reputation of the school.

Registration

Basic requirements

Children are normally placed according to their age on August 31. Applicants in the K-9th grade program will also be required to undergo a readiness assessment before acceptance. Readiness assessments may be required for admission into the LEPS program also.

Registration priority

Parents may submit Registration Forms at the beginning of February for enrollment in the next academic year. Registration Forms for new students are prioritized in the following order:

- Returning students
- New students from families with returning students
- New students from families that are members of St. Paul's Church

A non-refundable Registration Fee must accompany the Registration Form.

Tuition

Tuition and fees paid by parents constitute approximately 90% of the school's revenue. The balance comes from contributions and fundraising, in which parents volunteer extensively.

Each spring parents contract to pay tuition for the program in which their child enrolls. To permit the school to arrange for teachers and space, the payment is due June 1st. No refunds will be made in cases of absence, suspension or early withdrawal. For 2007-2008, a 2.5% discount will apply to each sibling enrolled in Preschool – Grade 10 (excluding Toddlers). The

school reserves the right to discontinue this discount in succeeding years.

All parents pay a one-time \$50 application fee the first time their child enrolls in LEPS or SPA. Then a registration fee is paid each year per child enrolled. These fees are non-refundable. Please see the Tuition Contract for amounts and other requirements.

Financial Aid (K - 11th)

A portion of SPA tuition may be waived as financial aid to families with demonstrated need. Details of this limited program are available in the office. Applications, supported by the parents' tax returns, are required.

New Family Referral Bonus

Currently enrolled families will be awarded a \$400 check in January 2009 for referring a **new** family to the K-11 program. New families are those who have never had a child enrolled in LEPS or SPA. We will require written verification before the bonus is awarded. You will receive a \$400 check for each new family you refer.

School Hours

The LEPS office is open from 8:30AM until 3:00PM Monday to Friday every instructional day. During summer vacations, tours will be scheduled by appointment only. Please e-mail the secretary or leave a phone message. The office is closed on state and federal holidays.

Inclement Weather

In conditions of difficult driving conditions, the decision regarding attendance at school rests with the parent or guardian. For children remaining at home during inclement weather, an excused absence will be given. Parents need to use their discretion in deciding whether travel is safe.

Regardless of conditions, every attempt will be made to keep the school open and functioning. The policy regarding school closures will be consistent with Bellingham Public Schools, which will be broadcast on radio stations: KAFE 104.3 FM, KGMI 790 AM, KISM 92.9 FM. We also try to have it announced on Channel 4 and 5. Unlike the public school system, however, we do not delay the beginning of the school day on

inclement days.

Organizational Structure

St. Paul's Academy is a Washington non-profit member corporation qualified as tax-exempt under paragraph 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Each parent or guardian of a currently enrolled student in the School qualifies as a member of the corporation. An annual meeting of the members is held each October in

Board of Trustees

SPA has a fifteen member Board of Trustees, with responsibilities encompassing governance, financial stability and support for the Head of School and non-profit corporation. Board members work extensively through a number of committees. Qualifications are described in the SPA By-Laws, which are available in the office. The Board holds regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. Board minutes are available to the school community.

Financial Statement

Financial Statements are available upon request.

Little Epistles' at St. Paul's Church

Environmental Precautions

The program has written procedures to protect children and adults from environmental hazards such as air pollution, lead, and asbestos, according to public health requirements. In addition children and adults are protected from electrical shock, burns, slipping and tripping.

Car Safety

Because the school is located near a heavy traffic area, parents and teachers need to be always aware of hazardous situations for children. Children may not leave the building without a parent or a teacher. At the school we stress the importance of staying with an adult when leaving and entering the building. Parents can help to reinforce this by not allowing their child to precede them to their car or classroom.

Pets on Site

LEPS does not keep pets on the premises. Occasionally, a staff member or a child will be allowed to bring a family pet to share. Reptiles, amphibians and parrots (which may carry psittacosis) are not permitted. Staff supervises

all interactions between children and animals and ensures that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing when pets are on the premises. Children and staff will thoroughly wash hands after handling or feeding visiting animals.

Pesticides and Materials Data

The use of pesticides on LEPS premises is minimal. We follow recommendations from the Whatcom County Public Health Model Pesticide Policy. Ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals or deodorizers control unpleasant odors.

Protection Against Cold and Heat

Children play outside only briefly or not at all when weather conditions are colder or warmer than average. Children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. Children typically will play in the gym during adverse weather days. Children have the opportunity to play in the shade during periods of intense sunshine or heat.

Water Safety

When using the water tables precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease.

- No child drinks the water.
- Children with sores on their hand are not allowed to participate in communal water play
- When the activity is completed with each group of children, the water is drained.
- New water is used for each new group of children play in the water.
- When engaging water play, children are closely supervised.

Child Abuse Policy

All state-licensed childcare programs, by law, are mandated to report any suspicion of possible child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Failure to do so can result not only in the loss of the schools license, but also in possible charges filed against the staff/agency or institution responsible for the school.

The reality of child abuse and neglect is a terribly sad and uncomfortable one for all of us. At LEPS, we operate under the belief that all parents want to be the best parents possible and that no one truly wants to hurt their children. The child abuse policy exists, however to try to help children and their families who may be having problems in this area. A call to child Protective Services from LEPS will never be made lightly, but always with the best interests of a child at heart.

If a child has sustained any physical injury at home (bruises, cuts, burns, etc.), parents are asked to please bring this to the Lead Teacher's or Director's attention. Likewise, teachers are also required by Washington State Law to report any incidence of physical or emotional injury or neglect that appears to have been inflicted by persons responsible for the care of a child. The law (revised code of WA, chapter 26.44) states that those required to report must do so: Those who knowingly fail to make a report or cause a report to not be made shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Early Childhood Education at Little Epistles' Preschool

Class Goals

The early years of a child's life are marked by quickly changing series of developmental stages.

In the Toddler class we will:

Encourage cooperation, independence, and respect of self and others,

Reduce toddler frustration by scheduling and planning developmentally appropriate activities,

Discipline by redirection and separation,

Introduce students to numbers and books,

Introduce story and circle times,

Develop small and large motor skills.

In the Three-year-old class we will:

Develop positive social interactions with other children and adults,

Develop listening skills and the ability to follow directions,

Introduce the habits of good manners and cooperation,

Promote positive feelings of friendship and fellowship within the class,

Develop a safe and comfortable learning environment for all children,

Introduce number sense and numeral recognition,

Introduce letter recognition and sound awareness,

Develop color and shape awareness.

Pre-Kindergarten Preparedness

As a child turns four, they are ready, in fact eager for, a more challenging environment. It is our goals as teachers, working with you, the parents, to encourage learning, facilitated by age appropriate, hands-on activities that will enable your child to mature into an individual with a desire and excitement about learning and the ability to become all they can be. We, at Little Epistles, hope to lay a positive foundation, which stresses cooperation, problem solving, imagination, communication and motivation.

It is expected that a four-year-old students are able to perform these few simple tasks before they begin the school year:

1. Take off and put on shoes and socks.
2. Take care of toilet needs and hygiene
3. Wash with soap and dry hands and face
4. Take off and put on sweaters and coats
5. Carry their own coats, jackets and backpacks into the school

In Pre-K we will:

Develop positive social interaction with other children and adults,

Develop listening skills and the ability to follow directions,

Reinforce the habits of good manners and cooperation,

Promote positive feelings of friendship and fellowship within our class,

Develop self awareness of who we are , where we live and our community,

Develop number sense and numeral recognition,

Develop letter recognition and sound awareness,

Develop the necessary skills for printing by further developing hand-eye coordination,

Develop color and shape awareness.

Academic Preparation in Pre-K

Language Development – The cornerstone of our curriculum is providing a rich background in language opportunities through poetry, drama and literature, discussion opportunities, social play and hands-on experiences in Science, cooking , Math and Art.

Reading Preparation – We provide a variety of reading experiences along with letter recognition activities focusing on both upper (2 & 3 year olds) and lower case letters (4 year olds). Some students will be ready for simple writing as the year progresses. Rhyming words, opposites, and the introduction to new words and meaning will be incorporated into the various themes explored throughout the year. A child needs much time and practice and the opportunity to explore letters and language in a variety of situations.

Math - We base our math program on Math Their Way. This method stresses children becoming actively involved with manipulating concrete materials to develop mathematical concepts. They will make many discoveries using unifix cubes, pattern blocks, geoboards and collections as they work with patterns, sorting, classifying and graphing.

Science – Observation and experimentation will be incorporated weekly. The children’s natural curiosity in their world and the changes taking place around them daily will be the focus of our science curriculum. We cover life science, matter and materials, earth and space and structures.

Music and the Arts – An introduction to all types of media will be used on a daily basis. Music will include singing, playing instruments, creative dramatics and puppetry.

Chapel

Our chapel program consists of simple bible stories, bible songs, an emphasis on character development, and the celebration of Christian holidays.

Special Programs

*Pumpkin Carving with Dads – This is scheduled for October. The children find their pumpkins on a field trip to a farm and transform them into Jack-o-Lanterns with their dads.

*Halloween - All classes celebrate Halloween in their own way. For all, it means lots of fun and a party.

*Thanksgiving – Children in the three-year old class have a huge feast with seasonal foods brought from home. The older children have classroom feasts with their parents.

*Christmas – The four-year old children perform the Nativity with songs and costumes. The younger students sing simple seasonal songs for their parents and families.

*Valentines' Day – Students at LEPS enjoy this day by creating their own “mailboxes” and giving cards to all of their classmates. Sharing of treats is also part of this activity.

*Mothers' Day – Our preschool students have a very special “Tea” in honor of their mothers.

*Fathers' Breakfast or Lunch – Fathers of three-year old students come to school and participate in circle activities, after which they join their children in a celebratory meal.

*Easter – All children at LEPS engage in Easter Egg Hunts and learn about the resurrection of Jesus.

*Graduation – Our end of year celebration for the pre-Kindergarten students will include a simple ceremony and a potluck lunch. Our younger students perform songs and also enjoy a potluck lunch provided by the parents.

*Birthdays – A birthday celebration at school is very special to our students and you are welcome to bring in a special snack. Please avoid “cake” items because they are very difficult to clean up. We do not allow party invitations to be passed out at school unless everyone in the class is invited. Students in the two and three-year old classes are encouraged to donate a dedicated book from our school library

Sharing

Children may share on their assigned day. It is always fun to help your child bring something that is very special to him/her. Please, no weapons of any kind. The main focus of sharing is that the item is something that the child is connected to and can speak about in front of the group with enthusiasm.

Toys from Home

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring any toys to school. We do not want them to get lost or broken and cannot be responsible for finding them should they get lost. A special toy may be brought to school only on the designated sharing day or when that student is “Star of the Week”.

Snack

It is the parents' responsibility to send a snack to school with their children. We ask that you do not send sugary items. We want to stress healthy choices in these early years and the importance of nutrition in promoting emotional and physical well being.

Clothing

Please be sure that your student is appropriately dressed for our active school day and the weather. Children love to have fun in art without having to worry about paint spills and stains. **All clothing should be labeled.** It is important that you bring a change of clothing for your child in case a change is needed.

Additional Programs

Enrichment – Four-year-old students may enroll for a Friday Enrichment program which incorporates academic goals into play activities. A maximum of 12 children is permitted.

Lunch Bunch – This program is available to any student who wishes to have lunch at school and then play with his friends. A maximum of 20 students is permitted.

Summer

When sufficient interest warrants, the School offers summer programs appropriate to elementary school children. Each program focuses on a specific activity, and lasts for one week or more. Please contact the office for details.