

Get Set
Preschool
Family Handbook



FIRST PRES

719-884-6130- Get Set Office 719-884-6100- First Pres Church
219 East Bijou Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Welcome Get Set Families

We are honored that you have chosen to partner with us as your child acquires life-readiness skills that will serve them throughout their school years and beyond. Our staff uses developmentally appropriate practices to encourage whole-child development. We strive to create many opportunities for your child to explore and discover through hands-on learning, promote the practice of social and emotional skills as they interact with their peers and adults, and experience God's love for them through compassionate and attentive care. The Family Handbook outlines our basic preschool policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and ask any questions that arise.

Our Philosophy of Early Childhood Education

We believe that children learn through hands-on, developmentally appropriate, intentional interactions from caring and qualified staff. We believe that children learn and grow best in a positive, safe, and structured environment. We believe that families are the primary teachers of their children and deserve a place of value in the educational journey.

Our Mission

To promote a love for learning, a love for God, and love for each other in and out of the classroom.

Our Vision

Live for God
Hold Fast
Keep Growing
Love Like Jesus
Share Good News
Deploy Generosity
Make Beauty

Admissions

Admission Policies

Get-Set is a pre-kindergarten program for 4-year-olds, serving the downtown area. Families must meet income qualifications. We accept applications starting April 1st for the following year. Interested families may pick up applications from the main office or the Get Set office. You may also apply online. Acceptance letters are sent out in June and any families placed on the waiting list are also informed.

Registration

When a new family inquires about enrolling their child with the program, the school will request some basic information to ensure the program meets the family's needs. Next, the school will schedule a tour to show the family the facility and give more complete information on what the program offers. If, at the completion of the tour, the family would like to enroll, the school will provide the paperwork necessary to complete registration.

Registration paperwork includes the Student Registration Form. On the child's first day attending the program the parents are also required to turn in the Emergency Contact Form, the Student Information Form, the Permissions and Agreement Form, and the signed Handbook Agreement.

Each child must have a Statement of the Child's Health Status signed by their physician, and proof of immunizations or the required exemption form by their first day attending the program. If the family cannot obtain a physical by the child's first day, the family must provide the date of a scheduled appointment and provide the completed forms within fourteen days of admission. Children must be fully toilet-trained in all settings by their first day attending the program. This means that they must be able to take care of their own basic personal hygiene, including clothing adjustments.

We admit students of any race, color, sex, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students at the program. **We do not discriminate based on race, color, sex, and national and ethnic origin in our admissions policies, tuition assistance policies, educational policies, or athletic or other school administered programs.** We reserve the right to deny admission to any potential student.

Information Changes

We request that you promptly inform the office of any changes in address, telephone number, those authorized to pick your child up, etc., please let the office know in written form or give us a call.

Phone Messages

To leave a message for the Get Set office, please call 884-6130. In case of an emergency, please call 884-6126.

Absences

If your child is ill or will not be at school, please call the Get Set office at 884-6130. Absences affect what a child experiences in the program. If any child is accumulating many absences, the program will meet with the family to discuss possible support needed. If after this meeting the child continues to have unexcused absences, the program may need to drop the family from the program.

Snacks and Meals

Nutritious snacks and lunch are provided by the program daily. These meals provide approximately one third of the child's daily requirement for nutrition. Parents can help by bringing nutritious snack items once a month, such as wholegrain crackers, cheese, fresh fruit, and yogurt. Please sign up to contribute when registering your child. Lunch is served from 12:00 pm-12:30 pm daily.

Van Usage

Bus transportation can be made available to families to make it possible for them to participate in our program. Please read and follow these expectations to ensure that it is beneficial for all the families that need to use it. All children are required to have an appropriate car seat and wear a seatbelt while on the van. Each day we have a van rider on the van to help supervise the children. This is usually a parent of a child who rides the van. Each parent is asked to sign up to assist with this responsibility as their way to participate and contribute to the use of the van.

Families are responsible to inform the program in advance of any changes in their child riding the van. Please call the school in advance so that we can make necessary modifications. A parent or authorized person, 18 years or older, must meet the van each day to sign the child in to care at the beginning of the day and out of care at the end of the day. If you are not home, we will bring the child back to school and call you to come pick up your child. In case of an emergency on the road, not requiring medical care, we will send another van to pick up the children and bring them back to the church. We will notify parents to pick up their child. Children may not eat while on the van.

Field Trips

Get Set children participate in monthly field trips and activities. Monthly calendars and newsletters are provided to keep you informed of the special activities and field trips. Children will be transported on field trips in our Get Set van. Parents are welcome to join us on field trips, if van space allows, or they can provide their own transportation. Notification of our whereabouts is posted in the classroom whenever we are away from the building. All other First Pres Preschool field trip policies also apply.

Volunteering

In response to the gift of the ministry provided by Get Set we require families choose a way to contribute to the Get Set ministry that is meaningful and valuable to them and to the program. There are so many ways to be involved! Families can help cook and/or serve lunch, provide nutritious snacks once a month, plan and help with classroom events and parties, ride the van in the morning or afternoon, or assist in the classroom. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. If you have a unique gift or talent that you can share with the ministry, please discuss it with the Program Director.

Partial List of Community Resources

Child Abuse Hotline	719- 444-5700
Colorado Dept. of Human Services	719- 636-0000
Crossfire Ministries	719- 447-1806
Pikes Peak Legal Services	719- 471-0380

Notification of Change of Services Offered

If the program must make changes to the services it offers, or the policies and procedures that govern it, it will notify parents in writing. Families will then decide if the program continues to meet their family's needs.

Children with Special Needs

Whenever possible, children with special needs are welcome at First Pres Preschool. This includes social emotional and behavioral needs, special health care needs, disabilities, or developmental delays. Admission decisions will be based on the training and ability of staff and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the child's needs and to integrate them with other children. Please discuss your child's individual needs with the Preschool Director prior to admission.

Parking

Parking is available at the YMCA lot across the street on Bijou or in the lot on the corner of Bijou and Weber. Metered parking is also available. Please do not park in the alley to avoid blocking emergency vehicle access, and please use crosswalks when crossing the street.

Daily Drop Off

Get Set begins at 9:00 a.m. Please wait in the hallway outside your Get Set classrooms until the teacher is available. Children will need to be checked in by an authorized adult 18 years or older. Families should take their child to the bathroom and assist them in washing their hands before entering the classroom.

Daily Pick Up

Children should be picked up in the reception area of Get Set at 12:30. An authorized adult, who is 18 years or older must check the child out before they can be released.

Checking Children In and Out

To ensure a clear transfer of care each day, parents are required to check their children in when they arrive at the program and out when they leave for the day. The program is not responsible for children who have not been checked into care.

Late Pick Up

Please be prompt in picking your child up from preschool at the end of the scheduled day you have chosen. We understand that emergencies do arise, however chronic lateness affects the staff's ability to properly meet their classroom responsibilities. If you are going to be late, please call the school office to tell us.

In the event you are late picking your child up and a call has not been received, we will attempt to reach you or your child's emergency contact. Your child will remain in the care of qualified staff until someone arrives to pick him or her up. **If any child has not been picked up and we have not been able to reach anyone listed as emergency contacts by thirty minutes after their class ends, the Department of Human Services will be called.**

Releasing Children

A parent or authorized adult must check each child in and out of school. During registration, the parent/guardian must supply the school with a list of people allowed to pick up your child (all

must be 18 years or older). If someone who is not on the authorized list must pick up your child, the following is necessary: written permission with the parent's signature must accompany the person picking up the child and be provided to the teacher before receiving the child into their care. The teacher will then call the parent to confirm that this person is authorized to pick the child up. The person picking up the child must provide photo identification to the teacher before receiving the child into their care.

PLEASE NOTE: If there is a restraining order or other legal paperwork concerning custody, the program must have a copy of these documents on file. If someone attempts to violate the agreement the police and parents will be called immediately. This also applies to any unknown party who attempts to pick up a child.

School Year

Our school year runs from September to May each year. Starting and ending dates are included on the calendar provided to families.

Holidays and Vacations

A calendar including holidays will be provided to families at the start of the school year. We value the time and experiences that families can gain during vacations. Please inform us in advance so we are prepared for your child's absence.

Snow Days and Inclement Weather

If District 11 is closed due to severe weather or delays to their starting time, we will be closed. Please check KKTU 11 for school closures and delays. First Pres may occasionally make their own decision about severe weather and close. If an independent decision is made by the church, the information will be on KKTU 11 by 6:30 a.m. In all cases, we encourage each family to use their own discretion concerning the roads in your neighborhood. If you feel it is unsafe to travel, please stay home. Days missed due to the weather will not be made up.

If a storm occurs during school hours, parents will be called and asked to pick their child up as quickly as possible.

Family Support and Participation

Parents and other Visitors in Classrooms

Parents and other visitors are welcome in the classroom. All visitors must sign in at the school office and provide photo identification, name, address, and purpose of visit before entering a classroom or the playground. Volunteers are visitors who plan to serve in the program more

than one day per year. They must complete a brief orientation and submit to a background check and additional training requirements from the church. At no time may a volunteer be alone with or responsible for any children. Please see specific types of volunteers below.

Parent Volunteers

We believe parents are vital partners in a child's education. We appreciate parent volunteers on field trips, for special occasions and holiday parties, to share a talent or a craft, or as a helper in the classroom. Please inform your child's teacher if you would like to volunteer, and in what capacity you would like to help.

Language and Translation Assistance

If a family primarily speaks a language other than English and would like translation assistance, the school will make every effort to accommodate them. Google Translate and other resources may be utilized.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year to share children's progress and provide a time to discuss possible concerns or needs a child or family may have. We ask families to make every effort to attend. If at any time you would like to schedule an informal conference, please contact the teacher and let them know you have a concern about your child. All meetings between families and staff will be conducted in a manner that respects confidentiality. This also means that children may not be present at conferences.

Email

When families enroll with us, we request an email to be used for communication. Please provide an email that is checked regularly and let us know if your email changes. You may also opt out of receiving emails from us by letting the office know by email or in writing.

Special Events

The program offers several special events to families throughout the school year, such as Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas Program, and Graduation. Whenever a special event is planned specific details will be communicated to families through classroom newsletters.

Community Resources

The school has a display of community resources available near the main office. It includes information on community-based programs, community health and mental health resources,

child nutrition and locations to access food assistance, physical fitness, Child Find, and medical and dental resources.

Health

Well Child Policy (see COVID documentation provided separately)

We are a well child facility. This means that only children who are well, and ready to play are able to be at the program. We understand that everyone has days that they do not feel well, and we kindly ask on these days that you stay home where they can rest comfortably and recover. If a child becomes ill during the school day and cannot participate with their class, you will be called and required to pick your child up as quickly as possible.

Children with contagious illnesses or symptoms like those listed below will be required to remain home or be taken home. This list, though not exhaustive, gives common examples:

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Headache
Diarrhea	Head Lice, Scabies, Ringworm
Discharge from the ears or eyes	Open Sores with or without drainage
Discharge from the nose (persistent or yellow-green)	Rashes
Earache	Sore throat
Fatigue, irritability, or listlessness	Temperature over 100° F
	Vomiting

Children with a temperature of 100.4F or higher must be fever free for 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines. It is recommended that children with any contagious illness should remain home for 24 to 48 hours after treatment from a doctor has begun and symptoms have disappeared. The program may request a note from the doctor before allowing a child to return to the classroom.

If a child or adult connected to the program has or has been exposed to communicable illnesses such as, but not limited to, chickenpox, diphtheria, giardia, hepatitis, influenza, measles, meningitis, mumps, norovirus, rubella, salmonella, shigella, streptococcal illnesses, or tuberculosis, please inform the main office. If a child enrolled at the program has been exposed, the director must inform parents, staff, and the health department. Confidentiality will be maintained with any health disclosures.

When your child will be absent from school, please call the office at 884-6130. The office will ensure the information is shared with the classroom and others with a need to know.

Accidents or Injuries

If there is an accident or injury during program hours the following steps may be necessary. Immediate care of the injured party will be given, including first aid, and the school will complete an accident report. Depending on the severity of the injury, the parent may be notified at pick-up or called immediately. If necessary, we will contact emergency services and escort your child to the nearest emergency room.

Immunizations

We admit children to the program who may be under immunized or nonimmunized. Each family must provide the program with either proof of current immunizations, a statement documenting why immunizations are delayed, or a statement of exemption as required by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. When under-immunized or nonimmunized children are registered at the program there will be a posted notice available to inform all families. Confidentiality will be maintained.

Medical Care and Medicine

No medical care or medicine will be administered at school other than basic first aid and emergency medication, such as those for asthma or severe allergies. Any request for medications to be administered at school must be made in advance and be reviewed by the Director and the family involved. All medications administered at school must have completed a health care plan including the prescribing doctor's signature before the school will accept the medication.

Health Care Plans

Families of children with health needs that require care or potential emergency care during school hours must inform the school of these needs upon registration. Then a Health Care Plan template will be provided to the family. This Health Care Plan must be completed by a doctor before the child can attend the program. This plan must outline steps that the program may be required to take care of the child, and detailed information about how and when any medication is to be given. Once the Health Care Plan is received it will be reviewed with the program's Child Care Health Consultant and care will be delegated to the proper staff members. We cannot take medical action beyond our training or that we do not have authorization to provide by the child's health care provider and their parent(s)/guardian(s).

Allergies

Allergies can be very severe and at times life threatening. In order to protect the children in our care to the best of our ability, we ask families to disclose any allergies upon enrollment, and complete a Health Care Plan if emergency medication is prescribed as a precaution. In such cases we will do everything possible to exclude the allergen from our program. Please understand that

this is not a guarantee that we can completely ensure that the environment will always be free from any trace of an allergen that might be harmful.

Toileting

In compliance with our license, all children must be completely toilet trained before their first day attending our program. We do not have diapering facilities in the program.

Safety

Our staff is trained to follow specific safety procedures in case of fire, tornado, or other emergencies. The children and staff practice multiple types of drills several times per year to better prepare for these emergencies. If there is an emergency, please allow our staff to follow the procedures we have set in place to keep your child safe. We will bring your child to safety and then contact you to let you know where you can pick up your child.

Child Abuse

All staff at a childcare facility or preschool are mandated reporters and must report any suspected child abuse to authorities. If you suspect child abuse please call, 719-444-5700.

A Lost Child

In the very unlikely event, a child is lost or separated from their group, the Lead Teacher will immediately re-check the immediate area and use the communications radio to alert the program that a child is missing. All staff and the director will search the program until the child is found. Lead Teachers in charge of other groups of children will remain where they are but check to be sure that the lost child did not accidentally join their group. Other church staff members will also be alerted and assist in locating the child. If a child cannot be found, the police will be notified.

Fire Drills and Evacuations

Fire drills are conducted by the program monthly. In case of a fire, we will take children to the Weber Street Center at 105 N. Weber. Once all children are safely evacuated and accounted for, we will notify parents and work on reunification.

Tornado Drills and Sheltering

Tornado drills are conducted during the months that school is in session and a tornado is likely to occur. In case of a tornado, classes will shelter in designated areas of the church. When all clear is given, we will notify parents and work on reunification if necessary.

Classrooms

Supervision and Ratios

Children will always be supervised by teachers. Class ratios will always be in alignment with licensing. A class schedule will be posted outside of each classroom door indicating classes' locations throughout the day. If the class varies from their posted schedule, the teacher will place a sign noting the classes' current location.

Guidance, Discipline and Positive Instruction

We believe that children learn best in a loving, supportive environment in which boundaries for behavior are clearly understood. We focus first on teaching social and emotional skills and assisting children in using those skills when situations are challenging. By focusing on and praising positive behavior, many behavior challenges are avoided. If behavior begins to escalate past a child's ability to use their skills, redirection away from the situation or object may be implemented. We also believe that families are our partners in guidance. From the beginning of the classroom relationship, family input will be sought on how the family uses guidance strategies. This may include a brief meeting during the program's normal course or at Parent/Teacher Conferences. Staff will take every precaution to have these conversations in a way that maintains confidentiality and does not speak over the child or any other child.

Note: Specific guidelines covering classroom behavior issues are covered in your enrollment package and require a signature.

Snacks and Meals

A snack and hot lunch are provided. Please do not send individual snacks with your child. We do ask that parents participate in providing snacks for the entire group. A checkup sheet and a list of preferred snacks will be provided by Get Set teachers. The Department of Human Services requests that parents provide food that meets USDA guidelines. **No candy or sugary foods are allowed at school outside of special events.**

**If your child has special dietary needs, please let us know. If we cannot accommodate your special needs, you can send a packed lunch for your child.

Celebrations and Special Occasions

We enjoy offering celebrations and special occasions in the classrooms sometimes. Details of these events will be given in the monthly newsletter and calendar. In many cases parents and siblings are welcome to join in the festivities. Staff are still responsible for supervising any children checked in during these activities.

Birthdays

If your child would like to celebrate their birthday with their class, you may bring in a special treat to celebrate. Please talk with the teacher in advance to discuss appropriate options and any allergies that need to be avoided. Due to regulations, all treats, or snacks must be prepackaged. We cannot serve homemade goods.

If your child is having a birthday party and would like to invite classmates, please work with the teacher to distribute the invitations in a way that is sensitive to all children in the class.

Items from Home and Personal Belongings

Please provide your child with a spare change of clothes, including shoes. This should be replaced as the season's weather changes. **Items such as coats, gloves, hats, etc., should be clearly and legibly marked with the child's name.**

Please do not allow your child to bring other items such as toys, money, or other personal belongings to school unless they are requested by the teacher. We cannot be responsible for the loss or breakage of any items brought in from home.

Dress Code

Please send children dressed in comfortable clothing for play. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather and fit so that a child may play and move safely. Clothing should be designed so that children can adjust it without assistance (avoiding overalls, buckles, etc.). All children must wear closed-toe shoes. Cowboy boots, dress shoes, and other slick-soled shoes are discouraged because of the lack of traction they provide. Children may not wear flip flops or sandals as they do not provide enough protection for feet in an emergency and may make walking up and down stairs hazardous. Please send your child with all necessary items for weather and temperature (coat, gloves, and a hat, etc.) We will attempt to go outside every day, even when it is cold or snowy.

Daily Activities and Curriculum

The program creates a basic structure and schedule for the time children attend. This is based on all children's needs and is individualized to meet each child's abilities. It may include the class schedule, classroom calendars, lesson plans, and other documentation that provides families with information on plans and daily activities. Curriculum will reflect the elements listed above.

Outdoor Play and Sun Protection

The time we spend outside is a critical part of our daily schedule. We go outside every day unless there is a public weather advisory or active precipitation. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather predicted for the day and supply needed items in case seasonal weather presents itself. This may include hats, gloves, boots, and protection for rain, snow, and cold temperatures. Also, please apply sunscreen to your child each day before sending them to school that will last the five hours that they will be at the program. If a family would like us to reapply sunscreen before we go outside, they must provide the sunscreen and signed permission to apply the sunscreen. Sunscreen provided by the family must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Please also consider other forms of sun protection, such as hats, sunglasses, etc.

If the day's weather is excessively hot or cold and poses a risk to the health and safety of those attending, the program will modify the schedule to best meet the needs of participants. This might mean going outdoors earlier or later in the day or modifying the amount of time spent outside and utilizing the indoor gym for gross motor play.

Field Trips and Leaving the Church Premises

Occasionally our classes may take field trips or leave the main church building. Parents will always be notified before the day when this is planned to occur. Each child must have a signed permission slip to participate in that specific activity. Parents and siblings are welcome to join us on most field trips, but staff are responsible for supervising any child that is checked into the class.

When possible, Get Set bus will be used to transport children to and from field trips. In this case, parents will need to transport themselves and any siblings. When it is not possible to use the Get Set bus, parents will be asked to help with transportation. There will also be occasions when field trips are within walking distance of the school.

If a parent has not given permission for a child to attend a field trip, we ask that the parent pick their child up prior to field trip departure time or to keep them at home on that day.

If you arrive at the preschool after your child's class has left for a field trip, you will need to either meet the class at the field trip location. If the class has already left the building, there will be information on how to reach them in the office.

Electronic Media

On rare occasions, we may watch an age appropriate, G rated Christian cartoon or educational film that contributes to our curriculum. Parents will be informed in advance. Staff are responsible for supervising children during these times. The viewing time will not exceed fifteen minutes per week. Personal computers, tablets and smart devices are not to be brought to the

program at any time. Rarely children may have instruction on one of these types of devices provided by the program. This time will not exceed fifteen minutes per week.

Child Assessment

Teachers will perform basic observational and informal assessment on all children in their classrooms within ninety days of their admission into the program. This information will be used to guide the teachers' use of daily activities and curriculum to best meet the needs of each individual child.

Developmental and Behavioral Referrals

If basic observation and informal assessment reveals concerns to the classroom teachers about a child's development or other behavior, they will inform the director. The director will make notes of the teachers' observations, make further observations if needed, and communicate these concerns to the child's family. This may include a referral to services available in the community and information on Child Find.

Transitions

The time children and families spend in an early childhood setting contains many types of transitions. These transitions may cause stress to children and their families. This program strives to support families during these transitions.

When a new family chooses to join the program, we assist with the transition to the classroom through the initial tour and orientation to the program. At this time families are given information on what to expect and are encouraged to ask questions that affect their individual situation. This might include separation anxiety concerns, individual transportation needs, etc.

When children complete their time in one classroom and prepare to move on to the next classroom, the program supports this transition with conferences and individual information sessions. This may include updates on a child's individual progress and program input on the next class available for the child. Families are encouraged to request individual meetings if there are unique concerns to be addressed.

When children near the completion of their time with our program their next transition is generally to kindergarten. Spring conferences are specifically planned to address families' questions about this conference. Teachers are happy to answer questions about what expectations might be, what programs may be available nearby, and other concerns.

Occasionally other types of transitions may occur that are specific to an individual family. When these transitions occur, the program will make every effort to support those families.

Licensing Information

State law requires that we make available to each parent a variety of information relevant to state licensing. In order to comply with this requirement, we have a display outside of the main office containing a copy of our Permanent Child Care License from the State of Colorado, copies of our most recent fire and health reports, information on how someone can contact State Licensing to file a complaint, and information on how to report suspected child abuse. Please feel free to review any of this information at any time.

To file a complaint about this facility, contact:
The Colorado Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
Or call:
(303) 866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876

Please sign Handbook Acknowledgments Below:

Acknowledgement of receipt of **handbook** and that parent/guardian understands and agrees:

I (we) the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of _____ have received the Family Handbook, and by signing this acknowledgement, we agree to follow, accept the conditions of, and give authorization and approval for the activities described in the Family Handbook.

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

