



## **Parent Handbook**

Preschool Director

Exie Anderson

Heather Dickens

## Table of Contents

About Compass Preschool	3
Enrollment	3
Preschool Staff	3
Education	4
Registration	4
Required School Forms	4
Potty training	5
Tuition	5
Notice of Withdrawal	5
Absences, Tardiness, and Drop-off & Pick-up/Carpool	6
Security	7
Illness	7
Steps for medical attention	9
Medication	9
Parent Participation Policy	10
Closure Policy	11

Smoking Policy	11
Emergency, Fire, and Storm Safety	11
Child Abuse	11
Discipline	12
Biting	13
Outside	14
What to Bring	14
Non-Discriminatory Policy	15

**Welcome to Compass Preschool! We are very excited to start a new school year with you and your child/children. This handbook outlines Compass Preschool policies and procedures. If you have any questions now or throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to ask!**

The purpose of this Parent Handbook is to help families and caregivers prepare for and understand what to expect at Compass Preschool.

We encourage parents to thoroughly read this information, which will explain the type of activities and care they can expect to receive from our staff and what parents can do to help partner with Compass Preschool to have a positive and meaningful school year. We seek to be clear and thorough so that you have expectations from the beginning. If at any point we make decisions that impact your family we will always point you back to the handbook as it applies.

## **About Compass Preschool**

**Mission:** The mission of Compass Preschool is to partner with parents by providing meaningful hands-on experiences for play and learning in a safe and loving environment for children 1 year old - 5 years old. We seek to point children to Jesus by nurturing their social and emotional development while teaching them the love of God."

**Schedule:** Compass Preschool is a half-day program that operates from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for children ages 1-5. Please note that Compass Preschool generally follows a traditional school schedule with some adjustments.

## **Enrollment**

We accept children starting at 12 months through 5 years. Compass Preschool follows the Wake County Public School System birthday cut off of August 31st. Children must be the appropriate age for the classroom they will enter at the beginning of the school year by August 31st.

The school year generally begins in August and ends in May.

## **Preschool Staff**

All of our staff are highly screened individuals who complete a competitive application process, including interviews, reference checks, and criminal background checks. For our lead teachers we seek to hire teachers with a NC Credential, Associate Degree or at least 5 years early childhood experience. All staff are required to participate in a

mandatory orientation and training session, during which they learn about our curriculum, mission statement, and expectations.

## **Teacher-Student Ratio**

At Compass Preschool our teacher-student ratios are as follows:

Ones 1:6  
Twos 1:8  
Threes 1:12  
Fours 1:15

## **Curriculum**

Compass Preschool uses curriculum for our two-year-old class through our four-year-old class. We also create hands-on and play based learning experiences that introduce math, science and literacy skills. We seek to develop children spiritually, emotionally, socially, and mentally.

## **Registration Information**

Registration is required each year for the upcoming school year. If you are interested in registering a child outside of the registration period please contact the Preschool Director. Parents interested in enrollment can request information about availability and schedule a tour of the facility.

In order to hold a space, Compass Preschool must receive a completed registration application and a **NON-REFUNDABLE** registration fee at the time of registration. Children will not be able to start the program until all required paperwork is returned.

## **Required School Forms**

Before a child will be allowed to attend our program, ALL forms must be completed and on file. The required forms are due prior to your child starting at Compass Preschool. CHILDREN WITHOUT COMPLETED FORMS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BEGIN ATTENDANCE.

- Registration Form (Only used at the open of Registration season)
- Electronically submitted Handbook acknowledgement (Part of Parent / Child Info Form)
- Medical Action Plan, if needed for allergies or chronic conditions

## **Potty Training**

We ask that before you request that we assist your child in potty-training efforts that your **2 year old** be almost fully potty trained (staying dry all night long, tells you when he or she needs to go potty, and is accident free all day at home). Please let your child's teacher know when he or she has reached these milestones, and we will be happy to assist in the potty-training adventure.

We do **not** potty train in the **1 year old** class, however if your child is fully potty trained at home we will schedule bathroom breaks/take them when needed.

**Three and four year olds should be fully potty trained before our school year begins.**

## **Tuition Information**

A schedule of monthly tuition rates is available on our website.

No tuition allowances will be made for illness, voluntary absences, holidays, pandemics, or school closings due to inclement weather or acts of God.

Payments can be made by check or money order-No cash payments will be accepted.

**Please make checks or money orders payable to Compass Preschool  
Memo Line: Child's Name and Month**

**Payments are due the 1st of every month, no later than the 5th of the month.**  
**Payments received after the 5th of the month must include a \$20 late fee.** If payment and late fee are not received by the 5th of the month, we can no longer care for your child.

**There is a \$25 charge for all returned checks. Returned tuition checks must be replaced by a cashier's check.**

## **Notice of Withdrawal**

Compass Preschool will enforce a 30-day WRITTEN Notice of Withdrawal policy for currently enrolled students. Parents and Guardians will be responsible for tuition charges in accordance with the original registration form until the completion of the 30-day period.

*Example:* Johnny Doe is enrolled in Compass Preschool in the 3-year old class, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mrs Doe submits a written notice of

withdrawal on February 10th stating that Johnny will no longer attend after March 1st. However Mrs Doe is still responsible for all regular tuition charges until the end of the 30-day period; which in this example is March 10th.

ALL Written Notices of Withdrawal must be submitted to the Compass Preschool director via email or a hand-written notice. We cannot accept text messages, voicemails, or verbal communication.

### **Absences, Tardiness, and Drop-off & Pick-up/Carpool**

Please be sure to get your child to school on time. Children who arrive late may miss out on activities and disrupt the class. The latest drop-off time is 9:15 a.m. After 9:15 the day has begun.

#### **Absences**

Parents should contact your child's teacher if their child will be out for sickness or vacation.

#### **Charges for Late Pick-up After 1:00 p.m.**

Children must be picked up **by or before** 1:00 p.m. A \$5 late fee will be charged for **every** 10 minutes that you are late. You will receive this charge on your next month's bill. Please note we charge this per *child* not per family.

**Carpool** Carpool begins at 8:45, ends by 9:15 if later please ring doorbell and patiently wait as the school day has already begun. Children walking up must be after 9:00am and must park in the back for yours and their safety. Afternoon carpool begins at 12:45 and ends by 1:05. Walk up for pick up must happen after 1:00 please park in back for your and their safety. Early pickup requires at least 30 minutes notice to the child's teacher and must be picked up by 12:30.

#### **Drop-off:**

Please pull through the carpool loop pulling up as far as possible and take your child out of their seat, a staff member will assist your child into the building.

If you plan to park and drop off your child you must park outside of the carpool circle and wait until 9am to walk your child into the building. Driving through the carpool line and assisting your child to the door is fine.

#### **Pick-up:**

Please pull through the carpool loop as far as possible and a staff member will bring your child to your car. You **MUST** show your carpool tag or an ID to pick up your child.

If you plan to park and pick up your child you must park outside of the carpool circle and pick up your child prior (if necessary for an appointment etc.) to 12:30 or after 1:00. From 12:45-1:00 children will only be released to carpool drivers.

Drop off/pick up time is not a time for discussing concerns you have with your child's teacher. If you have concerns please reach out via Class Dojo or set up a time outside of preschool hours to meet with your child's teacher. During school hours it is important for the teachers to be 100% focused on the children. Thank you for your understanding and helping us to keep everyone safe!

If you plan to pick up your child early please send a message to your child's teacher via Dojo.

## **Security**

Security is a high priority for Compass Preschool. As caretakers of your children, we promise to keep security a high priority and to monitor anyone who comes into the building. To ensure the safety of all children please follow the security measures we have put in place.

## **Authorized Pick-up**

Only individuals with a carpool tag or on the authorized pick-up list will be allowed to pick up a child from preschool. If Compass Preschool staff does not recognize the person picking up your child, the staff member will ask for a picture ID to check the authorized pick-up list. If you would like to add or remove a person from the authorized pick-up list please submit a written request to the director.

## **Building Entry**

The building will be locked at all times, if you need to enter the building please ring the doorbell and a staff member will assist you.

**In the event of custody issues, a copy of the court order is requested so it can be placed in your child's file.**

## **Illness**

When a child is sick, re-admission will not be allowed until symptoms have disappeared **without medication** for 24 hours. For illnesses requiring treatment with medication or antibiotics (ex. Ear infection, sinus infection, pink eye, etc.) re-admission will not be

allowed until the child has taken the antibiotic or medication for a full 24 hours, and a doctor's note is provided.

We ask that for the health and safety of your child and other children and staff members that you do not bring your child to Compass Preschool if he or she is sick or has begun showing symptoms of illness.

Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Fever within the last 24 hours (fever **must** be normal without the use of fever-reducing medications)
- Nausea
- Vomiting (for **ANY** reason) within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea (If a child has three episodes of diarrhea during the time he or she is in our care, we will call the parent for immediate pick-up. The 24-hour rule for return to Compass Preschool will be enforced)
- A contagious or hacking cough
  - Children diagnosed with croup may not return to the center for three days after the onset of the illness or 24 hours fever free without medication.
  - Children diagnosed with bacterial or viral pneumonia may not return for 24 hours after beginning medication and 24 hours fever free.
- A runny nose **that does not run clear**
- A sore throat
  - Children diagnosed with strep throat may not return to the center for 24 hours after beginning medication AND 24 hours fever free.
- Loss of voice
- Lice (if your child has lice, they must be nit and egg free before they return to Compass Preschool. The 24 hour rule for returning to Compass Preschool will be enforced.
- Pink eye or other eye infections (if your child is diagnosed with pink eye, or other contagious eye infection, he or she cannot return to school until eye medication has been administered for at least 24 hours.)
- Continuous scratching or touching of the ear (which may indicate ear infection)
- Undiagnosed or contagious rash or skin irritation
- Any skin infection (ringworm, impetigo, hand-foot-mouth, etc)
  - Children with hand-foot-mouth disease, impetigo or other contagious skin infection may not return to the center if any of the following are present.
    - Fever
    - Open or oozing blisters
    - New blisters

- Children diagnosed with impetigo should receive an antibiotic cream and be treated for a minimum of 24 hours BEFORE returning to school.
- Any unexplained swollen or enlarged glands
- Any symptoms of contagious disease

Compass Preschool reserves the right to delay reentry to preschool or refuse a doctor's note for return to preschool at our discretion. This policy is intended to minimize the spread of illness throughout the school.

We understand the dilemma of working parents when children are sick. However, please be considerate of other children and our staff. When we feel your child is too sick to be at school, we will call you to pick up your child. Please understand our intentions. We want what is best for your child, and when your child is sick, the best place for him or her to be is at home.

**According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a fever is anything 100.4 or above. Children must be fever free for 24 hours without medication to return to school.**

## **Steps for Medical Attention**

In the rare and unfortunate event that a child is injured at Compass Preschool, these procedures will be followed.

- Minor cuts, abrasions, and contusions will receive the appropriate first aid, and an incident report will be completed, signed, and a copy will be sent home.
- For more serious injuries, parents will be contacted immediately (or an emergency contact if parents are unavailable). The course of action will be followed, per parents instruction. Basic first aid will be administered at the school.
  - In the event of an emergency medical situation, EMS will be contacted immediately.
  - If the child needs to be taken to the hospital, a teacher or administrator will accompany the child to the hospital listed on the registration form. The accompanying staff member will also have the child's student record.

When a child sustains a serious injury at school or at home, re-admission will be based on the written approval from the child's physician.

## **Medication**

If a child needs any medication administered, parents must follow the guidelines below.

For **Prescribed Medication** to be stored or administered at Compass Preschool

- Parent or Guardian must complete the Medication Administration Permission Form (forms for prescribed medication are valid for the length of time the prescribed medication is to be taken).
- Prescription must be in the original container in which it was dispensed WITH THE PHARMACY LABEL.
- Must be labeled with the child's name.
- Must not be expired.

For **Over-the-Counter Medication for a Chronic Condition** to be stored and administered at Compass Preschool

- Parents must complete the Medication Administration Permission Form (forms for over-the-counter medication, including acetaminophen, ibuprofen, topical antibiotic cream, are valid for 30 days).
- Over-the-counter medication must be in the original package, with all dosing instructions included.
- Must be labeled with the child's name
- Must not be expired.
- Over-the-counter medication can only be administered for specified times (NOT as needed).

## **Sunscreen**

If you would like your child to wear sunscreen, please apply sunscreen prior to his or her arrival.

## **Parent Participation Policy**

Parents are encouraged to attend Compass Preschool's Open House that takes place at the beginning of each school year. Information on Open House will be emailed to parents prior to the event.

Parents may also request a conference with a child's teacher at any time throughout the school year. Conferences may be scheduled to discuss a child's needs, behavior, and progress as needed. Conferences may also be scheduled with the director as needed. Class Dojo should be the mechanism used to schedule said conferences. Please do not schedule conferences or try to have lengthy conversations during drop off or pick up. Our teachers must remain undistracted and cannot carry on with you at that time.

Our teachers are expected to share general information at the beginning of the week about what the students will be doing that week. Daily we are committed to sharing 3

overall class pictures. You may receive more but this is our minimum commitment to the parents. Please understand that the teachers are with and fully engaged with your children from 8:45 until 1:00 so they are minimally available to use their devices. Most communication will take place after 1:00.

If you have a question or concern about Compass Preschool, please contact the preschool director.

## **Closure Policy**

A notice of closure will be posted via Class Dojo. **Please make sure you check Class Dojo often. No refunds for unplanned closures.**

## **Smoking Policy**

Compass Preschool is a smoke free, tobacco free, and Vapor free campus.

## **Emergency, Fire, and Storm Safety**

We want the children in our care to be safe at all times; because of this, we will work with children to practice fire and storm safety drills. When a drill occurs, children will follow the assigned route (posted in every classroom) to the designated area of meeting. Teachers will be responsible to evacuate the building and lead the children to safety. Children will walk in a line to their meeting place. Compass Preschool staff will assist in every way necessary to ensure the safety of all children. When the all clear signal is given, children will be led back into the building.

You can help prepare your child by talking to him or her about fire and safety, weather or other emergency drills.

## **Child Abuse**

North Carolina State Law requires all childcare providers to immediately report any suspicions of child abuse. If a staff member has any reason to suspect that any child is abused or neglected, reports should be made to the County Department of Social Services. Reports may be made orally or in writing. If you suspect a child in our care might be a victim of child abuse, you must notify the director. The director will assist you in reporting the incident. Failure of a teacher to report suspected child abuse is a Misdemeanor. Aside from the legal implications, the failure to make a report would mean neglect on our part to protect the child in our care.

## **Discipline**

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, Compass Preschool will practice the following discipline and behavior management policies.

At Compass Preschool we

- DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- DO reason with and set limits for the children.
- DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
- DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
- DO listen to the children.
- DO provide age-appropriate alternatives for inappropriate behavior.
- DO provide children with natural and logical consequences for their behaviors.
- DO treat children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
- DO ignore minor misbehaviors
- DO explain things to children on their level.
- DO use short supervised breaks if necessary.
- DO stay consistent in our behavior management techniques that focus on a child's development.

At Compass Preschool we

- DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish children.
- DO NOT yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse children.
- DO NOT shame or punish children when bathroom incidents occur.
- DO NOT deny food as a punishment
- DO NOT leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
- DO NOT allow discipline of children by other children.
- DO NOT criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

Likewise we do not tolerate this behavior from children or parents towards staff or other members of the Compass Preschool family.

When unacceptable behavior is displayed, Compass Preschool teachers and staff will adhere to the following procedures.

1. The teacher will discuss the behavior with the child.
2. If the behavior continues the child will be redirected to another area of the room or activity.
3. If the behavior is still not resolved the child will be removed from the classroom for a brief period of time so they can calm down and return to the classroom.
4. If the behavior continues parents will be notified to pick their child up for the day.
5. If the behavior continues the teacher, parent, and director will have a conference to discuss the child's behavior and ways to help the child.
6. In most severe cases, we may have to ask you to temporarily remove your child from our program with no financial compensation.
7. We reserve the right to dismiss a child from our program at the administration's discretion.

Compass Preschool does not have the staff or resources to accommodate children who have physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral conditions which require special supervision or handling and/or requires the dedication of special facilities or staff for the child. Compass Preschool will make every effort to accommodate children within the available scope and resources of the school. In the event your child requires special resources not available at Compass Preschool we will work with parents to the best of our knowledge and guide you towards the resources your child needs to be their most successful self. This can include, but is not limited to: making the facility available to child development professionals to come work with, assist, and/or observe your child, filling out necessary evaluation paperwork, facilitating screenings, disenrollment from Compass Preschool and/or placement in another school.

## **Biting**

Biting is not uncommon with children who are 12-30 months old. Some of the causes for biting include a child being frustrated by their lack of vocabulary to express themselves, wanting a toy another child has, teething, or wanting attention. When a child is bitten, first aid, comfort and reassurance will be given to the other child. The biting child will be told firmly "No biting, it hurts" and may be moved away from the other children to prevent further biting at that time. After a short period of time, the child will be directed to a positive play activity. An incident report will be sent to the parents of both children and be placed in both children's files.

If the problem persists, the *most severe* way we will deal with it is as follows

- If your child bites three times within his or her school day, parents will be called for immediate pickup. The parents will then need to meet with the teacher and the director to develop a plan of action to prevent further bites.
- If the problem persists (with the child's parents and teacher working jointly), your child will be suspended from the program for one school day with no financial compensation.
- In most severe cases, we may have to ask you to temporarily remove your child from our program with no financial compensation.

This policy may seem drastic, but we cannot let a child hurt other children, and we will not allow one child to jeopardize the safety of others. However, we do wish to work with parents dealing with this problem, and we will seek to be fair to all involved.

## Outside Time

Children will play outside every day, with the exception of inclement weather days. Please keep in mind, in extreme temperatures (hot or cold), we will stay out for an abbreviated time. It is very important that children are appropriately dressed for the weather conditions each day.

We require a doctor's note if your child is not allowed to go outdoors due to health issues.

In the event we cannot go outside, we will have large motor activities indoors.

## What to bring to school

- A complete change of clothes for the **current** season, including socks and underwear, in a labeled Ziploc bag.
- **Full size** preschool backpack
- Children who are not potty trained should have plenty of diapers or pull-ups (with velcro) and any diaper ointment needed.
- Ones need to bring baby food, bottles prepared at home or sippy cup, pacifiers, and teething labeled with your child's name. Items should be in a full size backpack.
- A lunch that
  - Has been prepared so children can feed themselves (include utensils if needed);
  - No glass containers;
  - Does not need to be warmed in the microwave (with the exception of ones);

- In a labeled lunch box with an ice pack if necessary;
- Is nutritionally balanced
- **No Toys (unless your child is assigned a day to bring in his or her favorite book or toy for show and tell-no toy weapons)**

**BE SURE TO LABEL EVERYTHING!! WE CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR UNLABELED ITEMS!**

### **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

Compass Preschool does not discriminate against applicants or students on the basis of race, gender, religion, nationality, and/or ethnic background.