



**Tree of Life**

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P R E S C H O O L

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Parent Handbook  
2022/2023

Tree of Life Preschool  
153 Church St.  
Doylestown, OH 44230  
330-658-2224

[treeoflifedumc@gmail.com](mailto:treeoflifedumc@gmail.com)

Elizabeth Spry-Director

Updated 8-25-2022

\*\*\*The policies in this handbook are subject to change.\*\*\*

The Tree of Life Preschool is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Our license is posted on the wall between the window and the door to the Three Year Old classroom. On this license is a toll free number that may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The rules governing child care are available on the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website ([manuals.jfs.gov/ChildCare](http://manuals.jfs.gov/ChildCare)). All licensing records are available to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services upon request. The Tree of Life Preschool does not discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or disability. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit, <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.

## **Mission Statement**

The Tree of Life Preschool is an outreach of the Doylestown United Methodist Church. It will support the Church's mission to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our program reaches the community at large by providing a healthy and safe preschool program that will promote social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth as well as an introduction to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

## **Educational Philosophy**

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children 3-5 years of age. It provides experiences that enrich each child's cognitive, language, social, spiritual, physical and creative development. We feel that each child is a unique creation from God and will be loved, cared for and respected as such. All children grow and develop in individual ways. Our preschool has been designed so that each child has

an opportunity to create, explore, learn problem solving skills and learn preschool social skills in a caring Christian environment.

## **Curriculum**

The Tree of Life Preschool uses information from our experiences and education, with a basis in Creative Curriculum to form our curriculum. This curriculum allows individual teachers to create lessons based on themes of importance to our students. It allows our teachers to use their knowledge of child development, content knowledge and instructional strategies in order to create lessons that focus on the whole child, not just academics. We know that school success starts early and this curriculum adds to our knowledge in guiding children with their learning and development in accordance with the Ohio Department of Education Content Standards.

## **Enrollment**

In order to give continuity of care and supervision to the children, we will observe and comply with rule 5101:2-12-34 of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services pertaining to the staff and child ratio. One teacher for no more than 12 three and four year olds in the 3-day class and one teacher for no more than 14 four and five year olds in the 5-day class. If enrollment is high, there may also be an aide that will float between the two classrooms, or even an aide in each classroom.

## **Licensing Regulations and Laws**

The Tree of Life Preschool is licensed to operate legally the the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Our license is posted on the wall between the window and the door to the Three Year Old classroom. On this license is a toll free number that may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The rules governing child care are available on the Parent Library bookshelf and on the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services website ([manuals.jfs.gov/ChildCare](http://manuals.jfs.gov/ChildCare)). All licensing records (compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports, evaluations from building and fire

departments) are located in the preschool office and available for review to ODJFS. Parents may also wish to sign up for an RSS feed. Effective December 12, 2018 the ODJFS child care search has enhanced functionality that allows individuals the option to receive program inspection updates via a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed. RSS is a way for websites to distribute information to subscribers automatically. Individuals can now receive notification when a new inspection is posted online. This notification is sent three days following the date the report is posted to the website. Programs receive a copy of the inspection report one day prior to the report being posted on the website.

To sign up for the RSS feed, go to <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/> and search for a program. Click on a program name. This takes you to the program detail page. Click on the button 'Interested in receiving updates about this program?'. An instructional page displays with detailed instructions about how to subscribe.

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The Tree of Life Preschool is mandated to report all suspicions of child abuse and we will report them to Children's Services. The number for Wayne County Children's Services is 330-345-5340.

## **Times of Operation**

The Tree of Life Preschool will be in operation from September through May. Our class times will be 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for the 3 and 4 year old class and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday for the pre-kindergarten class. Teachers will meet students at their respective classroom doors at the start of class. Classroom doors will remain closed until teachers are ready to receive children for the day. Please, wait for your child's teacher to open the door. They have a lot to do to get ready for class.

Tree of Life Preschool will follow the Chippewa Local Schools Calendar for days off, snow days and vacation. We know not every family has a child attending Chippewa Local, so we will do our best to inform all parents of days off through a monthly/yearly calendar on the parent board. For school closing due to severe weather, listen for Chippewa Local Schools on WQKT 104.5 or Fox 8. If a delay is called, we will still have school. Please use your parental discretion on whether you feel it is safe to drive.

## **Daily Schedules**

The following schedules are samples from past years. We understand that each group of students is unique and teachers will adjust schedules accordingly. We will post updated schedules on the Parent Information Board in the hallway.

### **Sample 3 and 4 Year Old Schedule**

9:00-9:10 Arrive, wash hands, take attendance, morning work

9:10-10:00 Art/freeplay/small groups/discovery time

10:00-10:15 Circle Time

-songs/fingerplays

-calendar

-letter/number

-sign language

10:15-10:45 Large motor play/snack

(10:45-11:00 Chapel time--Wednesdays only)

10:45-10:55 Story time

10:55-11:00 Goodbye Song/dismissal

### **Sample Pre-Kindergarten Schedule**

9:00-9:05 Arrive, wash hands, take attendance

9:05-9:25 Circle Time (Calendar, weather, letter, number, sign language, songs, colors, shapes)

9:25-10:25 Free Choice

Art (small group instruction)

Free Play

Large motor

Science table

10:30-10:45 Snack

10:45 Story Time/Chapel Time

10:50-11:10 Small Groups (fine motor)

Singing

Games

Math

11:15-11:45 Clean up

12:00 Dismissal

### **Registration/Enrollment**

Registration applications will be taken on a first-come-first-served basis, with the children currently enrolled and their siblings having first choice for classes in the fall. Applications will be accepted until enrollment capacity is reached. Once capacity is reached a waiting list will be made in order of applications received. Applicants will then be notified by the Director if any openings occur. All registration forms, enrollment forms, health information and child's medical form must be completed before your child may begin preschool. There is a **\$35.00 non-refundable**

**registration fee that is required to guarantee your child's spot.** If permanent withdrawal is necessary, please advise the Director as soon as possible.

## **Disenrollment**

If you choose to disenroll your child, please notify the director as soon as possible. A written request for disenrollment will need to follow a verbal request, or you will still be charged tuition and/or other fees.

If Tree of Life Preschool determines that it is necessary to disenroll a child, parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible. Some reasons for disenrollment include, but are not limited to, a child injuring others, foul language of child/adult, lack of immunizations during outbreaks, inappropriate use of media, failure to maintain emotional control in front of children, failure to pay or failure to follow school policies.

## **Tuition and Other Fees**

Tuition can be paid in one lump sum, or paid in nine equal payments from September through May. This is a YEARLY tuition based program, NOT MONTHLY. We offer monthly payments to make it easier for families. If opting to pay the full tuition in advance, 10% of the tuition rate will be deducted. Monthly payments are due the **first class day of each month.** Tuition will be considered late after the 10th of each month. Once late, a \$10.00 late fee will be charged. If account has not been paid by the end of the month, a second \$25.00 late fee will be charged. Monthly tuition is derived from a predetermined yearly base amount and divided by nine, the number of months we are in operation. If there is **EVER** a change in a family's financial situation (ex. sudden unemployment) please speak with the Director right away. We are an outreach of The Doylestown United Methodist Church and arrangements can be made.

### **Tuition rates:**

#### **Threes and young Fours**

**\$1,215.00/school year or \$135.00/month**

#### **Pre-kindergarten**

**\$1,485.00/school year or \$165.00/month**

Again, the registration fee is **\$35.00 and is non-refundable.** It is due when returning application papers. Applications will not be considered complete and a spot will not be held for your child if this fee is not paid.

Children do need to be picked up on time at the end of the class day. Teachers are only paid for a specified amount of time and have a lot to do at the end of class. Please, be respectful of this time. We understand that occasionally circumstances arise and a caregiver may be late. Please, be aware that a late pick-up fee may be charged. **The late pick-up fee is \$5.00 per child for every 10 minutes, or any part of a 10 minute increment, a child is in our care after class is over.**

## **Director's Office Hours**

The Director will be in the building September-May from 8:30 to 12:30 when the preschool is in session. A message can always be left on the office answering machine at 330-658-2224, our facebook page at @treeoflifedumc or our email at treeoflifedumc@gmail.com.

## **Parental Access**

The custodial parent(s), custodian or guardian of a child enrolled in the Tree of Life Preschool shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during its hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their child, evaluating the care provided by the preschool or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the custodial parent(s), custodian or guardian must notify the director of his/her presence.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents are welcome in the classroom any time we are in session. A parent may volunteer as a classroom helper, a party planner, a lesson prepper or even a sharer of a special talent. There are certain requirements for regular volunteers in the preschool setting. Any costs that may arise due to volunteering (background checks, etc.) are the responsibility of the volunteer and not Tree Of Life Preschool. Please, speak with your child's teacher any time you would like to volunteer. Also, notify the Director when entering the building.



Newsletters will be sent home monthly and special reminders of events will be sent home as needed throughout the year. The Parent Board in the hallway between the two classrooms is also a great resource to know what is happening at school.

It is our job as educators of your child to keep in contact with you throughout the year. This may be in the form of a note sent home, a phone call or a quick conversation before/after class. Please, contact your child's teacher with any concerns right away. We are here to be a resource and help for the developmental needs of your child. Parent conferences will be held once a year in late winter or early spring. However, if you would like to speak with your child's teacher before then just ask for a time to do so. We are more than happy to talk to parents!

## **Staff Assistance**

The staff at the Tree of Life preschool is here to help. If you have any questions/concerns/problems, please, contact us at any time. We can be reached by phone at 330-658-2224 or email at [treeoflifedumc@gmail.com](mailto:treeoflifedumc@gmail.com). If you have questions and concerns regarding your child or any of the staff we want you to let us know right away. Please, feel free to contact your child's teacher, the Director or members of the preschool board at any time. The preschool board is a group of church members that help run and guide the Tree of Life Preschool. They can be reached by leaving a message in the church office (330-658-2224).

## **Parental Roster**

In accordance with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Tree of Life Preschool will prepare a parent roster for each class. Rosters of names and telephone numbers of the parents/guardians will be available upon request. All requests must be made to the director. The parent roster will not include the name or telephone number of any parent who requests that his/her name or telephone number not be included.

## **Supervision of Children**

Children will be supervised by sight and sound by a staff member **at all times while in our care.** However, parents/guardians have full responsibility for the direct supervision of their own child(ren) before signing a child into the classroom and after signing a child out of a classroom. Siblings and other children are never the responsibility of Tree of Life Preschool. Classrooms will be furnished in a way that allows the teacher/aide to be able to quickly identify the location of each child. Attendance is taken daily and the teacher will always have a list of students attending the center on hand. If your child will be absent, please let us know by calling the church office (330-658-2224) and leaving a message with the church secretary or the preschool line.

## **Arrival**

The preschool day starts at 9:00 a.m. Please, walk through either set of doors of the church, down the hallway and to the classrooms. Parents will be given a unique code for our security system in order to unlock the doors to the building. Children may find their names and hang up any coats or bags on the hooks. Classroom doors will be closed until it is time for school to start. The teachers will open the doors at the start of the school day in order to greet all children and take attendance. Parents will need to write down who will be picking the child up from school as well as the time of drop off on the sign out sheet in the classroom.

## **Departure**

The preschool day ends at noon. Please, be prompt for pick up. When picking up your child, please walk to the classroom. During the school year, we may change to parents picking up children by the main doors. Parents will be notified if/when this change happens. Children will be released **one** at a time. Adults picking up children will be responsible for having proper car seats, and for buckling their students according to Ohio law.

Children will **only** be released to parents/guardians and the individuals a parent/guardian has listed on the Pick Up Authorization form and Emergency Contact List. We will check I.D.s of anyone that is not

familiar to us. If there are any court documents concerning the custody of a child, we need to have a copy in the child's folder. Please, notify the preschool if another adult will be picking up your child. Again, we will check I.D.s of anyone the staff does not know.

## **Absences**

If your child will be absent, please notify us as soon as possible. We sometimes wait for all children to arrive before starting our day. You can let us know by calling the church office (330-658-2224) and leaving a message with the church secretary or the preschool line, talking with your child's teacher before the absence, or leaving an email at [treeoflifedumc@gmail.com](mailto:treeoflifedumc@gmail.com). When we notice a child is missing while coming from another program or activity, we will call the appropriate staff/program right away to determine where the child is.

## **School Closing/Delays\***

The Tree of Life Preschool will follow the Chippewa Local Schools Calendar for days off. If Chippewa Local Schools close for any reason, we will be closed. If Chippewa Local Schools are on a delay, we will hold class as usual. Please, use your discretion to determine if it is safe for you to bring your child to school. You can find out if Chippewa Local Schools have closed, or are on a delay, by listening to WQKT or watching WKYC.

If our school needs to close, without Chippewa Local Schools closing, information will be posted on our Facebook page and parents will be contacted by phone or note sent home. If Tree of Life Preschool needs to close during the school day for things such as but not limited to, loss of heat, water or electricity, parents will be contacted by phone as soon as possible.

\*The building may be closed if national, state or local authorities deem it necessary to do so.

## **Transportation and Field Trips**

The Tree of Life Preschool will not transport children in any type of vehicle to/from the center. Children must be accompanied and transported in a vehicle by a parent/guardian to any field trips that involve the use of such transportation. Any walking field trips will be supervised by the appropriate number of staff. Children will be within sight and sound of a staff member at all times. **All** field trips will require the parent/guardian to complete a permission slip in order to give consent for the child to participate. Most of the field trips will require a parent/guardian to attend. Parents/guardians are in charge of supervising their own child/ren during a field trip that requires a parent/guardian, NOT the staff of Tree of Life Preschool. If an emergency arises where the child needs to be transported from the center or from a field trip location, the local Emergency Squad will be called. Parental consent to transport needs to be signed on the enrollment forms. If a parent chooses to not give consent, the child will not be able to attend Tree of Life Preschool.

## **Tree of Life Preschool Safety and Transportation Policy**

1. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
2. To assure safe arrival/departure of all children a staff greeter is at the door and children are dismissed from their classes one child at a time.
3. Our center has immediate access at all times to a working telephone within the building used for child care.
4. Our center has monthly drills at varying times each month. A record of fire drills/severe weather drills is available at the center.
5. Our center has a fire and weather alert plan posted in each classroom which explains actions to be taken and staff responsibilities in case of fire or weather emergencies and diagrams showing evacuation routes.
6. Our center's plan for safety whenever children are transported from the center on field trips, special outings or routing trips is as follows:

- A person trained in First Aid, Child Abuse, Communicable Disease and CPR is available on each field trip.
- A first aid kit that meets all state requirements shall be available.
- Each child on a field trip shall have identification attached to the child containing the center's name, address and telephone number to contact in the event the child becomes lost.
- Child enrollment information and health records are taken on all outings.
- Written permission is needed from a parent for each child to participate on a field trip. This includes the child's name, destination, signature of parent with date signed and the date of the trip.
- When an accident or an injury occurs, or when any other incident necessitates, a staff member will complete an incident report, give the parent a copy and keep a copy in the child's file at the center.

7. Smoking (which includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, butts, ashes, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers and chewing tobacco) is not allowed within or outside the building.

8. Firearms and weapons are not allowed on church property. This includes conceal and carry. Those who may carry on property are those allowed by law, such as police officers.

## **Water Activities/Swimming**

The Tree of Life Preschool may participate in activities involving water. If water levels will exceed 2 inches, a permission slip will be sent home to be signed by a parent/guardian. If the permission slip is not signed, the child will not be able to participate.

## **Outdoor Play**

The Tree of Life encourages outdoor play and will take children outdoors from time to time. Please, dress your children according to the weather. Rain/snow boots are fine for outdoor play, but a pair of clean shoes need to be worn in the classroom.

Many factors may contribute to the safety of taking children outdoors and it is up to the director to make the final decision. Some factors that may prevent outdoor play are temperature, humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, lightning, rain or ice and individual children's behaviors.

### **Napping/Resting**

Due to our short school day, we do not have a designated nap/rest time. If a child becomes tired or needs a quiet place, the classrooms will be set up to offer a place of relaxation. If a child seems overly tired, parents may be contacted. If a child is tired due to an illness, the child may rest on the school cot while waiting to be picked up.

### **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency, the staff will do all they can for the well-being of your child. Teachers will keep an attendance list and emergency contact list at all times. All teachers/aids on site will be trained in basic first aid and CPR for children at all times. If the children need to be evacuated from the building due to an emergency, such as a fire, all children will quickly be escorted by staff and taken to wait for parents at the Doylestown Library. If there is an emergency where the center must be evacuated and relocated, all children will be escorted by staff to the Doylestown Library.

If a child becomes seriously sick or injured during the school day Emergency Services will be contacted immediately. Staff with training in first aid and CPR will monitor the child until help arrives. An incident/injury report will be filled out and a copy will be given to parents.

If the weather becomes severe we will take refuge in the hallway or the basement of the church. All children will be escorted quickly by a staff member to the location and kept there until the severe weather is over.

## **Management of Illness**

If your child has any of these symptoms, or the child becomes ill while attending school, children will not be permitted to attend class, and parents will be notified right away. Symptoms for which a child will be discharged from the center are as follows:

1. Diarrhea (more than one time)
2. Severe coughing causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
3. Difficult or rapid breathing
4. Yellowish skin or eyes
5. Elevated temperature
6. Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
7. Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rash
8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
9. Stiff neck with elevated temperature
10. Vomiting
11. Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations
12. Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
13. Other symptoms as determined by local/state/national authorities

Children must be free of any of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. For lice, children must be properly treated before returning to school. Children with skin infections can return to school upon a doctor's recommendation.

If a child becomes ill while at the center, the procedure is as follows: notify parents, isolate child away from other children on a cot, chair or other comfortable place, still under the supervision of a staff member. A guardian must pick up the child as soon as possible from initial contact with the teacher or director.

A staff member that is trained in first aid, communicable disease recognition, and CPR will be on site at all times. Notices will be posted on the Parent Board outside of the classroom when children have been exposed to a communicable disease other than routine colds or flu. Parents are asked not to bring children to school when there are any signs or symptoms of illness present. We do not provide care for sick children. The administrator reserves the right to request a physician's note.

If there is ever a need to follow state/local/federal authorities and agencies due to a new illness/outbreak (such as Covid 19), the Tree of Life Preschool will follow all protocols and suggestions from those authorities. \*Children and staff will be monitored on an ongoing basis while at the school.

## **Immunizations**

All children attending Tree of Life Preschool will be up to date on immunizations as required on the form JFS 01305. If you choose not to immunize your child, please be made aware that the Tree of Life Preschool is not responsible for the health of your child. You may be asked to keep your child home during outbreaks of illness and/or your child may be disenrolled if a safety issue arises.

## **Medication/Supplements Policy**

Medication and medical food will only be administered in cases of life threatening situations such as asthma or allergic reactions. Parents will be required to fill out State forms on an annual basis for any medications, medical food or medical diagnosis that requires action or monitoring by staff. Supplements will not be given unless directed by a physician.

All medication, medical food and supplements will be out of reach to children at all times.

The Tree of Life Preschool will try to accommodate food supplements and modified diets (ex. Nutritional drinks, eliminating milk or food dyes, vegan). However, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure an



appropriate snack for their child is available at the school if diet modifications or supplements are required.

Non-prescription topical products (such as hand lotion, sunscreen, etc.) may be administered if parents provide written permission. Lip balm and hand sanitizer do not need parental permission.

We will administer children with any medication, medical food, topical products, modified diets and care that are required for a child with a disability to the best of our ability, in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act.

## **Food Information**

Parents will be asked to provide a healthy snack for the appropriate number of children on a rotating basis noted on a monthly calendar, or in accordance with the classroom teacher. Examples of healthy snacks include:

fruit & vegetables

- 100% juice
- pretzels or crackers

Snacks must be store bought. They may either be in individual packages or one large package. However, the packages must be unopened prior to coming into preschool. If the snack is forgotten, or the child in charge of the snack is absent, Tree of Life will provide a store bought snack. If you have any questions about snacks please ask your child's teacher.

## **Behavior Management**

Discipline is not punishment. It is the process of teaching children self-control and self-discipline. Our aim is to help the children learn what socially acceptable behaviors are and the importance of these behaviors to future school success.

Discipline is necessary in the classroom to maintain a safe and structured learning environment. Redirection of attention will be the first manner of behavior modification. If the problem persists, the child will be taken aside to help them develop a plan for the teacher/child to change the

behavior. Persistent problems will be brought to the attention of the parents to work together toward a solution.

Physical punishment is not considered to be an acceptable method of dealing with young children's behavior. At the Tree of Life preschool we use positive reinforcement to encourage children to preserve or work on improving a child's self-image or further development of his/her self-esteem. A positive approach is employed in the classroom with good behavior being complimented and encouraged.

Occasionally, there are behavior issues that jeopardize the safety of staff and/or students. Things such as a child running out of the classroom, a child that is unable to regain control after repeated efforts, and excessive physical harm/spitting will not be tolerated. In these circumstances, the child will be sent home at the discretion of the Director.

## **Transitions**

Occasionally, a child may need to be transferred from one class to another. The final decision rests with the director, but movement to a new classroom will not take place without mutual consent between parents/guardians and the director. Parents will need to sign a transition plan. Parents and all teachers involved will work together to create a plan on transitioning a child into another classroom. This is not a fixed plan, but one that can be evaluated and changed to suit the child's needs. The child will not be permanently moved into the new classroom until the child is ready. The following is a sample of what a transition plan may look like.

### Sample Transition Plan

Parents and teachers of child agree that a change from the 3-day class to the 5-day class is in the best interest of the child. The child will be placed on the roster for both classrooms until the move is permanent.

\*Week 1-Child will be introduced to new teacher/classmates. Child will join the new class for 1 activity each day.

\*Week 2-Child will remain in new classroom for half of class time, and old classroom for the other half.

\*Week 3-Child will move to spending all day in the new classroom.

\*Week 4-Child is now permanently a part of new classroom.

## **Assessments**

The Tree of Life Preschool currently conducts informal assessments up to twice a year. These assessments help us to identify where each child is developmentally so that we can adjust our lessons and plans accordingly. Parents/Guardians will be provided with a copy of each assessment.

If and when the State of Ohio determines that formal assessments must be conducted, we will follow all state rules. We will also report any data to the state as required.

## **Fundraisers**

Fundraisers are necessary to maintain the quality of the Preschool as well as keeping our tuition rates reasonable. We ask that parents participate in fundraisers or volunteer time toward our efforts to raise necessary funds for the program.

## **Images of Children**

With the ever increasing use of electronic devices, internet, social media and the like, we will follow parents' wishes for the use of their child's image. All parents must sign a Picture Release Form that will be kept in the child's file. On this form, a parent has the opportunity to consent for us to use their child's image on the internet/printed publications/classroom purposes, **OR** to use their child's image for classroom purposes only, **OR** to allow no images to be taken.

Parents may take pictures at school events. However, parents may only take pictures of their own child, unless verbal or written consent has been given by the other child's parent. Parents may not post pictures on the internet of children other than their own without verbal/written consent from another child's parent.