

THE VINE PRESCHOOL

2019-2020

Kimberly Boston Vargas, Owner,
Director at St. James
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The Vine Preschool Handbook

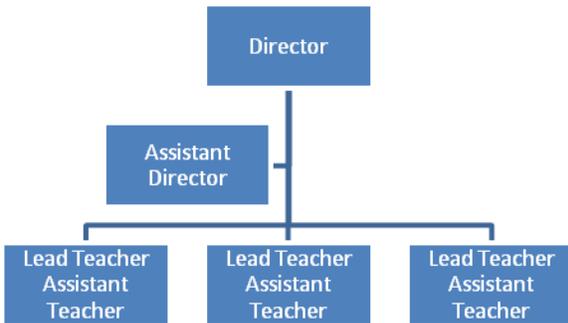
Welcome to The Vine Preschool (TVP) Family! This Handbook has been put together to give you the information you need and to hopefully answer any questions you may have. If you have any other questions after you read through the Handbook, just let us know!

Please read through the entire Handbook to ensure that you know and understand the information that has been provided. **There are places in the Handbook where you will be asked to sign or initial, indicating that you have read, understood and are in compliance with the guidelines of The Vine Preschool Handbook.**

The Vine Preschool (TVP) is a licensed child care facility under the Virginia Department of Social Services. For questions about licensing, their contact information is (703) 934-1505.

Chain of Command

Communication is key to the success of any organization, therefore effective communication between families and staff is essential.



On matters involving curriculum and instruction: Lead Teacher, then Director

On matters involving health, safety/injury reports: Director

On matters involving confidential information: Director

On matters involving staff: Director

Mandated Reporters

Every staff member of The Vine Preschool is a mandated reporter which means mandated, by law, to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Confidentiality

Your child and family's information is confidential and will not be shared with other parents or families. However, Virginia State Licensing has the right to review files for compliance during announced and unannounced visits.

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Parental Involvement

Being involved in your child's education from the beginning increases your child's educational success.

Custodial Parents have a right to enter The Vine Preschool any time during center hours.

Ways to get involved at **TVP** include:

- Showing interest in the work your child brings home;
- Maintaining open communication with caregiver(s) by letting them know how they can best help your child blossom during these important years (especially through the communication notebook);
- Volunteering to read a story to the children;
- Donating specific items for a cause or event;
- Participating in our music and movement activity;
- Being a field trip chaperone;
- Providing recyclables for arts & craft projects;
- Reading to your child at home at least once daily (suggested before bedtime as a routine);

Communication

The Vine Preschool staff uses **Hi Mama™** digital childcare daily reports solution to communicate with parents. It was designed by early childhood educators and childcare operations directors to be quicker than existing documentation methods and intuitive for all staff to use which means more time with the kids. For the infants, it outlines bottle feedings, diaper changes and naps and much, much more. For toddlers and preschoolers, parents will be able to see how the daily activities correlate with developmental milestones according to state standards for early childhood education. There are so many milestones that are reached when children are in child care, and this software system serves as the eyes and ears of your child's experiences at The Vine Preschool. This is also the place where parents can provide the caregiver with information via email such as the child's disposition the night before.

Philosophy on Discipline

At The Vine Preschool, we understand children's needs and abilities. Our discipline policy focuses on redirection, consistency and firmness. We encourage respect for others and respect for property. Children are always reminded of the rules and expectations. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children and there will be times when children test limits with adults. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, kick and scream. We will try to prevent inappropriate behaviors and redirect when necessary. We frequently use the term "use your listening ears" and children have responded well to that approach.

We will also try to help children read and understand the facial cues of others when they are verbally or physically aggressive towards one another. We believe that when we help children take the time to look at a friend whose feeling they've hurt, we are increasing their social emotional skills in the area of social

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relations. It takes time for children to learn how to respond sympathetically to peers in need and express empathy for others. This is a developing skill and our staff will always help children develop this skill in the area of social relations when it comes to friendships with peers.

When conflicts arise, we are pro-active, not reactive, with children. We must think about the underlying cause of a child's behavior so that the undesired behavior is eliminated. We must use continuous positive reinforcement to maintain desired behaviors in children.

If a child continues to exhibit an undesired behavior, he/she will be removed from the group for an amount of time comparable with the child's age. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling or isolation used. Food will never be withheld from children as a means of punishment. We will always create consistency for the child through open communication with parents and staff.

Significant Disruptive Behavior

If a child's inappropriate behavior becomes a significant distraction or disruption to the group or class, parents will be called to pick up the child. Several incidences of significant disruptive behavior will require that the child be removed from The Vine Preschool.

Educational Perspective by Kimberly Boston Vargas, Owner:

I am a former public school teacher who has taught kindergarten, third through fifth grade, and most extensively, preschool.

I have hands-on experience in a wide range of curriculums and approaches regarding children of all ages. My perspective is that children learn in a variety of ways. Therefore, I believe the curriculum and approach should be flexible enough to meet every child's needs.

My goal is to meet children where they are and raise the bar where needed. Learning is crucial during these beginning stages of development. The way in which children learn during this stage needs to be fun and engaging.

I believe that when you teach young children, you must take an active role in all areas of development:

Academic (cognitive)-understanding concepts

Physical-experiencing the indoor and outdoor world around them

Social Emotional-expressing their feelings and feeling safe and secure.

I believe infants, toddlers, and preschoolers learn from teachers but much of what they learn is from each other. Therefore, the environment must be conducive to learning. The Vine Preschool environment provides materials, "toys" and activities that are age-appropriate and encourage the learning process.

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Because rules and expectations for behavior are also important, The Vine Preschool environment is one that is centered around routine and consistency which helps the children know exactly what to expect at all times.

In addition to our own educational perspective, I incorporate the following approaches including, but not limited to:

Reggio Emilia philosophy, Kimono, High-Scope Approach and Creative Play Curriculum.

A monthly lesson plan is sent via email for the toddlers and preschoolers. It outlines the concepts, activities and theme that the children will be exposed to and taught; including the books being read that correspond to the monthly theme.

Registration

A tour of the learning environment will be provided, followed by an interview between the Director and the parents. Educational perspectives will be outlined and the child's developmental needs will be discussed. Any questions posed by parents will be answered and the registration packet will be provided upon request.

The following is required before your child can enter the program:

1. All forms from the registration packet filled out completely with names, addresses and all telephone numbers as well as personal and business email addresses that are checked regularly, to ensure that all available contact information is provided;
 - i) You must show your child's original birth certificate so that the birth certificate # can be written and kept in your child's file;
 - ii) If an original birth certificate is temporarily unavailable, the Proof of Birth letter must be provided until the original birth certificate becomes available.
The original birth certificate must be viewed by the Director and the birth certificate number must be documented in your child's file as required by the state.
2. An immunization form must be in the child's record by the start date of the child's enrollment. Immunizations must be recorded on either a Health Department form or a physician's form, have the child's name, date of birth, and be signed or stamped by the licensed physician, the physician's designee, or an official of a local health department;
3. First bi-weekly tuition payment;
4. Registration fee.

NOTE: Immunization forms must be updated every immunization schedule up to age 2, then every six months between the child's 4th and 6th birthday.

[PLEASE NOTE: for each subsequent well-visit to the doctor, after your child is enrolled in our program, a copy of all immunizations that were given must be provided upon return to The Vine

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Preschool. This is to ensure that your child's file remains up-to-date. The Vine Preschool must have record of your child's sick and well visits on file. For every sick visit, a doctor's note is required upon return that states when the child can return to school. _____

If the absence involves a communicable illness, a doctor's note alone does not ensure that the child can return to school. This will be further determined by the Director based on factors involving whether or not other children were recently affected and the number of children affected, while maintaining confidentiality.] _____

The **registration fee is paid annually**. If you are re-enrolling your child, the first week's tuition would be due in addition to the registration fee.

A non-refundable waitlist fee is paid to reserve a space for your child on the waiting list. If your child does attend, the waitlist fee will be converted to the annual registration fee.

Tuition Policy

Tuition is paid bi-weekly. **Tuition is paid for all 52 weeks, including holidays, sick days, and vacation days.** Tuition is paid in advance of child care services. _____

Tuition Late Fees

Declined Payments-When a tuition payment has been declined, an alternate form of payment (another credit/debit card or cash) must be provided the same day that the tuition payment is scheduled to be drafted. If an alternate form of payment is not provided the same day that the tuition payment is declined, a \$25 late fee will be assessed the next day. Tuition payment must then be made in cash if not paid within 24 hours. If tuition payment is not received within 48 hours, the child cannot return to school until full tuition payment for that time period has been paid. In some cases, Parents may be asked to submit a tuition deposit as a security payment, as a result. _____

If tuition payment is not paid within 14 days, enrollment will be terminated.

A child may be re-enrolled upon full payment of account plus the registration fee if a space remains available.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures

- Please turn off your car's engine and take your car keys when dropping off and picking up your child.
- You must enter with your child to ensure a smooth transition.
- Sign in and out on the Drop-Off/Pick-Up Log with your name and the child's name, the date and the drop off time. When picking up your child, sign your name and the pick up time.

Children will only be released to people authorized in the registration packet. Changes to this form or others must be done in person. For individuals whose identity needs to be verified, a driver's license must be presented.

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Drop-Off Policy

The Vine Preschool provides child care services from **6:30am-6:00pm**. Breakfast is served on a rolling basis as children arrive. However, children **must arrive no later than 8:30am** in order to have Breakfast.

If your child will be absent, please notify us as early as possible. If you are running late, please call to notify us by 7:45am so that we can plan accordingly. **The latest drop-off time is 9:00am. We will not accept children after 9:00am.** Thank you for your courtesy, in advance.

Drop-Off Policy:

- **Morning Doctor Appointments;**
- **Delayed Openings due to Weather;**

*For morning doctor appointments and delayed openings due to weather, please note that children must be dropped off **NO LATER than 10:00am**, and this only applies weather-related delays and morning doctor's appointments. For morning doctor's appointments, you must have a doctor's note and for well visits, we must have an updated immunization schedule.*

For parents who plan to bring their child to school after they have been to the doctor for a morning appointment (before 10:00am, SICK OR WELL) they must have a doctor's note. WE CANNOT ACCEPT CHILDREN WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S NOTE WHETHER SICK OR WELL VISIT.

We cannot accept children later than 10:00am as it interrupts the daily routine that your children are accustomed to. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Pick-Up Policy for Afternoon Doctor Appointments

Please notify the Director and the staff in your child's classroom if your child is getting picked up early for a doctor's appointment. For the purpose of communication, safety and security, it is necessary to communicate that information. The staff will then be prepared to have your child ready, to help minimize any disruptions to the classroom routine (or to other children who may be sleeping if it is nap time).

If your child is picked up early, they cannot be dropped back off at school. Once they are picked up from school, it constitutes as the end of your child's school day. Thank you in advance for adhering to our drop-off and pick-up policy.

Late Pick-Up Policy

The Vine Preschool provides child care services from **6:30am-6:00pm**. Please call us by 5:15pm if you know that you are going to be late picking up your child and notify us of which emergency contact will be picking up your child.

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Late Fees

Children not picked up by 6:00pm will be charged a late fee of:

- **\$2.00 per minute from 6:01pm-6:05pm.**
- **From 6:06-6:10pm, the late fee is \$3.00 per minute.**
- **From 6:11pm and thereafter, the late fee increases to \$4.00 per minute.**

If we do not hear from the person who is expected to pick up your child by 6:00pm, the parents will be called. If parents cannot be reached, the people on the emergency contact list will be called. **By 6:15pm**, if we do not hear from parents or emergency contacts, **the police will be notified.**

Withdrawal Policy

Parents must give 30-days notice *in writing* using The Vine Preschool *Intent to Withdraw* form to inform The Vine Preschool of the intention to withdraw your child. If your child is withdrawn without giving 30 days notice, you will be held liable for tuition expected during that time. (Example: If your child is withdrawn without notice on July 10th, you will be held liable for tuition through August 10th). This policy must be enforced and followed, thank you. _____

Local Field Trips

Local field trips (as a group) will be taken to places like the pumpkin patch, the apple orchard, and the farm. Parents will transport their own children to and from the destination. If possible, trips will also be taken to the museum and/or the zoo.

Field Trip Fees

Some field trip destinations charge a fee and some field trips are free of charge. Notice of the fee will be provided at least 2 weeks in advance. All field trips require parent permission.

Holidays

TVP celebrates all federal holidays, in addition to Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Halloween.

The Vine Preschool is CLOSED the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving, the day after Christmas and for all federal holidays including Veteran's Day.

On Good Friday, we close at 3pm.

VACATION

Tuition is paid for all 52 weeks, including school's vacation weeks.

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Snow/Ice Policy

TVP follows Fairfax County Public Schools SNOW/ICE policy for closures and delayed openings on the **FIRST DAY** of each new occurrence. TVP makes an independent decision on the second day and thereafter.

For a two-hour delay, TVP will open at 9:00am and will not accept children after 10:00am. For early closures, TVP strictly follows FCPS guidelines.

Sick Child Policy

Parents will be notified to pick up their child when their child exhibits one or more of the following:

- a temperature/fever of 100.4 degrees or higher;
- Vomiting or diarrhea two consecutive occurrences in one day;
- A communicable disease such as hand, foot and mouth, strep throat, chicken pox, measles etc.
- Severe coughing or wheezing;
- Thick mucus that significantly affects breathing;
- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Continuous tearing of the eye(s) with discharge (**with or without redness or pick color**);
- Mouth sores with or without drooling;
- Unusual spots or rashes;
- Or any other symptoms that cause apparent discomfort to the child.

Parents are expected to pick up their child within 1 hour of being notified about their child's illness or have an emergency contact with identification, pick them up. _____

24-Hour Requirement for Children Returning From Illness

Fever-child may not return until there has been NO FEVER for 24 hours without any fever-reducer medicine;

Prescriptions-must be administered at home for a 24-hour period before child can return to school;

Diarrhea (definition: 2 consecutive loose stools) -child cannot return until 24 hours AFTER the LAST OCCURRENCE;

Vomiting (definition: 2 consecutive occurrences of vomiting)-child cannot return until 24 hours AFTER the LAST OCCURRENCE;

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Other Important Requirements for Children Returning From Illness (to name a FEW)

Illness	Exclusion Requirement
Chicken pox	Cannot return until vesicles become dry*
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	Exclude while symptomatic OR until 24 hrs of antibiotic treatment has been completed
Measles	10 days after rash has appeared*-Health Department Notified
Mumps	14 days after onset of gland swelling*-Health Department Notified
Head Lice	Until completely treated with no signs of nits/eggs and/or louse.* Child will be asked to be picked up if a nit/egg or louse is found in their head.
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	10 days after antibiotic treatment has been completed*- Health Department Notified-
Ringworm	Until lesion(s) are seen by a doctor and is properly treated by oral or antibiotic ointment (must be covered while in school until lesion becomes flat and dry)
Streptococcal diseases (impetigo, strep throat, scarlet fever..)	Immediately after first indication of symptoms* AND 48-72 hours after treatment/antibiotic has been given.*
Hand, foot and mouth disease	Immediately after first indication of symptoms* AND 24 hours after lesions have dried*

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A doctor's note* is required every time your child is seen by a doctor/nurse practitioner, whether it is a sick visit or a well visit. _____

***When returning to school from an illness, a doctor's note alone does not guarantee that your child may return to school. _____**

Director will make a determination on a case by case basis depending on the severity of the illness and the current overall health of other children who may have also been affected (while maintaining confidentiality). _____

Medication Administration

The Vine Preschool has someone on staff at all times who is trained to administer prescription and nonprescription medication. Prescription (and nonprescription) medication can be administered once an authorization form* has been completed and signed, **and after** the prescribed medication has been administered to the child at home for a minimum of 24 hours and/or after the child has received two doses of the prescribed medication. _____

**Authorization is needed for all medications, ointments, lotion, sunscreen and insect repellent.*

Prescription Medication Tip:

Ask your pharmacist to split prescribed medication into **two identical, labeled containers**. That way one can be sent to school and the other can be left at home. Also be sure to fill out any necessary forms such as the Medication Consent form.

Accidents or Injuries

When an accident or injury occurs with a child or between 2 or more children, the appropriate procedures will be performed by the child care provider such as immediate first aid.

Kimberly Vargas and her staff are certified in Universal First Aid and Adult, Child and Infant CPR, and AED.

The accident/injury will be recorded on an Accident/Injury Report and the parents of the children involved will be notified. When the children involved are picked up, parents must sign the Accident/Injury Report acknowledging that they have been informed and return the original form back to school. Parents will be provided with a copy of the Accident/Injury report.

Emergency Medical Form

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, hospitals must have parental consent to perform emergency services. This form is included with the registration materials and must be completed and signed upon registration.

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Fire Drills/Shelter-in-place/Lockdown Drills

We conduct fire drills once a month. We conduct shelter-in-place drills two times a year. We also conduct “locked down” drills.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency that requires complete evacuation with the inability to return to the preschool building, the children will be transported to _____

USDA-Regulated Food Services

Breakfast and lunch is provided by TVP. Parents **must provide a daily afternoon snack for their child.** Parents may send up to a week’s worth of snack for their child on a weekly basis if they choose to do so.

Please DO NOT send whole grapes or popcorn because those items are on the list of choking hazards for children. Hot dogs are also choking hazards.

Please DO NOT send any nut products because we are a nut-free facility.

Nutrition

The Vine Preschool aims to provide high-quality nutrition in addition to high-quality child care.

Pork will **not** be served.

Only milk and water will be served.

For allergies or medical conditions, parents must provide a doctor’s note and supply whatever items that need to be supplemented from what the provider provides (such as an alternative milk product if lactose intolerant)

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays and you are welcome to celebrate or not;

Please only bring store-bought snack items for birthday parties;

We prefer miniature cupcakes for the children 2 years old and under

and regular-sized cupcakes for ages 3 years old and up;

You are welcome to celebrate big or small; and

You are welcome to invite children to birthday parties outside of school.

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Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are held every six months and/or at the request of the Parents, Teacher, or Director.

For children exiting kindergarten in the fall, there will be an exit conference that will include the exiting preschooler's Developmental Report.

The conference is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress. Each conference will address the developmental milestones your child has achieved. These milestones are discussed between the parents and the caregiver before a decision is made about the milestones that will be worked on until the next conference.

What Your Child Needs At School

Every Monday, your child needs a crib sheet and a blanket for their cot. There will be a \$5 charge to your account if a sheet and blanket is not sent in on Monday. We will substitute with TVP's sheet and blanket in the event that it occurs.

We do not allow the use of pillows or stuffed animals during nap time as regulated by the Department Licensing.

Your child needs at least two full changes of clothes including underwear and socks. PLEASE KEEP AN INVENTORY so that your child always has two sets of clothes appropriate for the weather. Please keep the clothing in a gallon-sized Ziploc bag with your child's first and last name written in large letters with BLACK ink. Using a Sharpie or permanent marker is strongly recommended.

ANYTHING THAT BELONGS TO YOUR CHILD SHOULD BE LABELED including backpacks, coats, hats, clothing and food items.