Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to Church Street Community Nursery School. Since 1971 we have been providing an engaging and nurturing program in the heart of Red Hook. This handbook has been designed for you to use as a guide and source of information. We hope you will enjoy reading about our program.

We believe that your child's experiences will provide a firm and positive educational foundation upon which to build. Our objectives are to help develop your child's social, emotional, and intellectual growth in an atmosphere that is fun and nurturing. We continually help develop their sense of pride and independence. Our goal is not only to encourage your child to learn and discover, but also to develop a love of learning.

Our dedicated and experienced teachers and assistants provide the very ingredients necessary to achieve our goals and objectives. You will find that our teachers are genuinely concerned with the well-being and growth of your child. They have years of valuable experience with preschoolers, and they regularly update their skills and methods through workshops and seminars. Each person contributes to our curriculum with his or her individual talents and expertise.

In an effort to keep you informed of our program activities and upcoming events, we circulate monthly newsletters and post important notices on our bulletin boards. Parent-Teacher conferences will be held twice yearly and as needed during the year to keep you informed of your child's progress. If you have any concerns or questions along the way, please be sure to talk with your child's teacher.

We warmly welcome the opportunity to celebrate your child. We are confident that it will be a fruitful and rewarding experience for children, parents, and teachers alike! We thank you for choosing Church Street and welcome you to our family!

Sincerely,

Church Street Community Nursery School
Board of Directors & Staff

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Church Street Community Nursery School is a non-profit preschool that is governed by a Board of Directors made up of parents, community members, and a representative from The United Methodist Church. The Board of Directors shares the common interest and goal of providing an affordable, high quality preschool experience for the youngest members of the Northern Dutchess County community. They come together once a month to review the happenings of the preschool and make decisions as necessary. If you are interested in joining the Board of Directors we invite you to submit a letter of interest detailing the qualities you have to offer in hopes of making our school an even better place for children to play and grow. The members are integral in the fundraising efforts to maintain the affordability of Church Street Community Nursery School.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. Provide your child with a happy outlook toward school. Discuss school as a pleasant and positive experience; please don't use school or the teacher as a threat.
2. Always leave cheerfully, and assure your child that you will return promptly to pick him or her up. If your child is anxious over your leaving, please be gentle but firm, and leave him or her in the care of the teachers. Our teachers are well acquainted with this type of situation, and they will handle it in a caring and effective manner.
3. Dress your child appropriately for school. Help them learn to dress themselves independently. Bring clothes that are appropriate for the weather, as we go outside.
4. Help your child to start the school day on time, after having a good night's sleep and a nourishing breakfast. Coming in late often makes a child feel anxious and overwhelmed. It is difficult for them to join in and become part of the group.
5. Carry over your child's interest from school to home. Praise your child for work he or she has done; it is something special for him or her. Asking your child specific questions about school are more likely to get a response than "How was school?"
6. If there are exciting times or sad times at your home it will help if we know about them, so that we can better understand your child's behavior.
7. If, at any time you have concerns about your child or our program, we are glad to help answer your questions. We prefer that we do not discuss these concerns in front of your child. We are happy to make an appointment with you to discuss your concerns.
8. Communication with your child's teacher is key. Let us know what you are comfortable with. You know your child and what will work with them.
9. **CONSISTENCY!** At some time or another, your child may decide to rebel against coming to school. This is very common and happens at varying times during the year. Never let it be your child's decision – you must continue to bring them consistently, or it will teach them that they have control over the situation. Give them something to look forward to when you pick them up.

PROGRAMS

Explorers Class (2 by 12/1/26): *9:15-12:15*
2 Days (T/TH), 3 Days (MWF), or 5 Days (M-F)

Mrs. Heather Hilbrandt, Teacher
Mrs. Kaylee Dargan, Assistant

This class is intended for children who will be 2 years old by December 1, 2026. It is geared towards enhancing children's play and social skills, which are the early foundations for success in elementary school and beyond. Children will learn to play, share with others, make new friends, develop listening skills and foster a sense of self-worth and self-confidence. They listen to short stories, sing songs, and learn through discovery and play. This class is structured to help our youngest students adapt to their new environment and thrive during this important developmental transition. This class provides a diapering service. **There is a $100.00 registration fee.**

Voyagers Class (Mixed age: 2 or 3 by 12/1/26): *9:15-12:15*
3 Days (M, W, F) or 5 Days (M-F)

Mrs. Beth Shiels, Teacher
Mrs. Danielle Dorrer, Assistant

This class is specifically designed for children who will be 2 or 3 years old by December 1, 2026 and are going to Pre-K the following year. Children learn to count, identify their letters, and write their names with more accuracy. Teachers in this class concentrate on expanding the social and emotional skills introduced in previous years. Children learn to work cooperatively within a group. They explore the calendar in-depth, sharpen their fine and gross motor skills and develop expressive language. We recommend children attending all five days to receive the maximum benefit of the class. This p*rovides a smooth and easy transition to full day Pre-Kindergarten.* ***There is a $100.00 registration fee.***

Adventurers Class (Mixed age: 3 or 4 by 12/1/25): *9:15-12:15*
3 Days (M, W, F) or 5 Days (M-F)

Mrs. Corinne Molinaro, Teacher
Ms. KC Furlano, Assistant

This class is specifically designed for children who will be 3 or 4 years old by December 1, 2026 and are going to Pre-K or Kindergarten the following year. Children learn to count, identify their letters, and write their names with more accuracy. For our younger adventurers, expectations will be appropriate, and many skills will simply be used as an exposure, not intended to achieve an expected outcome. Teachers in this class concentrate on expanding the social and emotional skills introduced in previous years. Children learn to work cooperatively within a group. They explore the calendar in-depth, sharpen their fine and gross motor skills and develop expressive language. Especially for our 4 year old adventurers, we recommend children attending all five days to receive the maximum benefit of the class. This provides a smooth and easy transition to full day kindergarten. **There is a $100.00 registration fee.**

Tuition

2 days (Tues/Thurs)	***$360mth ($3,600/yr)***
3 days (Mon/Wed/Fri)	***$480/mth ($4,800/yr)***
5 days (Mon-Fri)	***$660/mth ($6,600/yr)***

Registration fees are non-refundable and due at the time of enrollment. ***Annual tuition has been divided up into 10 equal payments to be paid out during the school year.*** Tuition will be due by the 5th of each month, to avoid a $40 late fee. These late fees will be applied automatically through our bookkeeping software.

If a tuition payment is more than 10 days late, it will be necessary for tuition to be updated before a child can continue. Please notify the director of any financial changes or payment arrangements you wish to make. There will be a $25.00 return check fee. **We also do not prorate for June, we usually end one week before Red Hook Central School and you are still responsible for a full month's tuition.** If you decide to take your child out of the program you are still responsible for the full month's tuition, we do not prorate. 30 days notice is required to withdraw your child from our program. Special circumstances may be considered. Please make all checks payable to: **Church Street Community, LTD**. Cash or payment through our website (using Zeffy) is accepted as well.

*****Payment is expected for all children enrolled whether present or not. Space is reserved for enrolled children. Thus, to hold that space, payment must be made regardless of attendance. This includes illness, holidays, inclement weather days, vacations, etc.**

Calendar

Church Street Community is open from September through June, excluding holidays and inclement weather days. Our program does follow the Red Hook Central School District calendar with exception of a few days. See separate 2026-2027 school calendar. We do not follow the District half days. During inclement weather, we follow Red Hook School District as well. If Red Hook is on a 1 hr. delay we are normal schedule, 2 hr. delay we open at 10:15, 3hr delay or closed we are closed. The Director will communicate delays and closings via ClassDojo, and Church Street's main Facebook page.

Attendance

Notification of Absence: Please call the school 845-758-6282, email, or message me via ClassDojo, if your child is going to be out of school and the reason for their absence.

Arrival/Departure

Explorers Class Hours: 9:15 – 12:15
Voyagers Class Hours: 9:15-12:15
Adventurers Class Hours: 9:15 – 12:15

Arrival:

- **We cannot accept children earlier**, this is the time when the teachers are preparing the classroom for the day. **Being here on time is important as well,** arriving late will disrupt the groups.
- There will be a barrier in the hallway prior to class starting. This barrier will be removed at 9:10 to open the hallway for classes. This insures that teachers can prep their classrooms for the day. Access to the bathroom will be open.
- Your child is your responsibility when you are on the premises.
- Encourage your child to respect the school rules by walking through the hallway.
- Be sure the teacher acknowledges your child's presence.

Departure:

- **Picking up your child on time is very important**, teachers need this time to close down their classrooms.
- Children will only be released to parents/guardians, unless otherwise notified by parent/guardian. If someone else will be picking your child up they need to present a photo id to the teacher before your child will be released.

Late Pick-up Fee:

- If children are picked up late more than one time, you will be charged a late fee. A fee of $5 per child will be assessed for every five minutes (or part of) if you are picking your child up late starting at 12:20. You will be notified of the late charge in writing the next scheduled class day. This fee applies to your account regardless of designated pick-up person.

Parking:

- Please do not block the sidewalk right in front of the school entrance. The church has a "No Parking Zone" in front of the school. You may park here briefly during drop off and pick up but please do not leave your car there for any length of time. The church operates one of the largest food pantries in Northern Dutchess County and they need this area clear to receive food deliveries which often come mid-morning.
- You may park in our lot, in front of the school along Church Street, or along any of the side streets such as Prince Street.

******Please refrain from allowing your child to play on the church ramp, it is for handicap use only. We invite you to visit with other parents and friends out by our playground where it is safer.**

EXPECTATIONS

What your child can look forward to in preschool:

- Free play in the classroom and on the playground
- Small group centers
- Circle time
- Art projects
- Science experiments
- Dramatic play
- Music and songs
- Read a louds
- Cooking activities
- Learning and practicing how to write their name
- Learning and practicing their letters and numbers
- Snack time
- Field trips
- Socialization

Your Rights As Parents

As a parent you have the right to know:

1. The philosophy, goals, and curriculum of this program
2. The daily schedule your child's class will follow
3. How your child is behaving, learning, growing, and interacting with other children and adults.
4. How the children are disciplined, and to offer your input about discipline
5. If there are special joys or problems in dealing with your child
6. Our health and safety procedures and sanitation standards.

What we expect from our children and families

We strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child. As such, we have school rules relating to the safety and consideration of others. Because we believe that children function best in a climate of support and approval, we design the rules to foster such an environment. Our expectations in regards to the school rules will be different for different ages. We recognize that family rules may sometimes differ from our school expectations but we encourage you to support our school rules while at Church Street. We will continue to applaud the children as they learn appropriate behaviors and will celebrate with them as they gain subsequent self-respect and confidence!

In addition to the rules already outlined in this handbook, we expect the children and our families to:

RESPECT THEMSELVES

1. Come prepared to play – be well rested, and fed, and dressed appropriately.
2. Ask teachers for help when needed.
3. Have good toileting and sanitary habits
4. Stay safe by following the teacher's directions during class time

RESPECT OTHERS

1. Share and take turns
2. Use words to solve problems, asking for help when needed
3. Listen to others
4. Remember manners and friendly words
5. Treat others with care
6. Listen to the teachers and follow directions
7. Keep school playtime friendly

RESPECT THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. We share the building with the United Methodist Church – please show respectful behavior. Please keep the children off the ramp and respect the “No Parking Zone”.
2. Play constructively and respectfully with toys
3. Use inside voices and outside voices appropriately
4. Please walk in the hallway
5. Help keep our school safe and clean by hanging clothing and back packs on hooks, picking up after yourself, and using the bathroom appropriately.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Monthly newsletters from the Director will keep parents informed of the various ongoing activities. This newletter will be emailed out, as well as sent home with your child. Newsletters from classrooms will be sent home and will also be posted on the bulletin boards outside your child’s class.

We believe in an open line of communication between teachers and parents. Together, we act as partners in the education of your child. Parents are encouraged to keep the teachers informed about any changes at home as they arise. Teachers will also inform the parents should any concerns arise at school.

Each year we hold parent teacher conferences. This is an important opportunity to discuss and celebrate your child’s accomplishments. They will be held once in the fall and once in the late spring. However if you have concerns that you’d like to address with the teacher, additional conferences can be scheduled as needed at any time during the year.

Visiting the School

We will have an Open House at the end of August/early September. On this night you and your child will come and meet the teachers, other students and parents, as well as turn in all paperwork that was mailed out during the summer. This must be turned in in order for your child to attend class on the first day.

GUIDANCE AND PROBLEM SOLVING

To insure a safe, healthy and nurturing environment for everyone it is expected that children, parents, and staff will conduct themselves in an appropriate, respectful and professional way.

We believe that the best way to handle problems is to work to prevent them. Teachers reinforce and encourage positive behaviors, which help to build a child's sense of self-esteem. They help children learn to identify their feelings and express their needs verbally, instead of physically. They redirect children if they sense that problems may be arising. Teachers will work together to help the children continually grow in their social development.

Should parent concerns arise, they should be brought first to the teacher's attention. Every attempt should be made by the teacher to provide appropriate conflict resolution. Teachers expect, and will promote respectful behavior in the classroom and will assist children in the development of these behaviors to foster their self-esteem and social growth. Parents will be encouraged to work hand in hand with the teacher on this. If the teacher's attempts are not satisfactory to the parent, the issue may be brought to the director's attention. The director will fully evaluate the situation and provide suggested solutions. If the combined efforts do not resolve the situation to the parent's satisfaction the parent may choose to write a letter to the Board of Directors, which governs this school, requesting a meeting.

Although it is a rare occurrence, it is possible that a child may not be ready to flourish in and enjoy Church Street. In such a case the teacher will consult with the parents on the next course of action.

We reserve the right to exclude a child from school for reasons including but not limited to:

- The child's behavior becomes a threat to the safety and well-being of that child or other children or staff in the school.
- If the child requires more care than what the current program can provide.
- The behavior of a parent or guardian hinders the success of the program or puts the welfare of others at risk.
- An ongoing disregard for rules and school policies.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

The safety and well-being of the children, parents, and staff, of our school is a priority. If a child is being unsafe towards peers or staff on a continuous basis (this includes but is not limited to: hitting, biting, punching, kicking, pushing, etc.), the following steps should be expected:

1) Staff will communicate with parents that corrective measures will be initiated as detailed in the hand book.

2) Staff will keep a log of behaviors; parents will be requested to do the same at home.

3) Staff will meet with parents/guardians to determine patterns or triggers for aggressive behaviors and to discuss a behavior plan.

4) Staff will communicate with parents about the progress of the behavior plan at an interval (daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly) as determined by the behavior plan.

5) Changes to the behavior plan can be made based on changes in behavior. The request for a change in behavior plan can be initiated by parents or the teacher. At this time, a meeting will be held between teachers/parents to discuss the changes requested. The director may attend the meeting if necessary.

6) If the aggressive behavior does not show improvement after one month, and continues to put the safety and/or well-being of any student(s) at risk, the Church Street Board of Directors reserves the right to review the behavior logs, behavior plan, and eligibility for the child to continue attending their program. Teachers/Parents/Guardians will be invited to the initial review with the board to offer input. A decision will be made within 7 days of the board's review meeting as to whether or not it is safe for the child to continue attending Church Street.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

You can obtain information about school closings two ways, the nursery school Facebook page or Remind. Our Facebook page will be updated with closing information. You can also join the school's REMIND account, which will enable you to receive text messages as soon as school is delayed or closed (it is free to join Remind, data charges may apply). At the beginning of the year all parents will receive a flyer for details on how to subscribe to this service by class. School closing include, but are not limited to: inclement weather, power outages, heat outage, etc. We will be closed if Red Hook School District closes or has a three-hour delay. We will be on a one-hour delay if

Red Hook School District has a two-hour delay. If Red Hook dismisses early or has a half day we stay on our regular schedule. If for some reason we have an emergency closing (which is rare) we will contact you by phone, so please make sure all numbers are kept up to date.

SICKNESS RELATED SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY

Should we need to close the school building due to widespread illness or staffing shortages, we will not make up the missed days. They will be treated as emergency school closings.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

A complete, accurate, and up-to-date Immunization Record along with a Health Statement from your health care professional must be provided to Church Street Community. The Health Statement should state that your child has been examined within the past year and is able to participate in the Church Street Community Program. These documents must be on file in the office no later than September 30th.

Physicals must be within 6 months prior to attending school. It is a state mandated law that all children must have proof of immunizations and of lead screening before attending nursery school. Often times you may have to ask for the lead screening to be indicated on your form. If your child is eligible for an exemption, or you have difficulty obtaining the necessary information please see the Director as soon as possible.

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency, we will notify the parent/guardian noted on your child's paperwork immediately after attending to the welfare of the child. It is very important that all names and numbers are kept current. It is then the policy of the school to call for transport of the child to Northern Dutchess Hospital. The administration of medical treatment will then become the responsibility of the parent.

A consent form for medical/surgical procedures (blue card) has been distributed to all parents for you to approve and sign. Your child will not be able to attend preschool until we have this form on file. If we are unable to reach you, the form will be presented to the hospital so that the trained medical staff will be able to take the appropriate steps on your child's behalf. Without this form, treatment may be withheld by the hospital. Please fill the card out carefully and make sure it is easy to read.

Medication/Allergies

No medication will be given by Church Street Community employees except if your child has a severe allergy and requires an epi pen. If an epi pen is required notify the Director immediately to fill out the proper forms before the medication can be left. No medication can be left in a child's bag for any reason.

If your child has a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional, you must have a food allergy emergency plan in your child's file at the school. The food allergy emergency plan must be prepared by your child's health care provider and signed and dated by both the health care provider and the parent/guardian. The plan must include:

1. A list of each food the child is allergic to.
2. Possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list.
3. The steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

We will require that you sign a letter releasing us from responsibility if your child has a severe allergic reaction.

Illness

Your child's health is important to us. For the protection of your child, as well as others, children must not be brought in if they are ill. Please keep children home if any of the following symptoms/conditions exist or have existed in the past 24 hours:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any symptoms of usual childhood disease
- Common cold, with excessive cough or nasal discharge (yellow or green)
- Sore Throat
- Croup
- Any unexplained rashes
- Any skin infections (boils, ringworm, impetigo, etc.)
- Suspected mononucleosis
- Pink eye or matted eyes
- Head Lice

If your child develops a fever or any other symptoms while at school, you will be notified to pick up your child immediately. Children who are ill will be sent down to the Director to wait for pick up. It is important that you pick up your child promptly. After an illness, children must be free of fever and other symptoms for 24 hours, or have been on medication for a 24 hour period before returning to our program.

Please notify the Director if your child is ill with a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox, lice, etc.). Church Street Community reserves the right to request written permission from your child's physician before your child can return to our program. We hope these precautions will help Church Street Community have a healthy environment for all children.

Toileting Accidents:

ALL CLASSES::

We will be happy to change your child enrolled in this program as long as you have given us written permission and provided us with diapers, wipes, and a change of clothes if needed. If you are not comfortable with us changing your child we will notify you and request that you come to school and change your child within 30 minutes. If

children are training, we will assist them if needed, but they are expected to try to do it themselves. Children will not be forced to use the toilet at any time.

We recognize that some children may not be completely potty trained and that accidents may happen. If your child is in the process of learning to use the bathroom we suggest using a pull up. Please be sure there is a change of clothes in your child's backpack along with a clean pull up.

Mandated Reporting Status
Please note that as employees of a facility inspected by the New York State Department of Health, we are required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

CLOTHING

- Please dress your child in comfortable clothes, remembering that children will experience messy activities at nursery school
- **Closed toe shoes are highly recommended for outdoor play**
- Your child's name should be printed on any clothing they may remove while at school.
- Help your child to recognize their own clothing, particularly their own jacket and snow pants.
- Clothing should be simple and durable. Especially for those learning to use the bathroom.
- Please dress your child for the weather. We will go outside during all four seasons.
- Children should be able to put their boots on unassisted.
- Please keep sharp or pointy jewelry at home.
- Each child should bring an extra change of clothes, (pants, shirt, underwear, socks) labeled with their name, you never know when they may need them.
- **Please no toys from home. Your child will be directed to put them in their book bags.**

OUTSIDE TIME

Children need fresh air and space to run around, so we will go outside most of the time. Make sure children are dressed for the weather outside. We go outside in the cold as well, but the time may be shortened if it is very cold outside. **If you do not want your child to go outside you will either need to stay with them until their class comes in or you will have to pick them up early. Due to limited staff we cannot provide one on one care for your child.**

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips add new perspectives and fun to our program. Throughout the year, we will be conducting a number of field trips. Field trips will require transportation. You must provide transportation for your child on these field trips or arrange for transportation. We are not allowed to transport children. Please be sure to turn in the form granting permission for your child to participate in these field trips or sign-up outside the classroom.

BIRTHDAYS & OTHER CELEBRATIONS

We like to observe the different holidays of the year and various ways that people celebrate them. It can be a valuable learning experience and a lot of fun for the children. If you celebrate a particular holiday or custom, and you would like to share it with the class, please let us know. Parents will be asked to "sign-up" to bring items in to celebrate.

Birthdays are also fun to celebrate and share. If you wish to send in a special treat for that day please discuss it with your child's teacher. Teachers can also make you aware of any allergies in the class. Invitations to parties may only be passed out at Church Street Community Nursery School if all of the students in the class are invited. Otherwise, please mail or email them. I will gather information at the beginning of the year for those who would like to be included in a class list (phone, email, address) once the list is completed I will send them out to each child.

SNACKS

Please refer to your child's teacher for specific information about how snack time works in your child's class.

FUNDRAISERS

Our program has several fundraisers yearly. Some of the fundraisers that we have done are: Parent's Night Out, Village Pizza Night, Krause's Chocolate sale, etc. I know fundraising can be bothersome, but it off sets the costs of running the nursery school so we can keep tuition prices affordable. Your participation is greatly appreciated and we are always open to new ideas.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

All parents can help in some way. We are always looking for parent volunteers to help out when staff are out, but if your child will have a hard time with this you most likely will not be asked to volunteer in your child's room. We have several fundraisers throughout the year and some may involve needing extra hands to make it a success. We participate in the community Memorial Day Parade, parents come together and decorate our wagon, etc. We welcome any suggestions and feedback that parents have. We issue monthly newsletters to update you about activities going on, these can be found on the bulletin boards, as well as sent via email.

RECORDING POLICY

Protecting Student Privacy and Professional Integrity

At Church Street Community Nursery School, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and private learning environment for our students, families, and staff. To protect student confidentiality and ensure professional integrity, the following policy regarding audio and video recordings is in place:

1. **No Recording in Classrooms**
    - Parents, guardians, or visitors are not permitted to make audio or video recordings, or take photographs, inside classrooms during instructional time.
    - This protects the privacy of all students and prevents the unauthorized use or distribution of images or recordings.
2. **No Recording During Parent–Teacher Conferences**
    - Recording devices (audio or video) may not be used during conferences or meetings with teachers or staff unless *explicit prior consent* is obtained from all parties involved.
    - Notes may be taken for personal reference, but recordings are not permitted.
3. **Exceptions**
    - School-approved photographers, videographers, or staff may record or photograph classroom activities and events with prior administrative approval.
    - Any exceptions for individual students (e.g., documentation for learning plans or special services) must be approved in writing by the school administration.
4. **Consequences of Unauthorized Recording**
    - Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which can include restriction of classroom access, removal from school events, or further action as deemed necessary by the administration.

******If you have concerns, at any time, please see the Director immediately. ******