



**The Rainbow Garden**

# **Parent Handbook**

**2017 - 2018**

**License # C980819**

# **The Rainbow Garden**

## **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to serve the community by providing a Christian preschool. We use Biblical values to create a loving and supportive environment for the child and family.

## **Philosophy of Education**

We believe the Bible, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to be the only infallible, inspired and authoritative Word of God. Our staff will use the Bible as the foundation to teach good moral values toward the family and society. Our goal is to nourish the child's growth and development spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually and to promote a life long love for learning.

## **The Rainbow Garden**

### **Director**

Barbara Wilcher

### **Associate Director Curriculum Specialist**

Suzanne Louvaris

**The Rainbow Garden**  
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**(727) 799-2700**

# Parent Handbook

The Rainbow Garden welcomes you to be a part of our community preschool family. We hope your involvement in our program will enrich you, your family and our community.

The Rainbow Garden is a Christian Preschool program. It was established as a ministry of Community Presbyterian Church in September 1994, as a Mom's Morning Out Program. In September 1995, the program grew to include a two, three and four year old preschool program. In July 1998, The Rainbow Garden Inc. was established as an independent non-profit Christian organization.

Our experienced teachers will nurture your child with Christian principles that provide a solid foundation and prepare the young child for his/her future academic school years. Our program admits children of any race, color, creed, national and ethnic origin and does not discriminate from all the rights, privileges, activities and programs available to the children of The Rainbow Garden.

## **Goals for the Child:**

- To provide a Christian based program that fosters the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.
- To provide opportunities with other children in a setting conducive to the development of wholesome social relationships.
- To provide appropriate learning experiences that contribute to the growth and development of the child.
- To provide moral guidance and practical instruction of Bible truths.
- To prepare children for the challenges of the next academic level.

## **Goals for the Parents:**

- To provide opportunities for each parent to grow in their knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.
- To provide opportunities to meet & volunteer with other parents and teachers who have in common the interest and development of the preschool age child.
- To provide quality education and care for the child while the parent has an opportunity to pursue individual interests and goals.
- To provide opportunities as a parent volunteer to grow in the understanding of child development through a planned educational program under teacher supervision.
- To provide opportunities for marriage and parenting classes to strengthen relationships.

## **Goals for the Community:**

- To provide an early childhood Christian education program.
- To contribute to the wholesome growth and development of the future citizens of the community.
- To assist in building strong families in the community.

## **Program and Enrollment Information:**

Parents should tour The Rainbow Garden and receive a registration packet prior to registering. A student orientation for all students will be done before the first day of school. All students registering for a class must be the same age by September 1 (or older) as the class in which they register, for progression to the VPK 4 year class and elementary school entrance age and requirements. If your child has a birthday between August 14 through September 1, 2017 and will be entering one of our two or three year classes, your child may not enter until their birthday. Students enrolled in the three or four year class must be completely toilet trained, wearing underwear and self sufficient in the bathroom. Registered students will be placed into classrooms by The Rainbow Garden directors. Much time and consideration is given to the placement of each child into a class. When placing registered students, the directors consider boy/girl ratios and new students enrolled. In house families receive priority registration and wait list status. Car pools, registration ticket numbers, verbal and written requests will not be used for classroom placement. The Rainbow Garden retains high quality professional teachers and our staff meet and exceed the criteria for early childhood instruction. The yearly schedule for all staff includes attending educational training and workshops and renewal of all educational credentials. Our staff is one of the main foundations of The Rainbow Garden preschool program for the children to have a positive and well prepared transition to Kindergarten. The Rainbow Garden has many recommendations from Kindergarten teachers and our VPK Readiness Rate of 100 is the highest possible score.

## **VPK Policies**

- Children are eligible for the Florida VPK program if they are 4 years old on or before September 1, 2017 and are a Florida resident.
- Children are not eligible for the Florida VPK program if they are 5 years old on or before September 1, 2017. These children are eligible to register with The Rainbow Garden as a private pay and will be responsible for any registration and tuition fees.
- If you register your child as a private pay and pay a registration fee, class fee and any monthly tuition, these payments are non-refundable if you withdraw your child or change to a VPK status.
- A child's absence must be documented with a written note signed by the parent or legal guardian for all absences.
- Parents are required to sign the AWI-VPK-03 Student Attendance and Parent Choice Certificate at the end of each month verifying the child's attendance in the VPK program. A parent's failure to sign this attendance form and adhere to The Rainbow Garden and VPK attendance policies will result in possibly forfeiting your spot in The Rainbow Garden VPK program.
- The Rainbow Garden will use our center based curriculum unless you are informed otherwise.
- Snacks and supplies for The Rainbow Garden VPK program will be received on a donation basis.
- Our school calendar year will be August 14, 2017 - May 18, 2018. This calendar meets the VPK 540 instructional hours requirement. Reference the school calendar for specific events and holidays observed.
- The closed days and holidays are *not* part of the VPK 540 instructional hours.
- The VPK Attendance Policy is 80/20 Attendance, which means a child is expected to attend 80% of the VPK Instructional Hours each month, as well as, the school year.
- The Rainbow Garden reserves the right to withdraw a student from the VPK Program that displays excessive absenteeism.
- Parents are responsible for payment of all fees for any non-VPK instructional hours that their child attends. (*i.e.*, *Early Care*, *Wrap Around class*) The parent is responsible for any late payment policies as stated in The Rainbow Garden Preschool Handbook.

**Packet 1: Registration Forms Completed and Received at Registration:**

- \_\_\_ **The Rainbow Garden Registration Form 2017-2018**
- \_\_\_ **Parent Signature Sheet**  
*Indicating you read the Parent Handbook 2017-2018, Discipline Policy, Emergency Information stated in The Rainbow Garden Parent Handbook, Know Your Child's Children's Center*
- \_\_\_ **Child's Enrollment Record**
- \_\_\_ **Child Health and Development Questionnaire**
- \_\_\_ **Emergency Medical Release Form** completed *except Notarized section done on site by Staff*
- \_\_\_ **School Directory**
- \_\_\_ **Photo/Audio/Video Release Form**
- \_\_\_ **Food Experience Permission Form**
- \_\_\_ **Onsite Field Trip Permission Slip**
- \_\_\_ **Seed Sower Volunteer Form**
- \_\_\_ **Current Immunization Form (Obtain from Child's Physician)**
- \_\_\_ **Current Health Exam Form (Obtain from Child's Physician)**
- \_\_\_ **The Rainbow Garden VPK Agreement (4yr. VPK Students only)**
- \_\_\_ **VPK Certificate of Eligibility from Pinellas County VPK Office(4yr. VPK Students only)**  
\* During initial registration time frame families have until February 28, 2017 to provide The Rainbow Garden with child's VPK Certificate of Eligibility in order to secure your child's spot. **Effective March 1, 2017** parent must provide VPK Certificate of Eligibility when registering at The Rainbow Garden. Certificate of Eligibility must be from Pinellas County where preschool is
- \_\_\_ **Registration Processing Fee/Class Fee *non-refundable and non-transferable***
- \_\_\_ **VPK Student Voluntary Donation**  
*(Fees and Donations received as Cash or Check payable to The Rainbow Garden; No Credit Cards)*

At registration you will receive a reminder about the dates and times the first tuition payment is due.

**Due Monday, May 15 and Tuesday, May 16, 2017 9:15 -2:15**

- First Tuition Payment *If payment is not received, we will call waiting list students on June 1, 2017 to fill the space.*
- Any missing required forms due.

**Packet 2: Given at time of first tuition payment.**

- Supply List
- Monthly Tuition Payment Schedule and Slip
- The Rainbow Garden Welcome Letter with reminder of Orientation date and times.

**Supplies Due: Thursday, August 10, 2017 Student Orientation**

**Use the following procedure if turning in paperwork after August 10, 2017.**

- To allow for your child's paperwork to be properly processed please allow a ***two business day minimum processing time before your child attends school.***
- Once you turn in your paperwork to the office we must process the paperwork and check for errors or incomplete areas that must be corrected before your child can begin school.

### **Tuition and Fees Information for School Year August 14, 2017 – May 18, 2018 :**

- A non-refundable and non-transferable Registration Processing/Class Fee is due at Registration for all The Rainbow Garden classes for 2 Year, 3 Year and 4 Year Wrap Around.
- Registration/Class Fees below are effective for all children enrolled as of Thursday, February 9, 2017 for the 2017-2018 School Year enrollments
- The registration processing/class fee for a currently enrolled child: \$200.00 per child.
- The registration processing/class fee for a new enrolling child: \$250.00 per child.
- VPK Students Voluntary Donation: \$250.00 [Students enrolling the VPK only do not pay registration/class fees or tuition, but are asked to make a voluntary donation of \$250.00 at registration to cover activities that are not covered by the amount that we receive from the State of Florida.]
- A 10% sibling tuition discount is offered to private pay families who have two or more enrolled private pay students during the same calendar school year. We offer a 10% sibling tuition discount on the lesser tuition amount.
- A 10% tuition discount is offered to Bayside Church families.
- Discounts offered may not be combined.
- No refunds, credits or prorates for absences, illnesses, holidays, vacations, withdrawals or dismissals.
- The Rainbow Garden is a non profit Academic Christian Preschool and the tuition, registration/class fees and VPK funding amount cover a portion of the costs associated with educating a Rainbow Garden student. To help off set the remaining amount that is needed for our quality preschool program, we appreciate and need additional support through kindness of Donations, which are tax deductible, and fundraisers. One of our partnership programs that benefits our classes and school during the school year is The Adopt "R" Class Program.

**The annual tuition is divided into 10 equal monthly payments. The *first payment is due Monday, May 15, 2017 or Tuesday, May 16, 2017* received from 9:15 am-2:15 pm. If first tuition payment is not paid by the close of business at 3:00 on Friday, May 19, 2017, we will call waiting list students on June 1, 2017 to fill the space. First tuition payment is non-refundable and non-transferable.**

**The second through tenth tuition payments are due on the first day of each month beginning September 1, 2017 and ending May 1, 2018.** There will be a five day grace period until the 5th of the month. A Monthly Tuition Form for the second through tenth payment will be included in Packet 2. The child's name and monthly tuition is on the form. Attach the slip to your payment. A \$25.00 service charge for payment not received by the 5th of the month will be assessed, include with your tuition payment. If school is closed on the 1st though 5th of the month, the payment must be made by mail and postmarked by the 5th to avoid the \$25.00 service fee. No refunds, credits or prorates for absences, illnesses, holidays, vacations, withdrawals or dismissals. A \$25.00 fee will be assessed for any checks returned due to insufficient funds. After two returned checks, the tuition must be paid in cash.

### **Withdrawal Policy:**

Parents withdrawing students from The Rainbow Garden need to complete the withdrawal process through the preschool office. Parents must sign a withdrawal form indicating their intention of withdrawing their child from the preschool. Please notify us prior to the first of the month if you will be withdrawing your child. Withdrawal past the first of the month will result in the full month payment due with no prorated refund. If a child has been withdrawn from The Rainbow Garden during 2017-2018 school year and is re-enrolling in The Rainbow Garden during the 2017-2018 school year, a re-entry registration processing fee of \$200.00 will be paid at time of re-enrollment with the tuition for the month of re-entry.

Parents are responsible to maintain current health and immunization forms on file with The Rainbow Garden. The Rainbow Garden will send a reminder of any expiring forms to update and provide to the preschool. Failure to keep these forms current will result in your child being withdrawn from The Rain-

### **Preschool Program Information:**

- The Rainbow Garden is a private part time preschool that has recognition for quality and excellence.
- Several class options are offered to provide opportunities for families to select the preschool class that is best for their child and family.
- Our preschool classes are curriculum enriched throughout the whole day, whether they end at 12:30 or 2:00, with cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual and physical learning experiences and focus. Our classes of any age group that continue to 2:00 have a tuition value.
- 4 yr. Wrap Around until 2:00 p.m. is a continuation of learning experiences with the class that includes Spanish, Art History, Music Appreciation, Fitness, Computers and Curriculum Enrichments.
- The Rainbow Garden Curriculum is in house designed and provides age appropriate transitions from one age group to the next with quality preparation for Kindergarten and progression to elementary school entrance age/requirements. Our Curriculum includes all the developmental domains and meets and exceeds standards for early childhood education.
- As a VPK provider, we have the highest score possible of a 100% readiness rate for our students.
- VPK students and private pay students will be together in classrooms.
- Two year class students are not required to be toilet trained.
- All three and four year class students must be completely toilet trained and wearing underwear.
- Students in a class until 2:00 p.m. will bring their lunch box and eat with their classmates.

### **Extended Day Options:**

Students may sign up for the following options where applicable: (check ages & days available)

**Early Morning Care:** We start receiving at **8:55 a.m. Monday - Friday**. \$5.00 daily rate per child. \$50.00 monthly rate 2yr., 3yr. & 4yr. children may sign up for the Early Morning Care Program, if space is available. Sign up at the Office or Welcome Counter prior to taking your child to Early Morning Care. You may prepay or pay that morning. Payments are non refundable and non transferable.

**Lunch Time Program:** (child brings lunch) Days offered will be based on Interest. Please see office. **Pick up by 1:05 p.m.** \$5.00 per day for 2yr., 3yr. & 4 yr. old children may sign up for the Lunch Time Program if space is available. The sign up for lunch will be located in the office or at the Welcome Counter. You may prepay or pay the day your child is staying. Payments are non refundable and non transferable.

**Stay & Play Program:** (child brings lunch) Days offered will be based on Interest. Please see office. **Pick up by 2:00 p.m.** \$10.00 per day 3yr. & 4 yr. old children (must be toilet trained) may sign up for the Stay & Play Program, if space is available. The children will have an additional play time following their lunch. The sign up for Stay & Play will be located in the office or at The Welcome Counter. You may prepay or pay the day your child is staying. Payments are non refundable and non transferable.

*\*The Rainbow Garden may make a variation of the Extended Day Options if needed.*

**The Rainbow Garden Preschool Classes and Tuitions:**

**2 Year Old Classes:**

2 yr.	3 Day Class	M/W/F	9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	\$320/month
2yr.	2 Day Class	T/TH	9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	\$320/month
2 yr.	5 Day Class	M-F	*See below	\$450/month*

\*Child attends 3 Day Class and 2 Day Class times and days.  
Extended Day Options available and listed on previous page.

**3 Year Old Classes:**

3 yr.	3 Day Class	M/W/F	9:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.	\$310/month
3 yr.	3 Day Class	M/W/F	9:30 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.	\$360/month
3 yr.	2 Day Class	T/TH	9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	\$310/month
3 yr.	5 Day Class	M-F	9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	\$460/month*

\* Child attends 3 Day Class and 2 Day Class times and days  
Extended Day Options for 3 year olds of Lunch Bunch until 1:05 or Stay and Play until 2:00 have a social focus and will be available based on interest. See previous page for details and fees.

**4 Year Old Classes:**

4 yr.	VPK Class	M-F	9:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	VPK Funded - No Fee
4 yr.	VPK Class with Wrap Around *	M-F	9:15 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	\$245/month
4 yr.	5 Day Class	M-F	Private Pay -See Office .	

\*4 yr. Wrap Around until 2:00 p.m.is a continuation of learning experiences with their class that includes Spanish, Art History, Music Appreciation, Fitness, Computers and Curriculum Enrichments.

Extended Day Options for 4 year olds of Lunch Bunch until 1:05 or Stay and Play until 2:00 have a social focus and will be available based on interest. See previous page for details and fees.

All three and four year class students must be completely toilet trained and wearing underwear.



## **Class Policies:**

*“Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6*

- Children know what is expected of them when rules are taught, consistently reinforced and fair. This helps to create a safe, healthy and relaxed atmosphere at the preschool.
- Children are expected to show courtesy and consideration to others at all times.
- Physical harm, such as hitting, biting or fighting with others will be addressed by the teacher. If the problem is not resolved by the teacher, a conference will be scheduled with the parent and a director notified. In the event a problem continues, a director will schedule a conference. If the problem is consistent, the child will not be permitted to attend the preschool program.
- The following items are not permitted in school: candy, gum, money, real or toy weapons, toys (the teacher will select appropriate times for show and tell).
- Students enrolled in the three year or four year program must be completely toilet trained and wearing underwear.
- All students must be the same age by September 1 (or older) as the class they in which they register.
- If your child has a birthday between August 14 through September 1, 2017 and will be entering one of our two or three year classes, your child may not enter until their birthday.
- For safety purposes, siblings may not be brought into any classroom. This includes arrival, dismissal, birthday parties, school parties, conferences, etc. Ratio numbers change when a sibling is brought in the classroom. Also equipment in a classroom may not be age appropriate for the sibling. These are guidelines set forth by the Pinellas County License Board. Siblings are welcome at family functions.
- The Rainbow Garden Preschool curriculum does not include TV viewing and limits the use of video viewing in the classroom.

## **Clothing:**

Play clothes and sneakers are suggested for your child’s comfort and activity. Please keep in mind the daily weather conditions. We recommend closed toe style shoes to be worn to school for safety purposes. Each child needs to have a complete change of clothes available at all times. In the event soiled clothes are sent home please bring clean clothes in the next school day. If applicable, in a two year class a daily supply of diapers are necessary for children who are not toilet trained. Do not use pull ups, unless they unfasten, for toilet training at school.

## **Discipline Policy:**

A child will be disciplined in a firm but loving manner. Positive methods of discipline will include:

- Role-Play, acceptable and non-acceptable choices to clarify acceptable behavior to the children.
- Verbal warning stating the misbehavior and consequence.
- Positive guidance and redirection of activity or play.
- Elimination of potential problems.
- Supervised time out appropriate for age of child from 3-5 minutes.
- Consistency of discipline guidelines.
- Praising for positive behavior.
- A child will not be disciplined in a severe, frightening, or humiliating manner.
- Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.
- A child will not be physically punished or spanked as a form of discipline by any staff member.
- If the teacher has repeatedly worked with the child using the guidelines above and the child continues with unacceptable choices, the child will be talked to in the classroom or office by one of the school directors.
- If a director deems it necessary, the parent will be called to pick up the child from school and a conference may be scheduled.
- In the event there are consistent issues that are not able to be resolved, such as, but not limited to, hitting, biting, fighting or behavioral incidences, the child will not be permitted to attend the pre-school program.

## **Health Policies:**

The staff will not be expected to administer medication except in emergency situations where the student has previously been diagnosed with a medical condition requiring emergency medication. A director will need to be informed prior to the student attending school for appropriate procedures to be in place. Emergency medications and first aid kit are stored in the locked first aid cabinet located in the school office. Students may not bring any type of item that states "Keep out of reach of Children," hand sanitizer, or medication to take or use independently. We function as a healthy environment. If your child shows symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, upper respiratory illnesses, fever, etc. please do not have him/her attend school. If a child becomes ill with any of these symptoms during class, the parents will be called to pick the child from school. If a parent is unable to be contacted we will call the emergency people permitted to pick up the sick child. Keep all phone numbers current and notify emergency contacts if you will not be available by phone. If a child is unable to play outside, they should not attend school. Additional staff are not available to supervise them indoors.

We follow the CDC Immunization Schedule for children in our facility and work in conjunction with "PITCH" Pinellas Immunization Team for Community Health. Per Florida Department of Health recommendation, The Rainbow Garden does not enroll children without a current Health Exam Form and current Immunization Form that complies with the CDC Immunization Schedule.

A child coming to school with a suspected contagious disease such as flu, pink eye, impetigo, chicken pox, measles, or head lice will be required to go home. Children with head lice must receive a treatment and be nit free prior to returning to school, per Pinellas County License Board. At the director's discretion, a contagious illness may require a physician's note stating the child is no longer contagious.

If an accident occurs the parents will be notified and The Rainbow Garden staff will administer minor first aid only. In an emergency situation, "911" will be contacted and the parent or emergency people notified. The emergency release form will allow your child to be administered immediate care at the nearest hospital.

## **Health Policies Continued:**

Any medications that are given at home on a regular basis, should be listed in your child's files. Let us know throughout the school year if any changes occur. Discuss severe illnesses, allergies and any other medical, developmental or behavioral concerns with a director prior to registering your child and let us know of any changes through out the school year.

All child care personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with Chapter 39.201 of the Florida Statutes.

## **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:**

The Rainbow Garden entrance is located on the east side of the church facility, by the white picket fence with The Rainbow Garden sign next to the entrance door. Do not use the playground door for arrival or dismissal. An adult must escort child/children to the classroom (s). In the best interest of your child and the whole class, the transition of your child from parent to teacher will be done at the classroom door. The adult will sign in the child on the sign in sheet located outside the classroom door that specifies the adult's name that will pick up your child and **indicate if they are staying for Lunch Time Program or Stay & Play Program**. The payment and the separate sign-in sheets for Lunch Time or Stay & Play Programs will be located in the office or at the welcome counter. Please inform people who may bring your child that they sign the child in at the classroom door.

Children may go to class five minutes prior to the class starting time. If you have a need prior to that time, we offer Early Morning Care, which starts receiving children at 8:55 a.m. The charge is \$5.00 per day or \$50.00 per month. You may prepay or pay that morning in the office before taking your child to early morning care (space provided).

An adult must escort the child from the classroom. Your child will be permitted to leave only with the people listed on the **Child's Enrollment Record** with proper identification. The Rainbow Garden will not release a child to an intoxicated/impaired individual. A verbal authorization is not acceptable. If you are in a car-pool, please list those parents as well. In the event others, besides those on the child enrollment record will be picking up your child (i.e. play date with a friend, etc.) please complete and sign a **student dismissal form located in the office**. Fill it out and give one copy to the teacher for her file and one copy to the office for our file.

During arrival and dismissal times the teacher and adult will have a brief opportunity to share information. Please write a note with any pertinent information you may need to share with the teacher at the door. Please schedule a phone call or personal conference with the teacher if needed.

**For each child picked up 10 minutes past their dismissal time, there will be a \$10.00 late charge for every 10 minute increment each child is late.** The child will be taken to the office or the lunchroom, which is designated for late pick-up and supervised by a staff member. The child will require a sign out with the appropriate late charge.

For safety, parents please encourage your children to use "walking feet" in the hallways and around the school grounds. **Keep your child next to you, especially in the parking lot.** Please go over with your children that they are to "stay" with the adult and how they are to "walk" with the adult who is bringing or picking them up. Children may not be left unattended. Out of respect to the church, children may **not** climb in the trees, play in or dig in the church's landscape areas. Please use inside voices while in the building, as some classes may still be in progress. Please stay in The Rainbow Garden's corridor and do not go into other areas of the church (Lobby, stairwells or upstairs) to visit or play. The church staff or members often have church activities in those areas. **Children should never be unsupervised while on the school grounds.** Per the Pinellas County License Board, smoking is prohibited on the premises.

## **Nutrition:**

Students will bring the daily snack and snack supplies on a rotational basis. VPK students snack calendar will be posted by the classroom for volunteering to donate the snack and snack supplies. The snack will represent two food groups and we are very specific as to the items to bring. Licensing regulations require items sent in for snack, cooking experiences, parties etc., be store bought and unopened containers. The food/drink (100% juice only) must have labels with ingredients on them. A calendar will be sent home at the beginning of each month showing the day/days that you will need to bring in a snack (for your child's class only) . In the event of an unexpected absence and it is your child's designated snack day please send in a **non perishable snack such as Gold Fish and one 64 oz. light color 100% juice on your child's next day of school. (If an item other than snack was listed please send it in on your child's next school day.)**

If your child has an allergy to food, it is important that you speak with a director and we have the information on file. You may need to bring in a separate food item depending on the food allergy. A Food Experience Permission Form must be completed for your child and kept on file.

Each child that is staying for lunch will need a lunch box. Use ice packs or frozen drinks to keep the lunch cold. License Board Regulations prohibit us from heating up lunch items for the children. Healthy lunches representing the different food groups should be packed. Please do not send in soda. Please keep treats to a minimum.

## **Birthday Parties:**

A birthday party form will be sent home prior to your child's birthday. We will be glad to celebrate your child's birthday during snack time. Please discuss any plans with the teacher prior to the birthday. **Due to health and safety concerns of our students with allergies, goodie bags for birthdays may not be distributed.** We prefer a Birthday Cookie with limited icing rather than cup cakes. **All items must be store bought with the label of ingredients attached and two food groups must be represented. 100% juice or milk must be provided.** No soda will be served. Birthday party invitations for the class your child is in only may be distributed at school providing the whole class is receiving one. No other party invitations may be distributed at school.

Paper products, party bags and favors, etc. must be pre-approved by the teacher before they can be used or distributed. If you are planning to use a theme this also must be pre-approved. Do not wait until the day of the party to discuss plans with the teacher.

**In an effort to keep written communication consistent with The Rainbow Garden guidelines, no invitations (other than child's birthday as noted above), flyers, or letters may be posted in the school or sent home through the children's backpacks. Directors will use their discretion in the event of a special circumstance.**

## **Classroom Party Guidelines:**

The Rainbow Garden will celebrate a variety of holidays during the school year. Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines, Easter and the End of the School Year Party. At The Rainbow Garden we emphasize "The Reason for the Season" at Christmas and Easter, which is "Jesus". He's the reason why we are so joyful through the year. We appreciate everyone's family traditions and respect that many families may or may not include Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny in their holiday celebrations. Therefore we do not include Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny in the decor of party themes and items. The children will be involved in many fun activities and art/craft projects that are seasonal related.

- **Only the volunteers who are signed up may help in the classroom. (two for 2 yr class, three for 3 yr class and four for 4 yr class)**
- **No siblings are allowed in the classroom. Please make child care arrangements ahead of time.**
- **The classroom teacher will contact all helpers with party details.**

## **Observations:**

We will allow a maximum of two observers in a classroom at one time. Observations may not be done on party days. Stop by the office, sign in and get an observation badge and guidelines.

## **Volunteers:**

We appreciate all volunteers who sign up to help at The Rainbow Garden. All volunteers are required to sign and date a Volunteer Affidavit Form before they begin to volunteer at The Rainbow Garden. This form is required to be signed each school year. Volunteers sign in on a volunteer sheet in the preschool office and are required to wear a visitor's badge while at the school.

The volunteer opportunities that are done during school hours on site must meet the required regulations and policies of the Pinellas County License Board and The Rainbow Garden. We invite you to be a part of your child's preschool program and appreciate your time and efforts.

Please speak with your child's teacher about volunteering, if you are interested. The teacher will let you know of opportunities that will be available. Siblings are not permitted on site while you are volunteering. Please make child care arrangements for the volunteer time frame.

We appreciate volunteers and allow a maximum number of volunteers in the classroom at one time. *2 yr. class: two volunteers, 3 yr. class: three volunteers, 4 yr. class: four volunteers (exception: end of the year class party for the 4 yr. old classes)*

## **Conferences:**

During arrival and dismissal times the teacher and adult will have a brief opportunity to share information. Please write in a note any pertinent information you may need to share with the teacher at the door. If you need more time please schedule a phone call or personal conference with the teacher.

Conferences are to be scheduled with the teachers before and after school, as it is difficult to carry on a lengthy conversation while a teacher is supervising the children. All conferences are confidential. Children may **not** be present during any conferences.

Mid and end of the year Progress Reports will be sent home, updating parents on their child's progress each school year.

Four year old teachers will be conducting parent conferences following mid year Progress Reports. There will **not** be any school for four year old students on conference day. Children may **not** attend the conference. Please make child care arrangements.

Please discuss a concern with the staff member directly. Should you be unable to resolve a parental concern with the staff member, please discuss your concern with a director and we will all discuss it together.

### **Photo/Audio/Video:**

Students may be photographed, audio taped or video taped during the school day, class activities or school events. The Rainbow Garden may make and use photographs, audio tapes or video tapes for keep sake purposes, wall displays at school, school newsletters or school activities.

Parents that photograph, audio tape or video tape children during the school day, class activities or school events may only make and use photographs, audio tapes or video tapes for their own individual use, and may not sell or make use for any other purposes (other than personal use) such photographs, audio tapes or video tapes without the written prior permission of The Rainbow Garden Inc.

There may be occasions when The Rainbow Garden will create a promotional piece, such as a school brochure. When a promotional piece is created using family members from The Rainbow Garden, we use a photo/audio/video tape release form for parent approval of people involved in the promotion piece. This is in the Registration Packet.

There may be occasions when The Rainbow Garden will place students and or family members on The Rainbow Garden website, such as photographs from a class fieldtrip. The Rainbow Garden will use a photo/audio/video tape release form for parent approval. This form will be in the Registration Packet.

### **Weather:**

The Rainbow Garden will follow the Pinellas County Public School announcement in regards to school being opened or closed due to weather conditions. (Unless you receive a call from a school staff member instructing you otherwise.) Please listen to the radio or TV weather broadcast in regards to this matter. We have a weather band radio on site to keep informed of weather conditions. In the event of an emergency we have use of an emergency phone and cell phone.

### **Emergency Information:**

- We will practice emergency drills on a regular basis.
- Evacuation plan is posted in each classroom.
- Per Pinellas County License Board, an Emergency Plan has been created.
- In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the school, children will be transported via church and staff vehicles to our designated site and parents will be notified by telephone.  
Sylvan Abbey United Methodist Church  
2817 Sunset Point Rd.  
Clearwater, FL 33759  
727-723-3538
- Alternate Emergency Number 727-599-6508
- Cell phones are available for use.
- Staff members have walkie-talkies for school communication.
- Security of classroom doors locked and accessible with key by authorized personnel.
- Security cameras are located at the school entrance and in the school hallway.
- Security cameras are located throughout the facility, indoor and outdoor.
- Security intercom system located at the school entrance.
- Security door locks throughout the facility.

***Thank you for taking the time to read The Rainbow Garden Parent Handbook. We believe good communication is a vital part of our program. Our efforts have been to implement practical and beneficial procedures and policies for our children, families and staff. Please call or stop by the school office if you have any questions.***