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# Parent Handbook

for



The Privette School  
of Broadmeadow United Methodist Church

**4419 Broadmeadow Drive  
Jackson, MS 39206  
Phone: 601-362-5545  
Fax: 601-366-2886**

**Web: <http://www.theprivetteschool.org>  
Email: [broadmea@bellsouth.net](mailto:broadmea@bellsouth.net)**

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## General Information

Name: The Privette School of Broadmeadow United Methodist Church

School Phone/Fax: 362-5545 / 366-2886

Church Office: 366-1403

Address: 4419 Broadmeadow Drive  
Jackson, MS 39206

Director: Tashena Wester

Ages served: Children 3 months through pre-kindergarten (full-day program)  
Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Pre-kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade (after school program)  
Hours: 2:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Days: Monday through Friday

Payment: Monthly draft

Curriculum: Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education  
(see Appendix B)

Holidays: The Privette School will be closed the following holidays:

Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Holidays (two days)  
Christmas Holidays (four - five days)  
New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Spring Break, as determined by the Jackson Public Schools  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
4<sup>th</sup> of July

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# **The Privette School**

## **of Broadmeadow United Methodist Church**

### **Our Mission**

To extend the ministry of the Broadmeadow United Methodist Church to our church members and the outlying community by providing a safe and loving environment in which children can grow physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. Children, through exploration, questioning, hypothesizing and creativity, will come to know and understand themselves and the world in which they live.

### **Our Philosophy**

The Privette School believes that

1. Children are rich, strong, powerful, curious, unique citizens with rights rather than simply needs. Children have potential and a desire to grow, relate to and communicate with others.
2. Children, with the support from loving, caring adults, have the ability to engage in in-depth project work designed to help them make deeper connections to and fuller sense of the events and experiences in their lives.
3. The environment is a teacher and must reflect the culture and history of the school community and must support interaction and communication among children, teachers and parents. The environment is a "home" for the children and the teachers that live within it and as such is designed with attention to detail, color, aesthetics, utility, imagination, and provocation.
4. Children and teachers are partners in learning, creating a curriculum built upon the interests of the children through flexible, organized planning by the teachers.
5. To assist children with the expression of ideas and demonstration of knowledge and understanding of concepts, a variety of materials and media are made available to the children.
6. Teachers act as researchers and learners alongside the children conducting daily systematic research for the purpose of facilitating the intellectual growth of children.
7. Parents are partners in the life of the school. Parents, with their rich and varied backgrounds and cultures, offer a significant support system for the work at the school as do the church and the surrounding communities.

### **Administrative Staff**

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Rob Hill	Pastor, Broadmeadow United Methodist Church
Kristen Kern	2013 Chair, The Privette School Committee
Tashena Wester	Director

### **The Privette School Faculty**

The Privette School carefully selects its staff based on education, experience, a strong desire to learn more about children's thinking and learning processes, and high moral character. Teachers must have your children's best interests at heart and possess the ability to extend love, compassion and understanding to your children.

It is our belief that our staff are not only teachers but also learners and researchers themselves. We understand the extreme need and importance of having qualified, conscientious teachers for the infants through the school-agers who will support the learning process at all levels of development. The staff is composed of dedicated, experienced teachers, with the majority possessing undergraduate degrees in the education of children and/or equivalent experience in the early childhood field.

#### **Professional Development and Training**

Professional development is a component of our program that is taken very seriously and is ongoing. Teachers attend professional development workshops on the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education led by nationally recognized consultants and staff development on other program-related topics, where they are presented new ideas, methods, strategies, and skills. We seek to utilize every avenue for allowing teachers to grow in their teaching competencies. CPR and First Aid training is completed by all personnel annually. In addition, staff receive training on other health and safety issues such as playground safety, emergency evacuation, off-site emergency evacuation, and risk management.

Employees of The Privette School are required by the Mississippi State Department of Health to complete fifteen (15) contact hours of staff development each calendar year. Contact hours for staff development must be approved by the state licensing agency. The majority of our staff far exceeds the required number of training hours.

### **Personnel Requirements**

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Every employee of The Privette School, whether full-time, part-time, or occasional must be of good moral character and must meet the minimum qualifications for their respective job classification, as set forth in the *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities* of the Mississippi State Department of Health. It is the desire of the church and the director to staff the school with individuals of high integrity.

### **Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry Checks**

Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry checks are performed on all employees of The Privette School. Background checks are completed by the county sheriff's office, the local police department, and the state child abuse center. Employees of the school have been found to be free of criminal activity or child abuse.

### **Admission Requirements**

Before admission to The Privette School, the following must be on file in the office:

1. A completed Registration Form
2. Non-refundable registration fee and one month's tuition deposit
3. Enrollment Form
4. Release Forms
5. Emergency Contact information
6. MS State Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Compliance Form 121 (This record shall include the child's name, date of birth, address, dates of immunizations, and the health provider. This information must be on a form 121, approved by the Mississippi State Department of Health.)
7. A copy of the child's Social Security Card
8. Summary of Licensing Standards Receipt
9. Completion of Registration Checklist
10. Parent Handbook Receipt

### **Registration and Waiting List**

**Full-day program:** A registration fee of \$125 is required and a deposit equal to one month's tuition. These fees are non-refundable, and must be paid at the time of registration. This fee places a child on the rolls of the school. An annual registration fee of \$125 must be paid each year that the child remains on the rolls. Parents will receive a notice prior to the due date for the annual registration fee once your child has been enrolled. **After-school program:** A registration fee of \$50 is required. Registration takes place annually and a \$50 fee will be due each year. The fee is non-refundable, and must be paid at the time of registration. This fee places a child on the rolls of the school.

Children of Broadmeadow United Methodist Church members receive first priority for placement in the school. Priority is also given to siblings if the family currently has other children enrolled. After enrolling these children, remaining spaces are open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis.

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## **Waiting List**

A completed registration form and a nonrefundable registration fee and one-month tuition deposit is required to place your child on the waiting list. The Privette School is a year-round mission of Broadmeadow United Methodist Church. We strive to serve as many families as possible. As spaces become available, they are filled immediately. You may call the director at any time to check on the list and ask questions. With much regret, The Privette School cannot guarantee a child a place in our school.

## **Tuition and other Financial Requirements**

### **Tuition Payments**

School tuition is to be paid in advance of the service provided. If a child attends any portion of a month, the entire tuition amount for the month is due. Pro-rated tuition is not accepted.

Payments are made monthly by bank draft. Tuition is drafted on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, or if the 15<sup>th</sup> occurs on a weekend, the next business day. Tuition is not accepted by check or other methods of payment.

If the drafted amount is returned for insufficient funds, a \$55.00 charge (\$30 insufficient fee and \$25 late fee) will be posted to the account and must be paid by check along with the amount of the insufficient draft within two weeks. A child will be removed from the rolls of the school if an account is two (2) weeks past due.

Tuition must be paid whether a child attends or is absent. Tuition is paid the entire year including holidays observed by the school and days missed for inclement weather.

**If withdrawal from the school is needed, the parent shall provide in writing one month's notice to the school.** If circumstances prevent the parent supplying a one-month notice, the registration deposit of one-month's tuition will be forfeited.

Checks should be made payable to The Privette School. The memo portion of the check should supply the name of the child or children and the reason for the check. A receipt will be supplied.

The Privette School operates from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. If a child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m., a late charge of \$15.00 will be due that day. After fifteen minutes (or 5:45 p.m.), the charge will be an additional \$1.00 per minute. A child may not return to the school until the late charge has been paid. This applies to children attending half-day as well.

Tuition schedules have been inserted into this handbook. Additional copies of tuition and payment schedules are available within the school office. A 30-day notice will be supplied for the parents of The Privette School when an increase in tuition charges is to be given.

## **Arrival and Departure**

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

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The Privette School opens at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 5:30 p.m. daily, Monday through Friday. Children should not arrive at the school prior to 7:30 a.m. Teachers will be in their classrooms ready to receive children at opening.

Whether bringing children in the morning or leaving at the end of the day, automobiles should be parked in the parking lot just outside of the school, and the motor should be turned off. We recommend that you lock your car and carry important belongings when entering the school. **Under no circumstances should your car be left running in the parking lot when you are not in it.**

### **Signing In and Out**

Parents should bring your child directly to his/her classroom in the morning and pick your child up from the classroom in the afternoon. You must always sign-in and sign-out for the security of your child. This is an essential part of the security plan. Please help your child understand the importance of this procedure, especially as they get older. At no time should your child be allowed to sign his/her name or yours at sign-in/sign-out.

When dismissal of children is conducted, please do not remove your child from a class or location unless the teacher is made aware, and the sign-out procedure has been followed. The importance of teacher awareness is even more crucial when the class is in areas outside the normal classroom, such as the playground, gym or other locations. Teachers are responsible for the sign-in and sign-out process.

### **Dismissal from Classroom Teachers Only**

Security of children is of the utmost importance. Office personnel are unable to fulfill parent requests that involve bringing children to the office and waiting for dismissal. *Children, including school-agers, are not allowed to walk to the office by themselves to await dismissal.*

### **Intoxicated Parents or Parents under the Influence of Drugs**

The Privette School will not release a child to an intoxicated parent or a parent under the influence of drugs. Should a parent appear to be intoxicated or under the influence of a drug, the teacher will contact the director or assistant director who will talk with the parent. Calls will begin for the other parent or emergency contacts to come for the child. Should the parent become uncooperative, 911 will be called and police assistance requested. The safety and security of your child has been entrusted to our school. Other children and parents also have the right to expect a safe environment.

### **Dismissal after Closing of the Facility**

Parents should notify the office immediately when it appears that your child will be left after 5:30 p.m. Our facility will be happy to cooperate with parents in emergency conditions. However, if the school has not received information from you concerning your absence, calls will be made trying to reach you or your emergency contacts.

### **Arrangements for a Child Left at School**

Should your child still be at the school at 6:00 p.m. and all contacts have been unsuccessful, The Privette School reserves the right to release your child into the care of the Department of



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Human Services and the Jackson Police Department. A sign will be posted on the door of the school to call for your child at the designated location. The sign will include the name of the precinct or designated location, its address, phone number, and contact person.

## **Security**

### **Visitors to the School**

A visitor or guest is defined as anyone other than the custodial parent of the child. A visitor may be a parent, grandparent, family member, neighbor, or anyone listed on the Enrollment Form and Emergency Contact Form.

Visitors will not be allowed to visit a classroom, drop-off or pick-up a child from the school unless the proper procedures are followed. An identification check will be performed unless the visitor is known to office personnel through routine visits. Identification checks may require name, address, driver's license, social security number, or other information shared by the parent. The visitor will be asked to sign the name of the child and time of request. Explain the Security Plan to the visitor. Help them understand that an identification check is a normal procedure and they should not be alarmed or offended by the request.

If the names listed on the Enrollment Form should change, please notify the director of these changes so that they may be recorded in your child's file.

### **Security Procedures for Visitors**

Visitors will not be allowed to drop off or pick up your child unless the correct procedures are followed.

1. Written notification is required when plans include a visitor dropping off or picking up your child. An Authorized Dismissal Form is available from your child's teacher or the school office.
2. In lieu of written notification, emergency phone calls from the parent will be accepted, provided office personnel knows the parent, recognizes the parent's voice and information can be supplied for security purposes.
3. Visitors must complete the identification check.
4. Following security clearance, the visitor will be allowed to go to the classroom. The visitor will be asked to sign the name of the child dropped off or picked up, as well as his/her own name. The time of drop-off or pick-up will be requested in writing. The visitor assumes responsibility for the child at this time.

### **Emergency Pick-Ups**

Should an emergency arise and time not permit written notice of permission for the person calling for your child, the parent must notify the director or director designee immediately. Please explain the procedure to the person coming for your child.

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### **Transportation by Persons under Eighteen (18)**

Persons under eighteen (18) years of age will not be allowed to transport a child.

In the event that a dangerous situation posing an immediate threat to children occurs within the school, staff has been fully trained first and foremost, to protect the children. Security measures have been taken to avoid this situation.

It is the aim of The Privette School to provide a safe and happy environment for all children. The safety procedures have been implemented for the safety and protection of your child or children. Your cooperation is requested.

### **Absences and Late Arrivals**

Please notify the office by 9:00 a.m. if your child will be absent or arriving late. School personnel, as well as your child's friends, are interested in your child's welfare.

### **Removal from the School**

The Privette School reserves the right to remove a child from our rolls if he/she seems unable to participate in group experience or is unable to follow rules and guidelines of the school.

The Privette School reserves the right to remove a child from our rolls if, in the opinion of the director, a parent or other family member is harassing, threatening, intimidating, or exhibiting other inappropriate behavior to the staff of the school.

The Privette School reserves the right to remove a child from our rolls if an account is two (2) weeks past due.

### **Personal Information or Photographs**

Update of your child's record is requested regularly. Please remember to update information when job changes occur, telephone numbers or address changes occur, or any other change that is essential for our reaching you by phone or in writing.

The Privette School will not release information on a child, family or staff member without prior permission in writing.

Because our school has chosen the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education as its inspiration, documentation in the form of audio and video recordings as well as photographs is crucial and constant. This documentation is displayed throughout the school in order to exhibit for the children, teachers and parents the learning that is taking place and as a means of planning future projects and environmental changes. This documentation becomes the property of the school and may be shared with parents. Pictures (and voice recordings) will not be used in publications unless prior permission is secured from the parent.

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Commercial photography is available within the school annually. Advance notice is given and photographs are made at the request of our parents.

### **Open Door Policy**

The Privette School has an open door policy for parents or legal guardians of the children in our school. Parents are welcome at all times.

### **Lost Items**

Parents are asked to label all children's belongings, particularly spare changes of clothing, coats and other items stored in children's cubbies. **The Privette School is not responsible for the replacement of lost, stolen or broken items.** Parents are encouraged to report lost items as soon as possible. Many times, items left behind are found by others and are brought to the office for safe keeping.

### **Procedures for Illness or Injury**

#### **Procedures for Life-Threatening Illness or Injury**

Despite all of the training and preparation of the staff to avoid life-threatening emergencies, they do occasionally occur. Examples of this type of illness or injury include a life-threatening reaction to a substance, food, insect sting, etc., an injury caused in a tornado or fire, and food poisoning. In the event this type of illness or injury is determined to be life-threatening, the school will:

1. Call 911.
2. The child will be transported to the hospital listed on the Emergency Contact Form completed by the parent. If allowed by emergency personnel, a school representative will escort the child to the hospital. Should personnel not be allowed within the emergency vehicle, the school representative will follow the ambulance to the emergency room and attend the child as allowed until the parents can be reached. The Emergency Contact Form, located in the child's folder, will be given to the physician in the emergency room.
3. The parent or legal guardian will be notified. If the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be contacted and continued efforts will be made to reach parents.

#### **Procedures for Non Life-Threatening Illness or Injury**

Non life-threatening emergencies occur within the life of an early childhood center. Examples of this type of illness or injury include minor cuts, allergic reactions such as a rash, a split lip, a bee sting, a nose bleed, an ant or mosquito bite, or a sunburn. In the event of a non life-threatening illness or injury, the school will:

1. Administer First Aid and care until the parent or emergency contact arrives.

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2. Notify the parent. If the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called, as well as continued efforts to reach the parent.
  3. Call 911, if it is warranted.
  4. Continue to adequately cover the children in the classroom of the injured child.
  5. The emergency will be explained to the other children and their fears calmed.
  6. An Accident Report will be completed by the teacher and reviewed with the parent upon their arrival.
  7. Parents will be given a follow-up call or visit to check on the injured child.

### **Procedures for Extreme Emergencies**

Extreme emergencies consist of events such as storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, fires, loss of heat or air conditioning, an unauthorized parent pick-up, an intoxicated or angry parent who is abusive to the staff, a stranger or animal on the premises threatening harm. The procedures for handling extreme emergencies are as follows:

1. The children's safety is ensured and either the police or fire departments when necessary are alerted.
2. Emergency and medical forces and, concurrently, parents of the victims are alerted.
3. The staff is briefed on the situation and the school pastor, attorney and insurance company are alerted.
4. Complete, factual information without speculation is prepared.
5. The school's spokesperson calls and conducts a news conference if enough information is available. This is the most efficient way of distributing facts.
6. Copies of the emergency plan and other general information about the school are made available. The attorney is present for all conferences and interviews.
7. In the event of a school closing, arrangements are made for the center's reopening.
8. If a particular product was involved in the crisis, the responsible supplier is notified they will no longer serve the program and are replaced.
9. Parents are contacted to determine the effects of the crisis on their child(ren).
10. Arrangements will be made to meet with the children to answer any questions and, if necessary, arrangements are made for the children and staff to meet with psychologists and/or counselors.
11. Staff reactions and feedback are appraised and discussions opened up.
12. A positive news story is prepared for the press as follow-up to the crisis.

## **Evacuation Procedures**

### **Fire and Weather Emergencies**

Teachers are trained to evacuate children in the event of fire or weather emergencies. Emergency procedures are posted outside of the office door. Emergency fire exit plans and tornado plans are posted in each classroom.

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Should an actual emergency occur, such as a tornado, we understand a parent's desire to be with your child. However, for the safety and protection of your child, please remain in the building until the emergency condition subsides. *Should a parent choose to take his/her child and leave during the emergency, you will be asked to sign and date a form entitled Release of Responsibility during an Emergency.*

### **Evacuation of Childcare Facility**

In the event of needful evacuation of the school due to flooding, fire, tornado-destroyed building, or other major emergencies, the children will be taken to the Christian Center of the Broadmeadow United Methodist Church campus, located directly across Broadmeadow Drive from the school. Should the Christian Center not be acceptable for habitation due to emergency conditions, children will be transported to Trinity Presbyterian Church, 640 East Northside Drive, Jackson, Mississippi, 39206.

Announcements will be made through media broadcasts. Parents will be contacted by the staff to come for your children at the alternate location. Trinity Presbyterian Church is less than a 1/4-mile northeast of The Privette School campus. Transportation will be performed in the bus belonging to Broadmeadow United Methodist Church. Should the emergency prevent usage of the church bus, rental vans, buses or cars will be used.

## **Emergency Closings of the School**

### **Closing Due to Hazardous Weather Conditions**

In the event of hazardous weather conditions, such as ice or snow, the school will remain open as long as safety allows. Closing of the school will parallel the closing of the Jackson Public Schools. Stay tuned to media broadcasts in the event of hazardous weather. Parents are asked to come as soon as possible when a closing is announced because The Privette School staff have children needing pick-up and care.

### **Closing Due to Other Emergencies**

Should the following emergencies occur it will be necessary for the school to close:

- Break in weather main that cannot be repaired quickly
- Total loss of power (due to tornado, cut lines, etc.)

In the event of the above-mentioned emergencies, parents will be called before or during regular school hours.

## **Medical Policies**

### **Assistance of Parents Requested**

The Privette School will depend on parents to assist in maintaining a school that ensures the health of all children. Parents are urged to keep your child at home if there seems to be any sign of illness, including

- Fever of 100° or higher (within the previous 24 hours)
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea

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- Any symptom of the usual childhood diseases-scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and whooping cough
  - Common cold - The child should be free of all symptoms of a cold. If a child has chronic allergies, and is under the care of his/her physician, a written statement from the physician must be presented specifically stating the nature of the child's condition and that the condition is not contagious. Guidelines regarding the care of the child should be provided from the physician.
  - Sore throat
  - Severe coughing
  - Any unexplained rash with fever
  - Any skin infection-boils, ringworm, impetigo
  - Pink eye and other eye infections with discharge
  - Jaundice
  - Continuous irritability and crying

This list has been taken from the American Academy of Pediatrics' report on the control of communicable and infectious diseases.

For the protection of your child and other children, any child who appears ill cannot be accepted into the school. When in doubt, please apply the "Golden Rule". Your cooperation is essential to the well being of your child and other children.

### **Notification of Illness**

Should your child become ill during school hours, you will be notified and asked to come for your child. Parents will be called if the child has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100° under the arm
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool)
- Severe coughing
- Tearing, irritation and redness of eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge of pus
- Vomiting
- Labored or rapid breathing
- Yellowish tint to the skin or eyes.

You will be expected to come for your child immediately if he/she becomes ill. Your quick response will help prevent the spread of illness throughout the school.

### **Fever**

Should a child develop a temperature, these steps will be followed:

1. An under the arm temperature reading will be taken.
2. If the reading is 100°, the parent will be notified.
3. If the child continues to run a low-grade fever or is unusually fussy, the parent will be called to come for the child.

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4. If the reading is over 100°, the parent will be asked to come for the child.

Your child should be free from fever, without medication, for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Medication should not be given to reduce fever while the child is attending the school.

### **Disposable Diaper Policy**

Because of the dangers of handling fecal matter, The Privette School only accepts disposable diapers.

### **Medication Dispensing Policy**

The Mississippi State Department of Health's regulations state that medications may only be dispensed to a child when written instructions from the parent are given each day the child is to receive the medication. Forms for dispensing medication to children may be obtained from your child's teacher. Medication must be brought in its original container along with a personal measuring device. Only the dosage listed on the medication container will be dispensed.

When possible, please request from your child's doctor such dosages as can be administered at home. We will not administer more than one dose of a medication per day. Although all precautions will be taken to administer medication properly, we are not medical professionals. Therefore, we prefer not to be responsible for medications.

Should a child possess a known health problem that is life threatening, it is the responsibility of the parent to make school personnel aware of the problem. Specific step-by-step instructions from your child's physician should be submitted to the director of the school. The parent will be asked to sign and date a Medical Emergency Exception Form. This information will be shared with your child's teachers. Should this health problem occur while your child is at the school, action will be taken to follow the outlined instructions of the physician, and 911 will be called immediately. Emergency procedures for life-threatening illness will be followed.

### **Contagious Disease**

If your child has a contagious disease, please contact the school office as soon as possible. A sign will be posted on the door of the classroom making other parents aware of the possibility of a communicable disease. When returning to the school, a physician's statement will be required stating that your child is no longer contagious and is ready to return to school.

### **Immunizations**

An original Mississippi State Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Compliance (Form 121) is required for your child to enter the school. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide a new Certificate of Immunization Compliance (Form 121) each time your child receives an immunization. The following is a list of required immunizations:

<b>Recommended Age</b>	<b>Vaccines</b>		
2 months	DPT-1	OPV-1	Hib-1

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4 months	DPT-2	OPV-2	Hib-2	
6 months	DPT-3		Hib-3	
12 months-15 months	DPT-4	OPV-3	Hib-4	MMR-1
4-6 years	DPT-5	OPV-4		MMR-2

### **Infants Sleeping Position**

In following the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics in regards to the prevention of SIDS (Sleeping Infant Death Syndrome), The Privette School will place infants on their backs for sleeping. An infant shall not be placed on its stomach for sleeping unless the parent has supplied written authorization. This authorization will be kept in your child's file.

### **Potty Training**

A Potty Training Agreement is available in the school office or two-year classrooms. Generally applicable to children in the two's classroom, the goal of the agreement is to provide a positive experience for the child and consistency in training between the home and school. A parent-teacher consultation is requested prior to toilet training. Signatures of parents and participating teachers appear on the form upon completion. A copy is given to parents and all teachers involved promoting consistency of effort. Parents are requested to begin potty training on Friday afternoon before teachers begin on Monday. Teachers will not take responsibility for potty training.

Any one or several of the following signs may indicate that your child is ready to begin potty training:

- Your child remains dry at least two hours at a time during the day or is dry after naps
- Your child's bowel movements become regular and predictable.
- Your child indicates by words, facial expressions or posture that he/she is about to urinate or have a bowel movement.
- Your child can follow simple, verbal directions.
- Your child can take pants on and off and walk to and from the bathroom.
- Your child becomes uncomfortable with soiled diapers and wants them changed.
- Your child asks to use the toilet or the potty chair.
- Your child asks to see grown-up underwear.

Children should be potty trained prior to entrance in age three classes. Potty training children should have several changes of pants and clothes clearly labeled with the child's name.

### **Rest time**

According to state-mandated guidelines, a rest period is observed at The Privette School. The amount of time established for a child to rest depends on the age of the child or the amount of time per day a child spends at the school. Rest periods shall be scheduled for a minimum period of one hour and will not exceed the maximum of two and one-half hours. Rest period is scheduled shortly after lunch until 2:15 p.m.

Rest for a child may be time asleep or time lying still and quiet. An established rest time permits all children in the room an opportunity to be still and quiet without being disturbed.



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Children are not allowed to walk around in the room, talk loudly or play with toys. Children may have one rest-time friend with them; examples are a stuffed animal or a book to enjoy. Toys are not allowed during the rest period. Appropriate music is enjoyed during rest periods. Rest time may begin with the reading of good literature appropriate to the age of the child. If your child has a special blanket or would like to have a blanket during rest time, parents are responsible for bringing that blanket to the school, labeling it with your child's name and laundering it weekly.

Since guests in the room may disturb sleeping children, parents are requested to plan dismissal of children at a time other than the established rest period.

## **Biting Policy**

Many children go through a biting phase, which may last up to several weeks. Biting causes more upset feelings than any other behavior in childcare programs. Because it seems so primitive, we tend to react differently to biting than we do to hitting, grabbing or other aggressive acts. This biting policy was created to give parents insight into why children bite and the actions that will be taken when a child is bitten as well as actions that will be taken to prevent biting.

### **Why children bite**

Most biting occurs between the ages of 13 and 30 months and should stop around age three. Children bite for many reasons, including

- Toddlers are oral beings and still put everything into their mouths. This may include another child's finger.
- Toddlers do not have the cognitive ability to discriminate between animate and inanimate objects. A toddler may not be able to distinguish between a soft, plump teething ring and a soft, plump arm.
- Toddlers often bite because they are frustrated, tired or hungry. They do not have the vocabulary to say, "I'm hungry," "I'm tired," "I want that toy." Biting is often the basic response.
- Toddlers bite when there are too many children in close proximity. If another child is too close, too rough or too intimidating, a toddler will often bite to move them out of the way.
- Some toddlers will bite for the attention they receive from caregivers. Even if it is negative, caregivers often give a great deal of attention to biters. Children in need of attention will bite to get negative attention, which is better than no attention at all.
- Toddlers tend to be territorial in their behavior. They need a certain amount of space around them and their toys and usually do not want other children intruding on what they are playing with or doing. When another child comes too close, they may bite that child to remove them from their "space" or to keep them from taking their toys.
- Toddlers have very limited, if any, social skills. For this reason, they cannot talk out their problems with other children. As a result, they often act first because they have not learned to discuss their problems or feelings. Biting happens as an immediate reaction because they have not learned self-control or social skills.

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- Many toddlers are teething and biting helps alleviate the pressure resulting from new teeth breaking through the gums.
  - Some children bite often and some not at all. In addition, some children seem to be victims more than others.

*(from the Mississippi Forum on Children and Families, Inc.)*

### **Preventative steps**

The Privette School has gone to great lengths to create an environment that will serve to decrease incidents of biting. Some of these steps include

1. the use of small groups during play,
2. appropriate toys on which to bite, including attaching teethingers safely to the clothing of those children known to bite,
3. appropriate words with which to express themselves being taught to the children,
4. shadowing children known to bite, and
5. parent education that includes this policy, parent meetings about developmental issues including biting and other literature.

Despite these best efforts, whenever young children are grouped together it is inevitable that biting will occasionally occur. If a child is having a problem with biting the staff will work with the parents to try to resolve the problem together. The parent of the biter may be concerned that the child will be expelled from the school and may also be concerned about what the parent of the child who was bitten may be thinking or feeling. The Privette School teachers will address the problem of biting when it occurs. Each biting incident will take into account the age of the child and the suspected reason for the biting.

Though it is normal for infants and toddlers to mouth people and toys, and for many two-year olds to try biting, most do not continue after the age of three. If the behavior becomes chronic or out of control, or continues past the age of three, parents will be asked to a conference with teachers and the director to discuss appropriate ways to deal with the problem. Should the problem continue and begin to cause stress among the teachers and parents and fear among the children, the director reserves the right to remove the child from the school for one - three months, until the behavior has been resolved.

### **When a child is bitten**

First and foremost, when a child is bitten, teachers will

1. attend immediately to the injured child providing comfort and care;
2. have the child who did the biting sit to the side where someone can watch him/her;
3. provide appropriate treatment (e.g. cleaning the area with soap and water, applying ice, antibiotic ointment, or a Band-Aid as needed); when biting behavior persists, a close eye will be kept on the biting child. If possible, a teacher will remain close to the child to prevent incidents.
4. when the bitten child is calm and the bite attended to, teachers will allow the biting child to gently stroke the victim so that both children learn the appropriate social behavior;

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5. when the bite breaks the skin, an accident report will be completed by the teacher and filed;
  6. verbally inform the parent of the child who was bitten and the parent of the biter; and
  7. teachers will "shadow" the biting child.

### **Actions that will NOT be taken**

Although some parents insist that a child who is biting be physically punished or removed from the school, children will never be physically hurt (bitten back) as a form of punishment for biting. Teachers will not withdraw food, love or keep them in isolation. Nothing will be placed in the biting child's mouth in order to prevent future biting. For confidentiality reasons and under no certain circumstances will teachers or the director reveal the identity of the biting child.

It is important to keep in mind that biting is a developmental issue that does pass. Parent patience, understanding and support is very helpful to The Privette School teachers.

## **Child Abuse Policy**

Mississippi law states that persons having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected must immediately report this suspicion to the Department of Human Services. A toll-free hotline number has been set aside for this purpose, 1-800-222-8000. This reporting is in accordance with the state's Youth Court Act. Directors, teachers and operators of schools have a duty to report such reasonable suspicions.

The Privette School has established specific guidelines to aid in the prevention of child abuse.

- Isolation of teachers with individual children is avoided.
- Classrooms are open to inspection at all times.
- State-mandated ratios of teacher to child are maintained at all times.
- All areas of the classroom and playground are visible to the teacher.
- Staff are trained to recognize signs of child abuse.
- Staff development sessions are held for faculty regarding child abuse.
- An open-door Policy is maintained for parents of school children. Parents, however, are not left alone with the children of the class.
- Written injury reports are submitted daily as needed to parents. The report, including the type of injury, the treatment given and the circumstances of the injury is signed by the teacher and parent and is kept on file for future reference.
- Children grouped together are at close age levels. Grouping of widely different ages of children is avoided.
- Daily visual observations determine awareness of scratches, cuts and bruises. Suspicions and concerns of abuse are reported to the director.
- Male teachers working with young children are given special training.
- New staff members are not left alone with children until background checks and orientation training are completed.

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- Criminal Background and Child Abuse Checks are conducted on all staff of the school as mandated by state law.
  - Future plans include security cameras for all classrooms of the school.

It is the intent of The Privette School to provide a safe haven for children, a warm and caring atmosphere and the best possible care for the children entrusted to our school.

## **Food**

### **Foods for Babies**

Parents are asked to provide written instructions concerning your baby's daily feedings, foods permitted, etc. Parents are requested to inform teachers if your child is eating table foods. Otherwise, parents are responsible for furnishing each day's supply of baby foods, formula and juice for children who are unable to eat regular table foods. All necessary foods, bottles and pacifiers should be properly labeled with the name of your child. Glass baby bottles are not permitted.

State law requires that we not accept previously opened jars of baby food. In addition, baby foods stored or prepared in jars will be served from a separate dish for each infant. Any leftovers from the serving dish will be discarded. Leftovers in the jar will be labeled, dated and refrigerated, and used within the next 24 hours or discarded.

### **Foods for Other Children**

All children eating table food will be served a delicious, well-balanced lunch, as well as morning and afternoon snacks. Menus are available upon request and are posted in the school. Food Management, serving childcare centers throughout Jackson prepares our meals. The Mississippi State Department of Health approves menus.

### **Food Allergies**

**Please notify our staff if your child has known food allergies.** Staff will be happy to assist parents in watching for foods that may be harmful to their child.

### **Outside Foods Prohibited**

In accordance with Mississippi State Department of Health regulations, foods from outside of the facility are prohibited. Permission may be granted by the director and teachers on the occasion of a child's birthday or other special celebrations. Foods collected from children will be saved when possible and returned to parents at the end of the day. Parent cooperation is requested and most appreciated.

### **Kitchen Area**

In compliance with state regulations, children are not allowed in the kitchen area of the school. A sign announcing this regulation is posted on the door of the kitchen. Parent cooperation is requested in this matter.

## **Parties**

### **Birthday Parties**

Our school welcomes the efforts of parents wishing to provide a special occasion for their child's birthday. Refreshments supplied for birthdays are an exception to the outside food

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regulation and allow the birthday child to feel absolutely wonderful about their special day. The party allows a joyful sharing experience for the birthday child and parents, his/her classmates, and teachers. Please make arrangements for these occasions at least one week in advance by planning with your child's teacher.

Guidelines for birthday parties allow simple refreshments, and birthday activities are planned at the normal snack periods of the day, morning or afternoon. Suggestions for refreshments may include sandwiches, cake or cupcakes, individual ice cream cups, drinks, or other age-appropriate foods. Hard candies, suckers, balloons, and extremely small toys should be avoided due to choking hazards with small children. The school requests that no gifts or favors are given. The special event should be limited in time to twenty or thirty minutes. The number of guests coming into the classroom should be limited to parents, immediate family or an extremely close friend. The parent is responsible for bringing the following items as needed: food or drink items, paper plates or saucers, napkins, cups, forks, or spoons.

### **Holiday Celebrations or Special Parties**

Our school invites the involvement and participation of parents in assisting teachers in providing special parties and holiday celebrations throughout the year. Should you desire to assist or do something special for your child's class, please make arrangements with your child's teachers.

As with birthday parties, hard candies, suckers, balloons, and extremely small toys should be avoided due to choking risks with small children. Soft homemade candies are permitted for special parties and holiday celebrations when prior approval and arrangements have been made with the teacher of the class.

### **Birthday Invitations for Non-School Parties**

The Privette School will not be allowed to handout invitations to birthday parties when each child in a classroom is not receiving an invitation. If a parent is planning an outside birthday party that does not include the entire class, invitations should be mailed directly to home addresses by the parent.

## **Clothing**

Please allow your child to come to the school each day in comfortable, washable clothing. Select clothing that can be easily managed. Since play is a large part of your child's learning process, clothes should be appropriate for playtime, art and other activities. Please avoid sending your child in his/her finest clothing.

An extra set of clothing is needed for all children. This extra set of clothing, including underwear, should be labeled with the child's name and be stored with your child's belongings in his/her classroom cubby.

Children are required to wear shoes to school each day. Thongs, flip-flops, athletic shoes having cleat-type traction devices, and boots (cowboy and hiking) should not be worn to the school. Children's shoes should be safe for the person wearing them, as well as others.

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All children are expected to come to The Privette School in appropriate dress. Children will not be allowed to wear items that are inappropriate. Clothing relaying messages on the front or back should be in good taste.

**The Privette School is not responsible for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged items.**

## **Discipline Policy**

The Privette School operates on the premise that discipline means teaching children acceptable behavior. Our staff seeks to promote positive behavior in young children and to give them opportunities to gain self-control, the ultimate goal of discipline.

### **Differentiating between Discipline and Punishment**

All too often, the terms *discipline* and *punishment* are used interchangeably when in fact, they are two very different concepts. Discipline, derived from the Latin word "to teach," means teaching children acceptable behavior. When appropriate discipline is used, children learn appropriate behavior, the reasons behind appropriate behavior and how to behave in everyday situations. They are gaining self-control.

On the contrary, punishment refers to inflicting negative consequences to control behavior without teaching the appropriate behavior. Punishment oftentimes results in poor self-esteem and lack of self-control. Therefore, The Privette School strictly prohibits any of its staff from engaging in humiliating, frightening or physically harmful behaviors to address negative behavior, including

- Corporal punishment of any kind;
- Withdrawal or the threat of withdrawal of food, rest or bathroom breaks;
- Abusive or profane language;
- Any form of public or private humiliation;
- Any form of emotional abuse;
- Using any food product or medication in any manner or for any purpose other than that for which it is intended;
- Inappropriate disciplinary behavior, such as putting soap in a child's mouth;
- Isolation out of the view of a teacher;
- Forcing children to sit in high chairs or at a table for long periods of time; and
- Telling parents to punish children at home for misbehavior at the school.

### **Our Staff and Discipline**

The Privette School staff strives to promote positive, acceptable behavior that promotes self-esteem and confidence. Creative discipline techniques are used to promote positive behavior in response to negative behavior. To avoid punishment that could cause confusion, fear or low self-esteem, our staff

- Develops clear, consistent rules and expectations with the children that are appropriate to their development level;

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- Clarifies consequences for disobeying rules before disobedience occurs;
  - Allows children time to learn the rules;
  - Reinforces desirable behavior; and
  - Recognizes that inappropriate behavior oftentimes results from a lack of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills and works with children at their level of development to understand what behavior is appropriate.

Therefore, our staff uses the following techniques when appropriate in an effort to teach children positive, acceptable behavior:

- *Separate the child from the behavior* or address the behavior, meaning letting the child know that the negative behavior is unacceptable and not the child.
- *Redirect behavior*, meaning if a child is acting inappropriately in one area, they are redirected to another.
- *Provide acceptable choices*, meaning the teacher will give two acceptable choices to the child as opposed to an unacceptable choice.
- *Use positive language* and avoid using words like, "no," "don't" and "stop."
- *Look for deeper problems*, meaning teachers will look for other stressors like parental divorce, a new sibling or death of a pet; in order to reduce the stress, teachers will listen to the child as they talk about the situation, provide children's books about the subject and give children an opportunity to act out their feelings.
- *Allow children to experience natural consequences*; children often learn when left to experience the natural consequences of their actions such as pulling the wheels off the truck prevents it from rolling.
- *Anticipate and plan for new and difficult times*, such as anticipated waiting periods. For example, teachers may plan for finger puppet play when children are required to wait to have their photographs made.
- *Use humor when appropriate*, particularly when accidents occur such as a spill.
- *Refuse to argue on non-negotiable issues*; children must know the limits on certain behavior and discussion of these limits would only indicate they are open for discussion.
- *Use of time-out, when appropriate*, with preschoolers and school-agers only. When time-out is used, children will be separated from the other children but in view of the teacher until they have calmed down. Once calm, the teacher will talk with the child about what happened and how the child can handle the situation differently next time. The goal of time-out is to have the child think about and learn from the behavior and to learn self-control--true discipline.

In addition to the techniques above, our after-school staff, who works with school-aged children, will also

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- Involve children in the making of the rules and project planning
  - Plan for cooperative games and activities
  - Model appropriate ways to communicate negative feelings
  - Teach conflict resolution techniques in which the children are involved
  - Talk to children in private about inappropriate behavior
  - Help children think through their actions
  - Hold group meetings with the children to confront and brainstorm solutions to problems affecting the whole group
  - Allow children to work out their own problems whenever possible
  - Develop signals with the children as a reminder of inappropriate behavior
  - Involve parents when inappropriate behavior is repeatedly demonstrated

### **Parents and Discipline**

You as parents will be informed on a regular basis of the social development of your child. Questions and concerns are welcome. Our staff desires to work together with you to address problem behaviors. Since we have observed that children respond to discipline when adults involved are consistent, it is our hope that consistency will be evident to your child between home and the school.

Should your child's behavior become severe enough to interfere with the normal functioning of his/her classroom, it may become necessary for you and the staff to plan together for assisting your child in dealing with the problem behavior.

The following steps may be taken to aid a child in correcting problem behavior:

1. A group conference may be called to discuss and analyze the problem behavior and possible contributing factors. A consistent plan for discipline will be defined. The conference may include the child's parents, teachers directly involved, the director of the school, and/or other personnel equipped to assist in behavior modification.
2. Parents may be required to come for their child during the day if an undesirable behavior becomes harmful to their child or others or if the problem behavior is detrimental to the classroom environment.
3. Parents may be required to sign a *Discipline Guidance Agreement*.
4. In extreme situations, when the above-described procedures have been ineffective, *the director of the school reserves the right to remove the child from the roll for the good of the child and/or his/her peers.*
5. **The Privette School reserves the right to remove a family from the roll if, in the opinion of the director, a parent or other family member is harassing, threatening, intimidating, or exhibiting other inappropriate behavior to our staff.**

### **Staff Training**

Our staff periodically trains on discipline issues beginning with staff orientation. Professional literature and media are made available as well as opportunities for training. Brainstorming ideas and role-playing difficult situations at staff meetings are other types of training the staff



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engages in while constantly striving to stay abreast of new information regarding discipline and maintaining positive environments so that everyone succeeds.

The Privette School staff is here for your child and you. We want you to feel secure that your child is safe and developing strong and appropriate behaviors and social skills. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance from our staff at any time.

## **Parents as Partners**

Parents are significant partners in early childhood education. Parents and teachers strive to provide not only the best care for their children but also an abundance of positive experiences from which social, emotional, physical and cognitive development occurs. What is the best way parents can help their children prepare daily for the multitude of experiences from which to learn?

- See that your child gets a good night's sleep.
- See that your child has regular eating habits.
- See that your child leaves for the school happy and unhurried.
- See that your child arrives at the proper time for his class schedule.
- Take an interest in what your child tells you about his/her school activities.
- Show an appreciation of your child's early artistic attempts. Remember, it is better to say "Tell me about your picture" instead of "What is it?"
- Give your child an assurance of unconditional love and understanding.
- Invest in quality time with your child each day.
- Read to your child every day. Research shows that it really makes a difference!

What about your child's life at the school? Please consider the following suggestions:

- Read this handbook carefully to gain an understanding of school policies and why they have been made. Keep it close for referral information.
- Understand and talk with your child about the school as an important and wonderful place in your lives.
- Let your child know your love and support for his/her teachers and the school.
- See that your child's belongings are labeled with his name.
- Send a change or changes of clothing to the school for your child.
- Check frequently on supplies needed for your child. Keep an adequate supply at the school. This is his home away from home.
- Remember to ask your child's teacher or the director about anything that you don't understand.
- Remember to ask your child's teacher or the director about anything that will help your child.
- If there seems to be a problem, talk to the administrative staff immediately. It's much better to address problems quickly and in a professional manner.
- Make a real effort each day to leave your child happy.
- When you come to get your child, try to be happy, whether you are or not.

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- Be a good resource person for your child's school. If you have items of interest, a hobby to share or a vocation of interest, let your child's teacher know of your willingness to contribute. Your child is proud of you!
  - Participate in planned group activities with your child.
  - When possible, try to come for your child at times other than rest periods.
  - Remember that parents are always welcome in the school.
  - Come for your child by 5:30 p.m. Despite comfort given by your child's teacher, children get alarmed when you're late.
  - If you cannot come for your child, explain this letting him/her know whom to expect.

### **Program of Activities**

General schedules of activities for regular days, summer, and holidays are posted on the main hall bulletin board. A schedule of daily activities appropriate to each age group is posted inside each of the classrooms. The schedules include routine activities focusing on reading, educational activities, toys and equipment, outdoor play, and eating and rest periods. Daily schedules are adjusted as needed for extreme changes in the weather.

### **Outdoor Play**

The Mississippi State Department of Health requires that childcare facilities operating more than six hours daily provide a minimum of two (2) hours of outdoor activities per day, weather permitting. (Infants are required to have 30 minutes per day, weather permitting.) Children of our school are given this opportunity. On excessively hot or cold days outdoor play will be limited. Discretion will be used to determine the feasibility of outdoor play and the amount.

Your child should be sent to school in comfortable clothing appropriate for weather conditions. Should a medical condition exist that would prohibit your child's participation in outdoor activities, it will be necessary for you to provide a doctor's statement explaining that condition. The doctor's statement will become a part of your child's permanent folder.

Although the playground is well shaded and children will not be outside during the hottest parts of the day in the summer, if parents desire to have sunscreen applied to your child before going outside, the sunscreen and instructions must be provided to the teacher. Please label the sunscreen container with the child's name. Teachers may request parents to supply mosquito spray as well.

### **Promotion/Transfer**

The Privette School strives to provide an atmosphere in each class that encourages the ethical, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of each child as a whole. In working toward this goal, occasionally it becomes necessary to promote or transfer children to another class due to age or developmental progress. At all times, however, the ratio of teacher to child, directed by the Mississippi State Department of Health, is adhered to. Our staff desires that each class be a happy experience for you and your child. Please let your

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child's teachers or the director know if you have any questions concerning a move. It will be our pleasure to assist you in this time

### **Ratio of Teacher to Children**

The state mandated minimum ratio of teacher to children present at all times is

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Number of Children to Caregiver</u>
Less than 1 Year	1:5
1 Year	1:9
2 Years	1:12
3 Years	1:14
4 Years	1:16
5 Years through 9 Years	1:20

The Privette School seeks to maintain higher than minimum ratio of caregiver to children present.

### **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

The Privette School has a non-discriminatory policy.

### **Smoking, Tobacco Products and Prohibited Substances**

Smoking, the use of any tobacco products, alcohol, and illegal drugs, are prohibited within the physical confines of The Privette School. Furthermore, the use of any form of tobacco products, alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited on all outdoor playgrounds, the Christian Center (housing the gym area) and Broadmeadow United Methodist Church campus.