



Handbook

Nursery
Program

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First Congo Nursery School Core Values

It is our intent to nourish the growth and development of children at First Congo such that they are ready and eager to embrace the learning opportunities that lie ahead for them. In the time children spend at First Congo, we seek to cultivate:

- an attitude of engagement
 - a sense of autonomy
 - a social awareness
- a belief in the value of community

We believe that young children are eager to learn and grow in ways that are meaningful to them. At First Congo this means:

- Providing a play-based curriculum appropriate for the 2-5 year old learner
- Cultivating a sense of wonder and sharing the delight of discovery
- Enhancing intellectual resiliency and promoting curiosity through thoughtful dialogue

We believe that social growth is the paramount goal in the years before formal schooling begins. At First Congo this means:

- Creating an environment where children can develop at their own pace in an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding
- Encouraging children to make choices according to developmental needs and abilities
- Supporting the development of friendship skills toward independent implementation

We believe in the value of developing emotional intelligence. At First Congo this means:

- Allowing for and validating all feelings while limiting actions to reflect consideration for others
- Inspiring such experimentation and risk-taking as supports personal growth and encourages resiliency
- Helping children to become aware and appreciative of their own best learning and coping styles

We believe in the power of collaborative effort to achieve the greatest good. At First Congo this means:

- Promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust
- Valuing the partnership between parents and teachers in best serving children
- Nurturing and celebrating ourselves as a community of learners

NURSERY SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

In accordance with our core values, there are several First Congo practices worth highlighting that distinguish the program from others in the area.

We are play-based: It is our purpose to provide a carefully planned program that reflects our present knowledge of human growth and development. Based on that knowledge, the underlying premise of our program is that young children learn best through play. Our rich environment invites children to engage themselves both physically and mentally, fostering intellectual qualities such as curiosity, inventiveness, perception and concentration, as well as helping them to develop physical wellbeing and coordination. Creativity and individuality are given free expression through painting, music, dramatic play, crafts, block building, and woodworking, and by making use of raw materials that encourage originality. We believe that process is more important than product. Play helps children best to understand themselves and others, and aids them in the development of social skills such as making friends, dealing with conflict, and experiencing the many aspects of community life.

Children make their own choices: Although children are grouped with same-age classmates we recognize that each child brings a unique set of aptitudes and challenges to the community. We strive to create an environment in which children can develop at their own pace physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially, in an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding. Through self-directed play, children learn that they are free to make choices, to explore and experiment, to discover and create, as long as they stay within the limits of consideration for people and things. For the greater part of each morning, children choose the activities in which they will participate according to their developmental and personal needs, whether outside or inside, active or quiet, messy or clean.

We emphasize emotional intelligence: We strive to give children an awareness and acceptance of their own feelings. Children are helped to articulate feelings and needs, to identify what they want and to ask for it. The goal is always to help children learn to work out their own problems, first with the support and guidance of a teacher, and later independently. We understand and foster their right to express their feelings through acceptable means and we encourage risk-taking, problem solving, and conflict resolution with gentle guidance. It is our hope that all children leave our program with a sense of independence and carry with them a joy of learning that will last a lifetime.

Parents participate directly: We are committed to being a parent participation program — requiring direct participation by parents in their child's classroom — because we believe this cooperative environment gives parents a unique opportunity to learn effective, positive, child-centered teaching methods and provides a sense of community for parents as well as for the children. Parents get to know, respect and trust the teachers, and their child's classmates and their families as well.

The Nursery Program

The philosophy of the Nursery program is based on respect: respect for the developmental stage of the young child in general, and also respect for what each child needs, feels, and experiences. We believe that play and exploration are essential because the young child learns with his whole body and all his senses.

As teachers, we provide a safe environment by setting limits and by setting a predictable structure of time and routines. We introduce developmentally appropriate activities that give children the freedom to be self-directed. We allow them time to thoroughly master an activity or skill. We give them time to wonder and reflect upon all that they experience. And most of all, we share in the children's joy of discovery.

A basic premise of the class is that children need to feel safe and have their needs met in order to be successful learners. The role of the teacher is to facilitate rather than to teach. In this role, we set up an environment that offers children freedom to explore and discover, and then we remain available in a non-directive way while the children play—intervening to keep them safe and to help them work at solving problems.

As the children play, their learning will occur in many areas: language, cognition, big and small motor skills, emotional, and social. Some of the important social and emotional skills they will practice are to separate and say good-bye to a parent, to develop independence in such tasks as hanging up their jackets or finding their own name tags, to make their own choices of what to do next, to ask an adult for help when needed, and to know what to do if someone grabs their toy.

Experience shows that young children feel safer and more relaxed in a quiet atmosphere. Therefore, as adults we all try to keep our voices low.

And, finally, we feel strongly that we are partners with the parents. Together, we can give your children the chance to grow and learn at their own pace, and encourage them to master the challenges they meet. You, as parents, will continue to be the most important people in your child's life, and we want to support you in this special role.

SPECIFICS OF THE NURSERY PROGRAM

Calendar

Our school year begins just after Labor Day and ends in May. We observe a two-week long winter break and a one-week long spring break along with the other assigned holidays of the Palo Alto Unified School District.

Health Policy

State law prohibits us from allowing sick children to attend school. The incidence and severity of illnesses can be greatly reduced if we work cooperatively to prevent the rapid spread of communicable infections among the children at First Congo.

We ask that your child stay at home if he/she meets any one of the following criteria or shows any of the listed symptoms:

Fever - 101 orally, 102 rectally, 100 auxiliary

Colds - Runny nose with fever, lethargy or irritability. A cold that is less than three days old.

Ear Infections - Fever or lethargy, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, irritability. Child may return to school when on medication and 24 hours after constitutional symptoms are gone.

Eye Infections - With yellow or green drainage. Child must be on medication 24 hours and have very little drainage before returning to school.

Cough - A wet wheezy cough with mucous.

Vomiting - Recurring or with fever.

It is not necessary to call the school if your child is ill and must miss a day of school for any of the above reasons. If illness causes your child to miss several days, feel free to check in to keep us apprised of the situation.

Other Communicable Infections

Parents are required to notify the school if they or their children contract a communicable disease such as **chicken pox, giardiasis, hepatitis, meningitis, measles, etc.** Parents will be notified if their child was exposed to a communicable disease while at First Congo.

A child may return when infectious symptoms have subsided and the child is feeling better.

If a child shows signs of illness or infection while at school, the parent will be contacted and the child will be made comfortable in an area away from other children. Make sure that all phone numbers on your emergency forms are up to date.

Children must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to First Congo. This is also for the protection of the recovering child, whose resistance is low and just getting well.

The State of California requires **full immunization** compliance for children entering into a private or public program starting September 2016.

Arrival and Departure

Parking

First Congo shares the use of the First Congregational Church parking lot off Louis Road. Please observe the "In" and "Out" directional arrows and park in the two rows of parking spaces directly across from our entry gate. When pulling into or leaving the school parking area, please be cognizant of children or adults walking to and from their vehicles. When leaving the parking lot, please watch carefully for walkers or bicyclists traveling along Louis Road.

Adults and children should cross to and from the parking spaces by using the walk directly across from our entry gate. Please do not park along the curb directly in front of the gate, even if for a moment, as this could block vision of the crossing area.

Safety Issues

We all agree that safety for our children is the fundamental concern for both parents and teachers. Arrival and departure times can present many demands on our attention, and can mean additional risk for the children. The following guidelines will help clarify the roles of staff and parents at arrival and departure times.

We will assume that you are primarily responsible for your child as long as you remain on the premises, that is, the classrooms and playground of First Congo. Our reasoning is that when a parent is present the child assumes that the parent is in charge. From the staff's point of view, our respect of the parent/child relationship makes us hesitant to intrude when parent and child are together. Of course, we are always available to help with saying goodbye or with interactions between your child and another; we try to be aware, but please do not hesitate to ask for help if needed. The staff will intervene if we do see a potentially unsafe situation.

Additionally, we ask that you keep a close eye on, and assume total responsibility for, the care and safety of other children (siblings, friends, etc.) who accompany you when dropping off or picking up your child.

Signing In and Out

State of California regulations for the protection and safety of our children require that all children be signed in and out by the parent or parent's assignee over 18 years of age.

It is important to be prompt at pick-up time, because a small child becomes easily upset if left waiting after all his or her friends have gone home.

Bulletin Board

It helps to read the school bulletin boards each time you are at First Congo. You will find the main bulletin board and announcements near the gate after you enter, and there is also a bulletin board near the Nursery classroom. Sign-ups for special events will be near the main bulletin board.

Daily Schedule

During the first 45-60 minutes of the morning we encourage child-directed play. We have created interesting spaces and activities throughout the room, allowing the children to get involved alone or in small groups.

We limit whole-group activities to two times in the morning. The first is at snack time when we split into two small groups to do a fingerplay, wash our hands, eat, and chat together.

Next we have our outdoor playtime while the Youngers and Olders classes go inside for their snack and story. This allows us to set up the equipment in ways that are appropriate for the Nursery class.

After playing outdoors, we have our second group time when we gather on the rug to sing a few songs and read one or two stories. At 11:45 one of our Nursery Program teachers will open the door and welcome parents and caregivers into the room. Please wait for the door to be opened which will signal that the class is ready for you. At this time, some children are ready to share one last book with a parent or caregiver while others are ready to head home.

Take-home artwork will be hanging up on the clothesline in the window or on the counter or table next to the window.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable, washable clothing, labeled with a nametape or laundry marking pen. School activities often involve rigorous play and the use of sand, paint, glue, clay and other such materials. A child should not need to be greatly concerned with keeping clothes clean. Sturdy washable outfits that allow the child freedom of movement and are easy to manage will encourage independence. We encourage children to wear tennis shoes or shoes safe for climbing or running.

It is especially important in the Nursery program that you bring a change of clothes each week because we don't have room to store them from week to week. Please include diapers (cloth or disposable), training pants, or underwear because toileting accidents are quite normal at this age. If you bring the clothing in a backpack, small cloth tote bag, or a small shopping bag with a handle, it is easy to hang on the child's coat hook in our room.

Our weather is often changeable so do provide sweaters and jackets. We will all work with children on keeping these belongings on the individual's coat hook. When the group is playing outside, we have a hand basket where the children can put any jackets or shoes and socks that they take off. Look for the basket in the Nursery room when it's time to go home.

Birthday Celebrations

We celebrate birthdays at snack time. The birthday child gets to put the three candles in the pink musical birthday cake, and then we'll sing "Happy Birthday." We serve our typical simple snack: a fruit, a cracker or rice cake, and always water. We do not serve birthday treats in the Nursery Classroom. There will be an opportunity for birthday treats in the Youngers and Olders programs.

Photo Policy

In a parent-participation preschool, many photos are taken of the children singly and in groups by First Congo parents and staff. These photos are often posted at school, used in projects, and shared amongst families in the program via our shared Shutterfly account. It is our intention to make sure that parents are aware of all the ways in which photos may be used.

Photos of classroom activities, projects, visitors, field trips, and special events are shared with class members on the members-only portion of the Shutterfly Share Site (accessible only to members of First Congo who have been invited, and which uses individually created passwords.)

Photos of children are also used as part of school materials (art projects, etc.) and documents that are distributed only to the First Congo community. Some of these documents may be posted on the members-only portion of the First Congo website.

No photos will be used in any public way (such as on a brochure, for newspaper publication, on the public pages of the school website, or posted in areas outside the classroom) without specific permission from the parents.

Photos taken at preschool that include photos of children other than your own, cannot be used in any public forum (social media sites, personal web pages, and the like) without the permission of the parents of the children in the photo.

Only still photography is allowed at preschool. No moving images are to be taken for the following reasons: it interferes with the preschool experience where children are encouraged to explore and discover and not perform for an audience; and children other than your own may venture into the frame and be caught on camera in any number of preschool behaviors which should stay at preschool.

Please tell family members and care givers who pick up and drop off children to our program about these photo policies.

TEACHER-PARENT PARTNERSHIP

All of our staff members are experienced and exceptional early childhood educators. These highly-qualified teachers participate in a continuous program of in-service training to remain alert to the changing needs of today's families and to the findings of current research. Believing that teachers and parents share the goal of creating a wonderful and supportive school experience, the teaching staff seeks to be in a partnership with parents, one that is based on an assumption of good intentions and respectful communication. We offer the following information and guidelines in support of that partnership.

Teacher's Role

Our teachers set the stage for your child's learning experience by:

- **providing** learning opportunities, planting ideas, encouraging questions and fostering curiosity.

- **promoting** problem solving with the opportunity to experiment, test, retest and validate.
- **arranging** and rearranging conditions, adding resources, and eliminating others.
- **supporting** a child in using time, space, materials and equipment.
- **helping** a child develop a sense of mastery and competence.
- **setting limits** so that school is a safe and comfortable place physically and psychologically for all children.

Parent's Role

Parents can enhance their child's experience at school by:

- **assuring**, inasmuch as possible, that their child is well-rested and well-fed.
- **providing** comfortable, suitable clothing for their child to wear to school.
- **arriving** promptly at school at drop-off and pick-up times.
- **alerting** the staff to special occasions or out-of-the-routine happenings in your child's life—grandparents' visit, parent on trip, death in the family, or just a mention of a child who was up late or grumpy on the way to school.
- **communicating** to your child your confidence that school is a wonderful place to learn and grow.

Communication

The First Congo year begins before the first day of school with a home visit by one of the child's teachers. This unique part of our program sets the tone for the relationship between the child and teacher as well as the parents and teacher. For the child this visit gives them an opportunity to get acquainted with their teacher in a familiar and secure setting. For the parents it gives the opportunity to begin a dialogue that will continue throughout the year. This informal sharing will add to our mutual understanding of the child.

If you have a concern about your child, we prefer not to discuss it within your child's hearing. We can always arrange a better time or place if the classroom is not an appropriate place for a discussion.

Scheduled phone conferences will take place in February, but parents are encouraged to communicate with the staff in whatever way seems most suitable whenever the need arises -- verbally at school if appropriate, by telephone, or via a written note. An open line of communication is essential to our best efforts to support your child and family.

We also feel that it is important to have an ongoing program of written communications. These may take the form of

- **Handouts and memos** Please check for handouts and memos each day of school.
- **All school or all class email**

- **Bulletin board notices** Please check each time you come to school. The calendar for participation days is posted on the bulletin board inside the Nursery classroom.
- **Informational notes** from teacher or Director to parents.

Parent Education

A number of events will be offered throughout the school year on topics that will be of interest to parents of young children.

As a part of our parent education program the school offers an abundance of excellent books on children and parenting as part of our Lending Library located in the Blue Tail Room. To check out a book write your name and the date on the card in the book pocket, and leave the card in the drawer. Books are lent for a two-week period, with a renewal possible if no one is waiting for it.

First Congo also maintains a file of interesting and timely pamphlets and articles on such topics as families, education, science, toys, and television. Please ask if this is of interest to you.

Emergency Preparedness

Have you ever wondered what would happen in the event of an emergency at First Congo, a fire in the building, a gas leak on the street, or a major earthquake? Where would the children go? What would you as a helping parent be depended upon to do? Who would pick up your child if you couldn't and what would happen if a person on your Disaster Plan list got to school first and took your child from the facility before you got there?

There are plans in place for all of these events and we want to share them with you so that you know about the procedures we have in place. Please read the valuable information written in these pages to understand our disaster plan and to make sure that we have everything we need on file to make sure that **we** can get in touch with **you**, and **you** know where to find **us** in the event of an emergency.

Documents we have on file from each family:

- Identification & Emergency Contact Information (Form 700)
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Disaster Plan (names, signatures and phone numbers for all those given permission to take your child from our facility or under our care.)

Emergency Planning:

- Evacuation Destinations
 - Play Yard
 - First Congo Parking Lot
 - Parent's Nursery School (2328 Louis Road)
 - The Palo Alto Public Library/Art Center

- Disaster Planning
 - Class Rosters (daily sign in sheet – to know who is at school)
 - 2 Sets of ID & Information Forms
 - Release Forms
 - First Aid Kit
 - Foil Blankets
 - Water & Limited Supply of Food
 - Posters advising parents where to find children
- Procedures
 - Take all children to a safe place (account, assess, and stabilize the situation)
 - Initiate a phone tree using teacher cell phones (if cell service is working)
 - Immediate pickup of children is required in case of an emergency
 - Children are released to parents, authorized adults, or emergency medical personnel. A release form will be filled out and signed by the person who takes the child from the facility.
- Parent Responsibility
 - Keep all emergency info up to date
 - Keep all names and phone numbers of those designated to pick up your child up to date (new childcare provider, relative or neighbor)
 - Respond immediately in the event of an emergency by picking up your child as soon as possible
 - HAVE A PLAN with your spouse or caregiver if you are often out of the vicinity while your child is at nursery school. You need to have a designated 'first responder' within your own family.
 - WE HAVE THE EXPECTATION THAT ALL CHILDREN WILL BE PICKED UP WITHIN AN HOUR OF A MAJOR EVENT OR A TELEPHONE CALL ABOUT A FACILITY EMERGENCY. Please make sure that your plan has your child covered no matter where you might be. If your child is at school, you need to have a plan in place.
 - Pitch in and help if you are able. Stay as calm as possible.

Our overarching goal during the event of a facility emergency or a disaster is to keep the children safe, address any health concerns we have about children or staff, to remain calm and reassuring, and to return your children to your care just as soon as humanly possible. Planning is the key to emergency preparedness and we've done our part and will depend upon you to do your part to keep all of our children as safe and secure as possible.

When in doubt, don't call, just come –
cell phones may be tied up with outgoing calls or not working.

First Congo Office: 650-493-1915

First Congregational Church Office: 650-856-6662

Carrie's Cell Phone: 650-387-0381

PARENT PARTICIPATION (Required)

Three Evening Events

A parent orientation meeting is held at the beginning of the school year and attendance is required for all parents. We also require parents to attend two other parent events of their choosing out of a myriad of events offered over the course of the year. Parents can choose to attend any two of the following: school parties, book club nights, parent education events, and speaker events.

School Day Participation

Your role as a participating parent is very important to our program. Parents in the Nursery class work at school two times during the school year. We suggest that you spread your work time through the school year in order to enjoy your child's growth.

To Sign Up for Participation Days

The sign-up sheets for parent participation are hanging next to the name tag table in the Nursery room. Please use pencil so that changes can be made easily. Ask the teachers if there are any questions or problems.

If a parent needs to change a participation day, that parent needs to make arrangements to switch days with another parent. If another parent can't be found to take that day, check with the teachers.

If your schedule is flexible enough that you may be available to be a last-minute substitute for another parent, sign up on the list at the end of the sign-up sheets.

Guidelines for Work Days

Unlike parents participating in the Youngers and Olders classes, you don't need to come early to help set up or stay late to clean up. We need your help from 9:15 to 11:45 am.

Don't be surprised if your child's behavior is different when it's your day at school. You may see clingier, more demanding, or more out-of-bounds behavior.

We feel strongly that parent participation is valuable not only for the school and the teachers, but also for your child and you as parents. Therefore, we ask that it be the mother or father that does the three participation days for each child.

Health and safety are our primary concern. Try to be aware of the total situation at the same time that you're focusing on an individual child or a small area of the room or yard.

We have set up the room to be a low-key environment and one in which the children can make their own choices.

By being available when needed, we adults can help the children develop their own self-control. We feel it's very important to respect a child's feelings. We can do this by speaking to them in a calm, positive way, and by sometimes helping to give them words for their own feelings ("I can see that you are feeling really angry.")

Please join us for snack. The children will enjoy teaching you how to scrub the table and how to do the fingerplays. The other group time is the singing and stories near the end of the morning. It is typical of a group of young children that sometimes a child may need to move around before the group time has ended.

During our outdoor time, we ask that you move with the children. It is essential that an adult be at the climbing structure when children are using it. When we first go out, we adjust some of the equipment to make it more appropriate for the Nursery class. We don't lift the children up to the bars or climbing structures; they need to be able to do this for themselves. Our role is to be there in a supportive way and to keep them safe.

Safety

We do not allow children to climb up on the tables or the counter by the windows.

The loft-slide is a favorite area in the room. Children should not walk or run down the slide. It's great fun for the children to take stuffed animals, puppets, or dolls down the slide, but we discourage the use of hard or heavy toys on the slide.

While playing outside, it's important that there is always an adult supervising children who are playing on the structure. An adult is needed when several children are playing at the swings. Young children do not always realize how much space is needed by a swing in use. The school's rule is that we do not lift a child up to the bars or onto the structure. Children need to be able to do this for themselves—when they are ready and able. Red boards are used outside for jumping and sliding. These boards need to be in stable and secure positions.

Many safety concerns can be alleviated by being aware of potential problems. If there are too many children in one area or if there are signs of a child getting frustrated, it's important for an adult to be there to help.

Toileting and Diapering Policy

Parents may diaper and toilet their own children, but teachers will handle the diapering and toileting needs of the other children in the classroom.

Communication Tips

1. State suggestions or directions in positive phrasing, as "You can climb outside on the play structure." NOT "Don't climb on the table."
2. Give a choice only when you intend to leave the situation up to the child, as "It's time to go in for singing now." NOT "Would you like to go in for singing?"
3. Make suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary: "It's time to go inside now. I'll help you park your bike."
4. Help children substitute verbal requests for blows. "You can tell him you do not like that."
5. Validate a child's feelings. All feelings are permitted; actions are limited. When handling hostility, **reflect his anger and limit his actions**. "I know how angry you are, but I can't let you hit him."
6. Use specific descriptive praise. Describe what you see and what you feel. "You used lots of red." "You mixed red and yellow. It makes me feel sunny and cheery." rather than "That's a beautiful painting. You are a great artist."

FIRST CONGO PARENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The First Congo Parent Community Council offers parents an opportunity to expand their involvement in their child's school. The Council is comprised of parents from all First Congo classes who volunteer extra time to support the stated goals of the program and mission of the school in various ways. Membership in this active group is open to any and all interested parents.

FUNDRAISING AND CONTRIBUTIONS

There are a variety of ways to support First Congo – contributions of time, talent and financial support are all greatly appreciated!

First Congo is a non-profit 501c(3) corporation that receives no funding from foundations or government agencies. It depends exclusively upon tuition, fundraising, and charitable contributions for its revenue.

Check, cash, or stock may make monetary gifts. Additionally, gifts may be made to honor a family member, friend or favorite teacher. Many companies will match their employees' charitable gifts; check with your Human Resources Department to see what the policy is. Family foundations considering a contribution, or individuals wishing to make a gift of corporate stock, should contact the Director or Treasurer for further information. All contributions are tax deductible according to tax law guidelines.

Fundraisers

The school does little formal fundraising. A bake sale the Sunday before Thanksgiving provides scholarship funding. In addition, parents are encouraged to sign up for eScrip as a convenient way to provide additional funds without any extra effort or expense. If needed, the Parent Council organizes additional fundraising events.

The Enrichment Fund

This fund buffers our general operating fund and is used for capital improvements and unbudgeted expenditures.

Sources of money:

- fundraising
- eScrip rebates
- donations of money or stock
- interest from accounts and investments
- surplus funds at the end of each fiscal year

Money in this fund is used:

- to purchase unbudgeted teaching materials and equipment
- for upkeep and capital improvements to the rooms and yard
- for tech expenses (website, computers, etc.)
- to provide staff support

The Lee Newman Scholarship Fund

The Lee Newman Scholarship Fund was established when our much-loved "Teacher Lee" retired after helping to establish our program in 1963 and continued to guide the 3's for over 20 years. Tax-deductible donations received into this fund help make up any deficit that may exist when trying to meet all scholarship requests.

The Mae Kenrick Fund

In 2002 a fund was established to honor our beloved "Teacher Mae" Kenrick, who retired after 31 years of teaching at First Congo.

This fund was created to be a reserve fund and to provide stability for the nursery school. Tax-deductible contributions to the Mae Kenrick Fund provide a meaningful way for families to support teachers and the overall program.

Money from this fund is used for:

- teacher education
- underwriting parent education events
- helping to provide special resource teachers

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS

History

The First Congregational Church Nursery School was established in 1963, with the purpose to serve the families of the Church and to fulfill the mission of reaching out to the broader community.

Since its inception, "First Congo" as it has affectionately become known, has operated independently from the church where the facility is located. Although religious education is not part of First Congo's program, the program attends to values consonant with those of the church: provision of a positive atmosphere promoting social, physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of children; parent involvement and education to support and strengthen families; and provision of common experiences for children of different backgrounds.

In 1995, the First Congregational Church Nursery School became a non-profit corporation in the State of California. The school is planned as a community service, is non-profit, non-sectarian and non-political, and serves children between the ages of two years through five years of age.

Standards

The First Congregational Church Nursery School is licensed by the State Department of Community Services and complies with all of the standards of that department. A volunteer Board of Directors and a paid Director govern its operation.

Our teachers are trained in Early Childhood Education and especially chosen because of their understanding and sensitivity to children in their early years.

Tuition

The tuition for the school year is divided into 4 equal payments with the first payment paid upon acceptance into the school. The remaining 3 payments are due in August, November and January. Current fees are listed in the Nursery School brochure, on our school web site and are posted on the parent bulletin board. Tuition checks may be deposited in the designated box near the bulletin board at school, or sent directly to the treasurer at her home address.

Withdrawal

Should a family wish to withdraw their child/children, a written notice must be delivered to the school's Director thirty days prior to the child's last day at school. If the vacancy is filled, a prorated tuition refund, less the deposit, will be given, unless the withdrawal is

made after the final tuition payment of the school year. When leaving you are responsible for checking that your participation and tuition responsibilities have been fulfilled. The younger siblings of a student who is withdrawn from the program will lose the 'sibling priority' status on our waitlist and will be placed on our waitlist behind families who have not had a sibling leave the program prior to completion. First Congo thrives on continuity and our admissions policy seeks to offer spots to families who wish to be with us for the full three years of our preschool program.

Scholarships

Since its inception First Congo has been committed to maintaining a vigorous scholarship program. To that end, approximately 5% of each student's tuition is set aside for scholarships. The Lee Newman Scholarship Fund covers the money for scholarships needed beyond that amount. The source of money for this fund is from the annual bake sale and from donations. Requests for scholarship assistance are made on application forms or directly to the Director.

Plan of Operation for Incidental Medical Services

First Congregational Church Nursery School will provide Incidental Medical Services under the following circumstances:

- Administration of emergency medications needed in life threatening medical events. Examples of this are: Epi Pens for anaphylactic responses to bee stings or nut allergies, cortisol medications for SWCAH.
- Medications will be administered according to directions provided by the child's pediatrician with emergency medications. Prior to the start of the school year, each child's teacher and the director will be trained in the administration of these medications. No training beyond this initial coaching session will be required for administration of medications.
- All medications will be checked for expiration dates. Prescription medications will have labels that note the child's name, doctor and expiration information.
- First Congo staff is trained, according to licensing guidelines, in Pediatric CPR & Pediatric First Aid. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, staff will call 911 for additional medical assistance.
- Medications will be kept in a central location behind lock and key with signed medical release form (LIC 9221) Parent Consent for Administration of Medications and allergy questionnaire forms. The medication closet will be unlocked each morning for easy adult access during the school day.
- In the event the emergency medications are administered, the child's parent will be notified immediately using the contact information kept with the medication. If there is a life-threatening situation, staff will call 911 to summon medical personnel.
- Medical gloves and a CPR mask are kept with the emergency medications for easy access by staff who are administering medications.
- When we travel away from our facility on field trips, emergency medications and gloves will be carried by the child's teacher. That child will be in direct supervision of that teacher for the duration of the field trip. An emergency kit will also be carried along on all field trips.
- In the event of a need to evacuate the facility due to an emergency, emergency medications will be gathered and transported with our

- emergency kit to our secondary site: Parents Nursery School or the Palo Alto Art Center.
- If there is an instance where we need to administer medication, First Congo Director will fill out: LIC 624 (4/99) - Unusual Incident/Injury Report and submit copies to licensing and to the child's family.