

Temple Terrace Presbyterian Weekday School



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License # CTT140005
Director: Carrie Gassen

TTPWS serves families in the community with children ages 2 to 12. We are open from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

We offer a variety of part-time preschool programs for children ages 2 to 5, and our before and afterschool programs are offered to children attending our neighboring elementary schools.

We offer summer camp programs for both preschool and school-age children.

Mission Statement

It is our mission to provide a Christian Community in which every child feels loved, nurtured, and cared for in a safe environment.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of Temple Terrace Presbyterian Weekday School to provide preschool, child care, and afterschool care programs as a Christian Community where:

1. Each child feels loved, nurtured, and cared for in a special way.
2. Each child feels safe: physically, emotionally, and psychologically.
3. Each child participates in a variety of fun and interesting learning and play experiences which:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Contribute in a positive way to physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological growth
 - Are balanced between active time and rest time, noisy time and quiet time, group time and alone time
 - Promote the atmosphere of Christian community and collaborative teamwork





About Our Program



Whether your child is just joining our program or has been attending for a while, you may have questions for the staff regarding what your child will be learning. Our answers often use the words “developmentally appropriate”, but what does that mean? Temple Terrace Presbyterian Weekday School’s approach, which is based on play, is designed to promote “divergent thinking”, which searches for many different ways of defining or interpreting a problem, as opposed to “convergent thinking”, which means there is only one acceptable answer to a problem. Creativity is a skillful blend of divergent and convergent modes of thought.

Why is play important? The Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) affirm that play:

- Enables children to explore their world;
- Develops social and cultural understandings;
- Helps children express thoughts and feelings;
- Provides opportunities to meet and solve problems;
- Develops language and literacy skills and concepts.

In play, children make sense of their worlds by acting out meaningful themes.

What are the characteristics of play? There are at least five essential elements that characterize play:

1. Play is voluntary and intrinsically motivated. In play, children are free to choose the content and direction of their activity. The play is self-satisfying because it does not respond to external demands or expectations.
2. Play is symbolic and meaningful. Play enables children to relate their past experiences to their present reality.
3. Play is active. In play, children explore, experiment, investigate and inquire about people, objects or events. They are actively engaged with each other and materials.
4. Play is rule-bound. In play, children are governed by either explicit or implicit rules. Young children create and change rules during play that apply to appropriate role behavior and object use. Older children accept predetermined rules that guide play.
5. Play is pleasurable. In play, children pursue an activity for the pleasure it brings – not an external reward. Play behavior can be serious or non-serious.



Play enables children to create understanding of their world from their own experiences and exerts a strong influence on all aspects of their growth and development. Children become empowered in play to do things for themselves, to feel in control, to test and practice their skills and to affirm confidence in themselves.

(Excerpts from Creative Expression and Play in the Early Childhood Curriculum 1993)

The Teacher's Role

In a play-based preschool environment, the teacher must be:

1. An observer – Are materials adequately stimulating for a child's skill development?
2. An extender – Can new toys or props be added to expand a play situation without changing the themes?
3. A planner – Am I providing enough space, time and materials for children's play?
4. A responder – Am I asking questions, making suggestions, etc....?
5. A model – Do I have a playful attitude and am I encouraging independent problem-solving?

The Parent's Role

We hope that you appreciate the important role that you play in supporting your child's learning. You are your child's first teacher, and the importance of that cannot be overstated. The key to successful learning experiences is to figure out what interests your child and to use those interests to engage your child in actively exploring and learning about the environment. Every place is a learning environment for your child – your home, the park, your car, the grocery store, etc....

Together, at home and at school, we can enable your

- Become an avid reader
- Enjoy solving math problems
- Speak and write well
- Be creative
- Make decisions independently
- Develop physical coordination
- Have good study skills
- Get along with others
- Be self-confident

Indicators of Quality

Teacher Longevity – The staff turnover rate for this field is approximately 55% per year. We fall far below that percentage as we typically do not have a lot of turnover.

Class Size and Ratios – Our ratios versus the legal ratios for licensing are as follows:

Age Group	State Ratios	Our Ratios
Two year-olds	1:11	2:11
Three year-olds	1:15	2:15
Four year-olds	1:20	2:18
School-Age	1:25	1:15

Additional Programs Offered – Our educational program is a kindergarten preparatory program, however, we do offer additional programs, which are:

- **Chapel** – Every Wednesday, the children join all of the staff and the pastor in the church sanctuary to discuss God and His love for us. Christian education is non-denominational.
- **Music** – Once a week each class joins our Music Director for a music lesson. They work on gross motor development and pre-reading skills through singing, alliteration, and movement to music. These lessons culminate in several programs each year.
- **Library** – Each week, our Media Specialist does fingerplays, shares puppets, reads stories, and brings fun activities for the children to participate in.
- **Dance** – Elevate Dancers offers weekly dance classes for an additional fee, which is paid to the dance company.

Accreditation – Our center is accredited through the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care & Education Programs, and we are also a Gold Seal Provider, which is a designation from the State of Florida.

Center Longevity – Our center has been in existence since 1959 and some of our current parents and staff were students at our center! Temple Terrace Presbyterian Church has a strong commitment to providing quality education services to our families and you are welcome to join with the church family at worship services and other church events.

Who Said, “But All They Do Is Play?”

By Janice Thorson



When I Play “Let’s Pretend”, I Learn:

new words	sharing
respect for others	cooperation
cleaning up	independence
expressive language	self-confidence
feelings and property	self-reliance
hand-eye coordination	problem-solving
how it feels to be someone else	

When I Play With Art Materials, I Learn:

Colors	hand-eye coordination
Textures	color mixing
problem solving	cooperation
properties of matter	pride in my work
independence	creativity
how things work	self-reliance
new words	



When I “Read” A Book Or Am Read To, I Learn:

logical thinking	love of books
new information	sentence structure
reading readiness	new words
listening skills	creativity
sequencing	expressive language
hand-eye coordination	imagination



When I Play In The Sand Or Water, I Learn:

new words	concepts of volume & mass
sorting	using 5 senses
buoyancy	problem solving
textures	effects of gravity
measuring	cooperation
creativity	weights
sharing	expressive language
properties of matter	
hand-eye coordination	



When I Play On Large Muscle Equipment, I Learn:

Coordination	time
Creativity	sharing
Confidence	imagination
new words	how things work
position	taking turns
first-last	direction
common traffic signs	rules of the road
sequence	



When I Play With Puzzles & Games, I Learn:

hand-eye coordination	shapes
counting	problem solving
sorting	positions
spatial relationship	new words
cooperation	colors
numbers	sharing
sizes	



When I Play With Blocks, I Learn:

hand-eye coordination	balance
problem solving	gravity
shape	pride
position	creativity
design	size & numbers
self-confidence	new words



EARLIER IS NOT BETTER

By Wendy Carpenter & Elise Webb

Many parents are concerned when their children are not learning letters and numbers. They feel that ditto sheets and homework in preschool programs will prepare their children for elementary school.

We could give your child workbooks. We could make them memorize the alphabet. We could drill them and test them. But we know that if we do, your children are going to lose something very important.

Children who are rushed into reading and writing too soon miss important steps in learning and may suffer later on because they lack the foundation they need for using language. Children who are taught to read in preschool may be able to sound out and recognize, but they may also have little understanding of what they are reading. If they have not been given time to play, they would not have explored objects enough to know what words (like hard, harder, hardest) mean. If they are not allowed to string beads, fasten buttons, dress up, cut, paste, pour and draw, they will not develop the small muscle skills they need for writing.

Because math involves more than memorizing facts (like $2+2=4$), because it involves logical thinking, children should not be pushed into paper and pencil arithmetic too soon. To acquire the foundation for logical thinking, children need many opportunities to count objects, sort them into piles and add some to a pile and take some away. It is by playing games like these that they will learn to understand addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. Without these concrete experiences, children may give correct answers but probably will not understand what they are doing and why.

Worst of all, if children are rushed into academic subjects too soon, they may lose their enthusiasm for learning and lose their sense of themselves as learners. If children are told what to learn and memorize by the teacher, they may become more passive and dependent learners and may be less excited about learning something new. Children who are given plenty of time to play, however, learn to ask their own questions and figure out their own answers. They are responsible for their own learning. They see themselves as explorers, discoverers, problem solvers and inventors.



It's Not "Just Play"



Play is an essential part of early learning.

It is the lifeblood of the learning process.

As the children play, they are developing the cognitive, socio-emotional and physical skills they will need to take them into a successful adulthood.

They are developing their curiosity, problem solving, intentionality, flexibility, and verbal & non-verbal skills.

Socio-emotionally, they are developing their emotional intelligence – learning confidence, cooperation, negotiation, sharing, empathy, and how to communicate appropriately.

Physically, their fine motor and gross motor skills are being practiced and developed.

It's not "just play", they are skills for life!

MHC Early Childhood Solutions