



First United
Methodist Church
of Fort Worth
Preschool

Parent Handbook 2024/2025

Operational Policies

MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the FIRST UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL is to support and encourage the physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth of children. Special attention is given to each child to foster positive self-image and emotional well-being. A wide range of both structured and unstructured experiences encourages creativity and exploration in preparation for rigorous academic learning. A dedicated and caring staff serve as role models and teachers within a wholesome nurturing atmosphere, where children learn to love school. Our goal for you as parents is that you feel confident that your child is in good hands. We hope you will feel supported in your child-rearing efforts.

TEACHERS WILL HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP:

- Early literacy and language skills
- Independent thinking and curiosity
- Friendships
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Positive self-esteem
- Cultural awareness
- Appreciation of art and music
- Citizenship
- Good nutritional habits, safety, and health
- A positive attitude towards school

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Learning about letters and sounds
- Writing
- Communication and language development
- Mathematical games and activities
- Science
- Creative activities — art, music, drama, and storytelling
- Field trips for 4s and Pre-K (Conditions permitting)
- Daily outdoor play, weather permitting
- Individual and group activities
- Music
- Stretch 'n' grow
- Chapel
- Spanish

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sense of Self
Responsibility for Self and Others
Prosocial Behavior

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Gross Motor
Fine Motor

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Representation and Symbolic Thinking
Learning and Problem-Solving
Logical Thinking

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Listening and Speaking
Reading and Writing

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

God loves us

OPERATIONAL POLICIES

The policies may change at any time for any reason; families will be notified of changes and updates will supersede previous versions. The first day of school is September 3, 2024. This year our program will end May 14, 2025. The Preschool follows the Fort Worth Public School's decision on opening and closing of school during inclement weather. In case of a delayed opening, the Preschool will open at 10:30 am. On questionable days, the Preschool may also close early at the discretion of the Director.

NOTE: Snow days and severe weather days will not be made up.



ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

Months, Days and Hours of Operation

Preschool begins in September and ends in May.
Preschool Hours are 9:30 AM-12:30 PM (short day)
or 9:30 AM-2:30 PM (long day).

Preschool Office Hours

8:30- 2:30

800 West 5th Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
Phone 817-870-9174
Fax 817-339-5073

Website

fumcfwdayschool.org

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You have chosen an early childhood program for your child that is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Early childhood programs accredited by the association have been found to be in compliance with the criteria which includes a comprehensive process of internal self-study and invited external professional review. This is an award of excellence given on a national level!

The Preschool is also licensed by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services.

You are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the director to show you the most recent copy of:

- The Minimum Standards for this Licensed Center (also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at your local Licensing office)
- The most recent Department of Health and Human Services Inspection/Investigation Report, (compliance information is also available on the web at www.dfps.state.tx.us or from your local Licensing office),
- Documentation of liability insurance that complies with Human Resources Code, Section 42.049,
- The most recent Fire Marshal's Inspection Report
- The most recent Health Department's Sanitation Inspection Report
- The most recent Gas Pipe Inspection Report, and
- The Licensed Center's operational policies.

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**TEACHER MEETING DATES (Always a Tuesday)
EARLY DISMISSAL AT 12:15 PM**

**October 8
November 13
February 11
April 9**

**CALENDAR FOR 2024-2025
IMPORTANT DATES**

Parent Orientation	August 28
Meet the Teachers	August 29
First Day of Preschool and PDO	September 3
Book Fair	October 20-25
Registration Due	January 31
Open Registration	February 25
Parent Teacher Conferences	April 24-25
Last Day of School	May 14
Pre-K and 4s Promotion	May 15

HOLIDAYS

Fall Break	October 14
Thanksgiving	November 25-29
Christmas Break	December 18-January 3
Martin Luther King Day	January 20
Presidents Day	February 17
Spring Break	March 17-March 21
Good Friday	April 18
Monday after Easter	April 21

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

- Maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment is a partnership. Each family plays a significant role in maintaining the safety and health of all children and staff participating in FUMC Day School classes.
 - Please monitor your child's health each morning. If your child's temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher, or if there is any possibility that your child may be coming down with an illness of any kind, please keep your child home and contact FUMC Day School. Sending them to school could result in other families and staff becoming ill.
 - FUMC Day School follows CDC, Childcare Licensing, state and local health officials, and government directives and recommendations.

VACCINE POLICY

- FUMC Day school follows federal, state, and local guidelines for vaccinations and that I must submit my child's shot records before s/he attends school. I also agree to send updated shot records after any well-child visits during the school year. If my child is sick, I will inform the school as soon as possible, so the school may inform families whose children may have been exposed to an illness at school. The school will not release health information of individual children.
- If a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program, children who are not immunized will not be able to attend school.

IF A CHILD BECOMES ILL

- If a child becomes ill, the parents will be notified and are expected to pick the child up immediately. The school should be notified if a child has been exposed to a contagious disease (including, but not limited to, COVID-19, pinkeye, flu, lice, strep throat, and impetigo). The school will send notices home if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. This helps preserve a healthful atmosphere and protects your child from unnecessary illnesses. If your child has pinkeye, they must have a doctor's note before returning to school. Children with FEVER (100.4) or DIARRHEA/VOMITING are not allowed at school and should remain home for 24 hours after the fever or diarrhea subsides without medication.

MEDICATION

- The director will be allowed to administer medication (including OTC) only after parents and physicians have signed the proper forms and given the medication to the director. All prescription medication must be in the original prescription container, labeled with the child's name, date prescription was filled, the name of the physician, expiration date of the medication or the period of use, with the original prescription label that details the name, strength, and instructions on administering and storing the medication. All OTC medication must be in original container labeled with the child's name and accompanied by physician instructions. Anyone administering medication or treatment (i.e. nebulizer) has specific training according to NAEYC rules. If a physician has ordered a special medical management procedure for a child in care, an adult trained in the procedure must be on-site whenever the child is present. Most medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the teacher kitchen. Epi-Pens or Auvi-Q are kept in labeled cabinets in the classroom. This area is inaccessible to children but allows quick access for staff.

ALLERGIES

- Students with severe allergies must turn in an allergy form, an action plan, and an epi-pen.
- We will inform parents in each class where there is a severe allergy and limit foods accordingly.
- All staff are trained in the use of Epi-pens.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

- In the event of accident or illness that, in the Director's judgment, requires emergency medical treatment, the school is authorized to obtain and render emergency medical care. A medical treatment authorization form must be signed and kept in your child's file. If a hospital is required, Cook Children's Medical Center, 801 Seventh Ave., 817-885-4000, will be used. The Preschool will not be responsible for medical expenses incurred, and such expenses will be the responsibility of parent/guardian. All staff members have been trained in CPR and pediatric first aid.

HAND HYGIENE PROCEDURES

- All FUMC Day School staff will help children wash their hands upon arrival.
- Teachers will teach children children about safe hand hygiene practices.
- Children and staff will wash hands in the following circumstances:
 - Arriving at FUMC Day School
 - Prior to departing from class for the day
 - After using the restroom
 - After coming in contact with bodily fluids or using a tissue
 - After playing outdoors
 - Before and after lunch

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Classrooms and restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of every school day and as needed throughout the day. Our school uses least-toxic, fragrance-free cleaning products.

DAY SCHOOL SECURITY

- The safety of all students is a priority here at FUMC Day School. We have full-time security personnel during school hours to help provide a safe and worry-free environment.
- All doors into the school remained locked during the day. Parents and teachers may enter with a security code. Closed circuit video cameras monitor the school 24 hours a day.

2. TUITION

PAYMENT METHOD

- The school accepts credit cards (online through SmartCare), cash, money orders or checks. You can set up an automatic bill pay with your bank. ("Attn: Preschool" must be on the check.)

DUE DATE AND LATE FEE

- Payment for your child's tuition is due on or before the fifth day of each month. Starting the sixth day of each month, a \$10.00 late fee will be added to your account.
- The school is a non-profit organization and depends solely on tuition to pay for teachers' and teacher assistants' salaries. No deduction in tuition, enrichment, or after care is allowed for absence, illness, holidays, snow days or severe weather days.
- There will be a \$25.00 returned check fee.

3. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

DROP-OFF TIME

- All parents are encouraged to us the carpool line. Drop-off time is between 9:15 and 9:30 am. From Henderson, turn onto 3rd Street, heading toward downtown. We will come to the passenger side and take your child to his/her classroom. Please do not allow your car to idle in the parking areas and carpool line, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures. Please make every effort to be on time. We have found that the drop-off line helps to minimize separation anxiety. We appreciate your help in being on time and supporting the classroom teachers. Being on time also helps your child start the day off well.

- Parents who prefer to walk their child in may enter the Day School and drop their children at the classroom door. Park in the west lot and walk in. As your child is able, please allow them to walk and help carry their belongings, which will build independence and confidence.
- We use SmartCare to record your child's attendance. You will have the opportunity to download the parent app or have a key tag assigned to you. You will use this to sign your child in and out of SmartCare daily if you bring them into the building.

LATE ARRIVAL

- If you arrive after 9:30 am, please park in carpool line on 3rd Street and use the keypad to enter. Bring your child to the preschool office. We will take them to their classroom.

BEFORE CARE

- If you need to drop your child at school before 9:15 am, we have Before Care every day, beginning at 8:30 am in Room 175 (2s) and 179 (3s, 4s, and PK). You do not need to make a reservation. The cost is \$7.00 per day. We will tally the monthly amount and include it in your statement. You can include Before Care payments in the next month's tuition or write a separate check. If your child will attend before care every day, you can pre-register for \$6.00/day.

AFTER-CARE

- 2- and 3-year-olds who wish to stay at school later than 12:30 pm can use our After-Care program. You can have your child stay every day until 2:30 pm and pay the LONG DAY tuition. If your child will not ever stay, or will only stay occasionally, please select the SHORT-DAY tuition amount. On days when you wish to stay for after care, simply tell us in the morning before 10:00 am. We will charge you \$16/day, and bill you at the end of the month.
- The school provides a padded, vinyl-covered mat for each child. You may send a blanket, a sleeping bag, or a roll-up nap mat. We prefer something small that fits in a backpack or will roll up and fit in a cubby.
- If your child comes for 5 days, they may store their mat at school all week.

SHORT DAY PICK-UP TIME

- Pick-up time is between 12:15 and 12:30 pm for the short preschool day. Parents will need to come into the building to pick up their child. 2s parents may park in the carpool line at door # 1 and walk in. Children will stay in their rooms until parents come in and pick them up. 3s parents may park in the carpool line at door #2 and walk in. Children will be waiting in the gallery with a teacher or assistant.
- Children not picked up by 12:30 will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. Late pick-ups are stressful for children and teachers. If you are running late, please call to inform us. This way we can adjust and calm your child.

LONG DAY PICK-UP TIME

- If your child is in the 4s or Pre-K Class, or stays for After Care, pick-up is between 2:15 and 2:30 pm.
- Children not picked up by 2:30 will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. Late pick-ups are stressful for children and teachers. If you are running late, please call to inform us. This way we can adjust and calm your child.
- Please pick up your 3, 4, and PK age children using the carpool line along 3rd Street. Please do not allow your car to idle in the parking areas and carpool line, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.
- Parents of 2s who stay for aftercare should walk in to pick up your children.
- If someone new is picking up your child, please inform the office and we will add them to your approved pick-up list. We will ask for a photo ID. We will not release children to unauthorized people without approval. We will not release children to adults who appear to be under the influence.

4. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- The school conducts monthly fire drills and quarterly Duck and Cover and Lockdown drills.

FIRE

- In the event the fire alarms sound, teachers will calmly evacuate all children in accordance with the classroom's evacuation route.

SEVERE WEATHER/LOCKDOWN

- The FUMC Day School Office will notify teachers when the Severe Weather Plan or Lock-Down Procedure will be put into place. Teachers will calmly assemble all children in their designated shelter location.
- During thunderstorms or tornado threats, FUMC staff will not be outside operating the carpool line.

EVACUATION

- FUMC has formulated an evacuation/disaster plan for the school. We would only implement this plan on direct orders from the police or fire department to evacuate the downtown area. The entire church staff would help in moving the children by cars to the parking lot at Rockwood Golf Course, 1851 Jacksboro Highway, 76114. All children will remain with their teachers and the assigned staff representative. Please be aware of this plan so you will know where to locate your child in the event of a disaster making it necessary to evacuate the downtown area.

5. PARENT COMMUNICATION

PARENT AND CHILD ORIENTATION

- An adult event will be held in the evening, prior to the start of school, where parents learn school and classroom procedures. Parents can ask teachers specific questions before children attend school.
- A meet-the-teacher event for parents and children will be held the next day.

KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

- Any special occurrence or problem affecting children will be brought promptly to the attention of the parents, such as the discovery or suspicion of any communicable disease among the students or a change in your child's physical or emotional state. For the first two weeks of school, daily activity reports for the 2-year-olds will be sent home. Once a month, parents will receive a school newsletter. The director will send email updates as needed. Teachers will send a monthly calendar of activities and weekly emails. Lesson plans and daily schedules are posted outside each classroom. All correspondence will be sent by email. If you ever have any questions, please call, or come see us. Our doors are always open to you!
- Children remain in the same classroom, with the same group of children and teachers for the entire school year.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

- In the fall, an informal written progress report and developmental screening results will be sent to the parents of 2s and 3s. The 4-year-old and Pre-K teachers will have in-person or phone conference with the parents at the end of October. If necessary, the Director and teacher will help parents arrange for early intervention as needed.
- Spring conferences are scheduled for all preschool children in April to discuss your child's progress. If desired or as needed, parents and teachers may request additional conferences.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Parents or guardians assume full responsibility for the protection of the child to and from school and agree that they will not hold the school, church, or any member of the staff responsible in case of accidental injury that might occur while on the school premises or during the hours of care.
- If your child will not be attending school for any reason (i.e., sickness, travel), please call or email the Preschool office by 9:30 am that day to notify the Director.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- We would love to have your help, and have a wide variety of volunteer jobs, both large and small. Talk to your child's teacher or call the preschool office. We will find a volunteer opportunity to fit your schedule and interests.

PRESCHOOL EVALUATION

- Each parent shall be given the opportunity to evaluate the school each year. The form may remain anonymous and will be kept confidential.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- If parents have any concerns, they should first talk to their child's teacher. Any issues between parents and staff that are not resolved should be brought to the director's attention. A conference will be held if necessary.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- The content of each child's health and safety file is confidential but is immediately available upon request to administrators and educators who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records, the child's parents or legal guardian, or regulatory authorities.

6. GENERAL PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

WHAT TO WEAR

- Please dress your child in comfortable washable play clothing. Children will be using paint, glue, markers, water, and other materials in creative activities. They should come dressed for outside play, preferably in tennis shoes for climbing and running.
- PLEASE – NO BOOTS OR FLIP FLOPS, they inhibit gross motor development and cause accidents on the playground.
- Children play outside each day, weather permitting. Parents concerned about sunburn should apply either sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to the child's exposed skin before bringing them to Preschool. We will monitor outdoor air quality and adjust recess if necessary.
- When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, please apply the insect repellent to your child before bringing him/her to school. It is recommended that only repellents containing DEET be used, and that is applied only on children older than two months.

WHAT TO BRING

- 2-year-olds: Supply of diapers and wipes in a Ziplock baggie and an extra set of clean clothes in a Ziplock baggie.
- 3 and 4-year-olds: An extra set of clean clothes in a Ziplock baggie.
- Please label all clothes and/or jackets sent to school with the child's name and/or initials for all ages.
- Children should bring a non-perishable lunch in a container with the child's name on the outside of the container. Please cut or slice all necessary food before coming to school (1/2-inch square for 2s. To prevent choking, please do not send the following items for 2s and 3s: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. The school is not able to microwave lunches. For perishable items, please enclose an ice pack in the lunch box.
- Please send a reusable water bottle every day.
- Do not send candy or sugary sodas or drinks. Gum is not allowed at school.
- Lunch times are posted in the classrooms and daily schedules will be given out to parents.
- Preschool children will not be permitted to have a bottle at school.
- We post allergies in each classroom and are peanut-free on an as-needed, class by class basis.

POTTY TRAINING

- 2-year-olds do not need to be potty trained. We will follow your lead and support potty training all year.

- Children enrolled in the 3-year-old program should be potty-trained by the start of school. You may send a pullup for naptime. Please talk to the teacher before the start of school if your child is not fully trained yet.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

- We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday at school. We sing Happy Birthday in the classroom and in music. If you wish, you may send a small treat for each child, such as bubbles, but please do not send food.
- If you are sending party invitations to everyone in the class, please feel free to have the teacher pass them out at school. If only some children are invited, please send by mail from home.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

- We use positive discipline and techniques from Conscious Discipline with the goal of developing self-control and a community where each child matters. Our discipline and guidance policy is part of our enrollment paperwork and can be found on our website under the enrolment tab. We adhere to the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

- Social learning in preschool can sometimes be difficult as children figure out how to express their wants and needs while respecting others. We will do everything possible to support each child's inclusion and success while this learning takes place. Teachers will use redirection and positive discipline. We will make every effort to work with parents and children, using outside help, as necessary.
- If a pattern of challenging behavior continues over time, the Director will meet with parents and teachers to develop an individualized plan. We will use outside support and help families find an alternative placement for their child if necessary. This policy is in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff. The Director will review each incident, determine its severity, and implement the policies as appropriate.

BITING

- Biting is considered a very serious action. We will try to work with the individual child and his/her parents as each case occurs. However, the Director reserves the right to send the child home after one bite.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES

- Child abuse, by definition, is an act or omission that endangers or impairs a child's physical, mental, or emotional health and development. Child abuse may take the form of physical or emotional injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical neglect, medical neglect, or inadequate supervision.
- Texas law requires that any person suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected MUST immediately make a report. If child abuse is suspected, the teacher and/or teacher assistant must report it to the Director. The Director will call the Child Abuse Hot Line 1-800-252-5400 within 48 hours to report.
- All teachers/teacher assistants have attended the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training that complies with the requirements of the Texas Youth Camp Act (Chapter 141); TDSHS Training Code YC060034.
- Any staff member accused of abuse or neglect will be immediately suspended. The suspension will be continued during any investigation by law enforcement, child protective agencies and The FUMC safety committee. These policies are in place to protect both the employee and the child.

MINISTRY SAFE

- All teachers, staff, substitutes, and volunteers have completed our Ministry Safe program. Teachers and staff have also done a background check and FBI fingerprinting.
- Two adults will be in all rooms while children are present. Cameras may be used for a short period, if a teacher needs to obtain first aid for a child or attend to a pressing need and alerts the preschool office.
- 2s and 3s classes have a maximum of 12 children (1:6 ratio).
- 4s and Pre-K classes have a maximum of 14 children (1:7 ratio).
- Church policy does not allow the school to recommend babysitters.

GANG FREE ZONE

- House Bill 2086 passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resources Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed childcare centers. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your childcare center.