



First United
Methodist Church
of Fort Worth
Infants and Toddlers

Parent Handbook 2024/2025

Operational Policies

MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of our Infants and Toddlers program is to create a nurturing, stimulating atmosphere where children can develop physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. We want each child to possess a positive self-image and emotional security. A wide range of both structured and unstructured experiences encourages creativity, communication, and exploration in preparation for academic learning. A dedicated and caring staff serves as role models and teachers within a wholesome, nurturing atmosphere.

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

PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Communication and language development
- Mathematical games and activities
- Science for toddler classes
- Creative activities — art, music, drama, and storytelling
- Daily outdoor play, weather permitting
- Individual and group activities
- Music twice a week
- Stretch-n-Grow for toddler classes
- Spanish for toddler classes

“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. Please see the 2024–2025 calendar on the next page. The Day School follows the Fort Worth Public School’s decision on opening and closing of school during inclement weather. In case of a delayed opening, we will open at 10:30 am. On questionable days, we may also close early at the discretion of the Director. NOTE: Snow days and severe weather days will not be made up.

Months, Days and Hours of Operation

Our program begins in September and ends in May.
Our hours are 9:30 AM-2:30 PM

Day School Office Hours

8:30- 2:30

800 West 5th Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
Phone 817-546-4414
Fax 817-339-5073

Website

fumcfwdayschool.org

Infants and Toddlers Office

Catherine Youngberg
cyoungberg@myfumc.org

Director

Nina Burrows
nburrows@myfumc.org

Assistant Director

Sara Walters
swalters@myfumc.org

Enrollment and Accounting

Kim Shannon
kshannon@myfumc.org

Curriculum and IT Coordinator

Nikki McInnis
nmcinnis@myfumc.org

LICENSING

The Day School is 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
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 School	September 3
Book Fair	October 20-25
Registration Due	January 31
Open Registration	February 25
Last Day of School	May 14

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.
 - 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, Child Care Licensing, state and local health officials, and government directives and recommendations.

VACCINE POLICY

- FUMC Day school follows federal, state, and local guidelines for vaccinations. Parents must submit their child(ren)'s shot records before they attend school. Parents must also send updated shot records after any well-child visits during the school year. If a child is sick, parents should 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 unlocked labeled cabinets in the classroom. The cabinets are high enough to be inaccessible to children but allow 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.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME AND SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

- Our staff has been trained in SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), SBS (Shaken Baby Syndrome) and children's brain development and growth. Children under one-year-old will be placed on his/her back for nap and rest time. If your child is medically unable to sleep this way, please bring a note from your child's physician explaining in FULL DETAIL the recommended sleep position for your child. The FUMC Day School Staff WILL NEVER shake a baby for any reason. The FUMC Day School Staff will strive to provide an environment which fosters your child's brain growth through art, music, literature, socialization, physical activity, and free play.

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

- We follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):
 - Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional.
 - Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non-full-size cribs
 - For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys/animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning device. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens or clothing.
 - Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation.
 - Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
 - If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing such as sleepers, footed pajamas or sleep sacks as an alternative to blankets.
 - Place only one infant in a crib to sleep.
 - Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, but the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk.
 - If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib such as a bouncy chair or swing, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat, the infant will be moved to a crib immediately, unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception Form 2710 signed by the infant's health care provider.
 - Our Day School program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations. This includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers.
 - Teachers will actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound.
 - If an infant can roll back and forth from front to back, the infant will be placed on his or her back for sleep and be allowed to assume their preferred sleep position.
 - Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles.
 - Parents who wish to have their child swaddled for sleep or rest time must provide an Infant Sleep Exception Form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional.

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 Day School 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 be required to instruct and assist children with washing their hands upon arrival.
- Teachers will teach children a hand washing song and educate children on 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/diaper changes
 - 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: Day School 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

- Drop-off time is between 9:15 and 9:30 am. When a child is brought to school, he or she will be left in the care of a Day School worker and released only to the custodial parents or to some other person specifically designated by the custodial parents or legal guardian. We will need names and phone numbers of anyone picking up a child. If it is the first time for us to meet the pick-up person, we will need to see a photo ID.

- 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.

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 163. 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.

LATE ARRIVAL

- We appreciate your help in being on time, but we understand sometimes it is unavoidable. Being on time also helps your child start the day off well. If you will be late, it is helpful to send an email or leave a voice mail.

PICK-UP TIME

- Afternoon pick-up is between 2:15 and 2:30 pm. Pick-up will be at your child's classroom.
- Children not picked up on time at 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, so we can calm your child and adjust where to meet you, if needed.
- For early pick-up please come to the Day School office and we will get your child.
- You may pick your child up early to nap at home, if you prefer. It will not affect your tuition.

4. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- The school conducts monthly fire drills and quarterly Duck and Cover and Lockdown drills. If you should arrive while a drill is in progress, please join us before signing in or arranging your child's items in their cubby.

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 take children to their designated shelter location.

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 car 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 make a note 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 in-person event for parents will occur prior to school.
- A meet-the-teacher event for you and your child will take place the following day.

KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

- The school will inform parents about any special occurrence or problem, such as the discovery or suspicion of any communicable disease among the students or a change in your child's physical or emotional state.
- Parents will receive weekly school-wide emails throughout the year.

- Teachers will send home Daily activity reports and will email monthly calendars.
- If you ever have any questions or concerns, please call or email. Our doors are always open to you!

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 office by 9:30 am that day to notify the staff. Church policy does not allow the school to recommend babysitters.

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 Day School office. We will find a volunteer opportunity to fit your schedule and interests.

INFANT & TODDLER PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Each parent has an opportunity to evaluate the school each year. The form may remain anonymous.

6. GENERAL DAY SCHOOL INFORMATION

WHAT TO WEAR

- We encourage you to dress your child in comfortable washable play clothing. The 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.
- Please include in the backpack every day:
 - Supply of diapers and wipes in a Ziplock baggie and 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 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 school.
- When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to elevated risk of insect-borne disease, please apply the insect repellent to your child before bringing him/her to school. We recommend repellents containing DEET, and only on children older than two months.

WHAT TO BRING

- Extra clothing in a plastic bag clearly labeled in case of accident or soiled clothes.
- Items for quiet time, so your child will be comfortable resting: blanket, stuffed animal, pacifier. Children under 12 months of age may use a sleep sack, but must have their arms free. Swaddling and Wubbanubs are not permitted.
- Your child's diaper bag should come stocked with diapers and wipes for the day, or you may leave a bag of diapers in the room. Check with your child's teacher. Diapers must be disposable.
- PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING.
- Lunch and drink in a non-spill juice cup clearly identified with the child's name.
- 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 in 1/2-inch squares. To prevent choking, please do not send the following items: 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 a frozen blue ice in the

lunch box. Please provide juice or water for your child during their noon meal, not a carbonated drink. We highly discourage sending candy. Gum is not allowed at school.

- We post allergies outside of each classroom and are peanut-free on an as-needed, class by class basis.
- At the end of lunch, all opened containers (i.e., opened juice containers, yogurt, applesauce) will be thrown away. Partial or uneaten food will be packed up so the parent can see what the child has eaten. Lunch time is posted in the classroom and daily schedules will be given at parent orientation.

BREASTFEEDING

- Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, may use the Breastfeeding Room (158) to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area has an electric outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in front of others if they prefer.
- Infant rooms have refrigerators for storage of expressed breast milk. Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

- We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday at school. We sing Happy Birthday in the classroom and in music. For children who are old enough, you may send a small treat for each child in the class, such as bubbles or stickers. 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.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

- We use positive discipline and techniques from Conscious Discipline with the goal of developing self-regulation and a community where each child matters.
- Our policy adheres to the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

- Social learning in school 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 collaborate with parents, if challenges arise, using outside help, as necessary.
- If a pattern of challenging behavior continues over time, we will develop an individualized plan. A pattern of aggressive or violent behavior may be cause for temporary suspension or permanent removal from the program, until the child is ready to be part of a group setting. 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 happens for a variety of reasons. We will try to work with the individual child and his/her parents as each case occurs, using the process outlined above.

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 staff members and volunteers have attended the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training that complies with the requirements of the Texas Youth Camp Act (Chapter 141); TDSHS Training Code YC060034.

MINISTRY SAFE

- All teachers and staff have completed our Ministry Safe program, a background check, and FBI fingerprinting.
- 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.