



University Christian Church

# Weekday SCHOOL

## **Parent Handbook**

2720 S. University Drive  
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

Direct School Phone: (817)926-3960  
Church Phone: (817)926-6631

### ***A Mission of Growth***

University Christian Church, through the Weekday School, promotes a partnership of growth for students, parents and staff. Our mission is to help meet students' needs for individual and social growth amidst a nurturing learning environment.

### ***Philosophy***

Our educational philosophy is to help young children become lifelong, enthusiastic learners. This philosophy, based on the sound research principles that undergird the premium preschool programs in the nation, is guided by the criteria for optimum learning environments as established by NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Within a framework of knowledge of developmental stages of students ages 0-5 years, we provide activities in all major areas of learning. Lesson plans and activities are based on the importance of the whole child.

### ***Mayfield Resource Center***

The Mayfield Resource Center is a point of pride and excellence at UCC Weekday School. It houses more than 3,000 children's books, as well as a wide selection (3,100) of teaching aids. This includes items for problem solving, math, science, dramatic play, puzzles, games, audio/visual aids, and large motor equipment.

## ***A Program of Excellence***

- *Founded in 1967*
- *Serving Ages 8 weeks through Transitional Kindergarten*
- *Classes available Monday through Friday mornings from 9:00-12:00. Students may attend from 1 to 5 mornings per week, depending on age.*
- *School-year based program (August-May)*
- *Enrichment programs available before (Early Birds, 8:00-9:00) and after school (Discovery Time, 12:00-2:30)*
- *Highly trained professional staff*
- *Outstanding Teacher/Student ratio*
- *Mayfield Resource Center*
- *Experiential, developmentally appropriate Learning*
- *Extracurricular programs such as: TCU Music, TCU Nutrition, Stretch and Grow, Weekday School Community Garden*
- *Environment of love, nurture, fun and happiness*

## ***Curriculum***

Curriculum at Weekday School closely adheres to the best practices for early childhood programs. It is drawn from three major sources:

High Scope Active Learning Program  
Addison-Wesley Active Learning Series  
The Creative Curriculum

Individual teachers and teaching teams design their classrooms and lesson plans based on the framework established in these curricula guides. Our highly skilled faculty combines activities and ideas from these sources to create the best of programs for their classes; programs that instill confidence while presenting daily opportunities for learning and discovery.

## **Our Goals**

### ***Social/Emotional***

- To develop a sense of self-esteem
- To express feelings appropriately
- To exhibit a positive attitude toward learning
- To develop independence, express choices and solve problems
- To develop cooperative, pro-social behavior
- To learn to deal with social conflict
- To develop responsibility and self-regulation

### ***Intellectual***

- To acquire concepts and information about the world
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To expand verbal communication skills
- To develop language arts concepts and skills
- To develop math and science concepts and skills
- To foster discovery, exploration and curiosity

### ***Physical***

- To enhance large motor skills
- To enhance fine motor skills
- To develop the use of all senses as modes of learning
- To promote healthy physical development

### ***Spiritual***

- To establish a loving Christian atmosphere
- To present Christian holidays and events in developmentally appropriate ways
- To nurture respect for diversity, inclusion and acceptance
- To strengthen character development through example and curricula
- To provide support for the whole family in their spiritual journey

## **Important Information**

### ***Days and Hours of Operation***

All students should be brought to their classrooms by an adult at the beginning of the school day, signed in and picked up promptly at dismissal time for each program. All students must be signed out each day with time of departure and authorized adult's initials. Students must be picked up by an adult and will not be allowed to go to the classrooms unattended. Please be prompt in your arrival and departure.

If, in an emergency, you will not be on time, please have an adult whose name is on file in the office, pick up your child. An adult that is not known to the teacher will be asked to present their identification for verification. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. You must pick up your child in the office. Habitual lateness may result in additional fees or withdrawal from the program.

Early Birds:	8:00-9:00
Classes:	9:00-12:00
Discovery Time:	12:00-2:30

### ***Tuition***

To secure enrollment, September tuition and each child's activity fee are due in the spring by the date set by the school. No refunds are made for withdrawal and a 30-day written notice is required.

Tuition is due and payable by the first day of each month. After the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month, a late fee will be charged. If tuition has not been paid in full by the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month, WDS reserves the right to drop the student from the rolls and replace them with another child. Any problems regarding payment of fees may be discussed with the WDS Director.

Tuition may be paid online through the Weekday School website, or by check, cash or card processed in the office.

### ***Safety and Security***

It is a primary goal of WDS to ensure the safety of students and staff. Exterior doors to the building are locked at all times. Key cards or the intercom system must be used to access the building. All doors to the WDS will be locked 15 minutes after classes begin and unlocked 15 minutes before dismissal. Access to the area between those times will be given via the intercom at the door and confirmation of identity. All visitors and volunteers must check in at the WDS offices.

All students must be signed in and out of the school, and time recorded, by those authorized by the family. As with all child-care centers in Texas, the 1,000 feet surrounding the school is considered a gang-free zone.

## ***Attendance***

It is important for enrolled students to attend regularly. WDS policy does not allow parents to enroll and pay for a child yet not send the child to school on a regular basis. Students may be removed from the program in such instances.

## ***Enrollment***

In January, enrollment privileges for the next year will be given to:

- Children currently enrolled at Weekday School
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Children of UCC members
  - In the crib class only, church members receive enrollment priority over current students' siblings

Enrollment for existing students for the next school year is secured upon receipt of completed enrollment forms and payment of enrollment fee.

Families on the interested list will be contacted if openings are available at the child's age level. If an interested list is exhausted, enrollment will be open to families new to Weekday School.

In the event of lack of space, students will be accepted in the order listed above. During the registration process, church members have priority above the general waiting lists in all age levels.

In order to participate in enrollment, families must be current in their financial obligations to the school. Following the open registration period, classes will be filled from the interested list.

Students will be assigned to a class within their age group according to class days, age, and gender.

## ***List of Interested Families***

Families will be placed on the interested list, once requested, after touring the school. If a parent is called regarding an opening in the program for the days the parent has requested and declines the opening, but wishes to remain on the list, the child's name will be moved to the bottom of the list.

## ***In House Wait List***

If a student is currently in the program and the parent desires a different or additional day, the refusal to accept an opening will not forfeit the child's place on the list.

## ***Assessment of Students***

WDS uses a variety of assessment methods that are sensitive to and informed by family culture, experiences, children's abilities, and home language. Assessments obtain information on all areas of children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health and physical development (including self-help skills). An ongoing assessment portfolio based on the High Scope curriculum is completed for each child cribs through 4's, based on teacher observation. Kindergarten students will receive skill based report cards.

## ***School Closings***

University Christian Church and Weekday School leadership take the decision to cancel or delay classes seriously. A decision will be made as early as possible when inclement weather occurs and communicated via the Remind App, and on social media. There will be no tuition or schedule adjustments due to inclement weather or other circumstances.

## ***Cancellation of Enrollment***

If, in the judgment of the leadership of the Weekday School, a child is not ready for the school setting, the school reserves the right to request cancellation of enrollment. In this event, any unused tuition would be refunded.

If, for other reasons, a child is withdrawn by the parents, the school will require one month's written notice (given or emailed to the office) and full payment for that month. This will enable the school to fill the vacancy from the interested list.

## ***Policy Changes***

Any major change (hours of operation, numbers/ages of students in care, tuition increases) in WDS policies will be approved by the WDS Parent Advisory Board. Notification of changes will be communicated to families.

## ***Questions or Concerns***

Any questions or concerns related to the program or a specific child's experience at school can be discussed with their teacher. If further consultation is needed, please contact the director.

## ***General Guidelines and Policies***

### ***Age/Ratio Requirements***

UCC WDS serves children 8 weeks through kindergarten. To be eligible for enrollment in each class, the child must be the specified age on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year. Adjustments in the number of classes available per age group may occur due to demand.

Cribs	2 teachers/6 students
Ones	1 teacher/5 students
Twos	1 teacher/6 students
Threes	2 teachers/15 students
Fours	2 teachers/16 students
K	2 teachers/18 students

### ***Advertising/Use of Cubbies***

Information concerning products, sales or events may be posted on the bulletin board by the WDS offices designated for Parent Information. "Parent-to-Parent" bulletin boards are located outside both WDS offices.

### ***Birthdays***

Please consult with your child's teacher regarding appropriate recognition of your child's birthday. Cribs and One's classes do not share edible treats due to their young age. Any food that is sent **must be store bought** (Fort Worth Health Department requirement) and will be shared by the class during lunch. Parents may use WDS cubbies to distribute party invitations only when every child in the class is being invited. In any other case, parents should mail invitations.

### ***Clothing***

Students should be dressed comfortably for messy, active play. Tennis shoes are recommended. All outdoor clothing must be clearly marked with the child's name. The school is not responsible for lost/damaged clothing. Please dress students who are not toilet trained in clothing that will easily accommodate diaper changing. Students who are using the restroom independently should be able to pull up/down clothing with little assistance. All students should have available in their school cubby extra clothes in case of an accident.

### ***Conferences, Orientation and School Visits***

Parents of all students will be asked to attend one or two scheduled parent conferences during the school year, depending on the age level of their child.

Conference days are included with the school calendar. Informal discussions of your student's progress may be requested at any time during the year that is convenient for both parent and teacher. *It is school policy not to discuss concerns about children at the classroom door in front*

*of the students and/or other parents.* Teachers will send notes home, email, make phone calls or schedule a time to speak with you privately. Books, materials and guidance are available through the director.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. Volunteer opportunities are also available for parents.

## ***Discipline and Guidance***

*Discipline is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding and directed toward teaching the child positive behavior and self-control.*

Teachers may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavioral expectations daily by using clear, positive statements

WDS faculty and staff are trained in problem solving and have age-appropriate expectations and guidance techniques. There will be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishment and no child shall ever receive corporal punishment. If very difficult behavior occurs where the child does not respond to redirection, a brief, supervised separation from the group may be used either in or outside the classroom. Should further guidance be necessary, parents may be asked to pick up the child from school. On rare occasions, the director reserves the right to counsel with parents and possibly remove the child from WDS either temporarily or permanently. Weekday School staff want to partner with families to create a positive school experience for all children.

## ***Early Birds/Discovery Time***

The enrichment programs offered before and after school are optional programs available to students enrolled in WDS. They are available only on the days that the student attends school. A full description of this program, policies and fees are available in the WDS office.

## ***Emergency Procedures***

Fire drills are practiced monthly in each classroom. Severe weather drills are practiced every 3 months. Escape routes are posted in the classrooms. School lockdown drills, named "Red Bird", are practiced at least 4 times annually.

In the event of emergency sirens or tornado alert, children will be moved to a lower, more secure level of the church in the hallways on the east side of the school and the area leading to basement storage areas. Should a major emergency occur, where the building must be evacuated, children will be moved to Ed Landreth Auditorium at TCU or the UCC Children's Closet Building.

## ***Equal Opportunity***

Weekday School admits students and hires staff of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges and activities generally accorded to students at the school.

## ***Field Trips***

For Kindergartners, written permission for field trips must be on file at the school. (Students under 4 years of age will not be taken on field trips but may use other UCC facilities for special activities.)

Each time a field trip is scheduled, parents will be notified in writing of the destination, time to be away from the school and the parents who will be drivers for the trip. If, for some reason, your child may not participate, other arrangements must be made ahead of time with the lead teacher of that class. Parents will be asked to sign up to drive and participate on field trips. Each transported child must have a safety seat, according to their age/weight. WDS does not provide transportation.

## ***Illness/Accidents***

If, in the opinion of the director or assistant director, a child appears ill, and cannot fully participate in their regular routine, the child's parents will be notified to take the child home. The child will be cared for in the office until their parent arrives. ***Any child with vomiting, diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash, or fever over 99.5 will be sent home.*** Children should be free of fever for at least 24 hours, without the aid of medication, before returning to school. In cases of a communicable disease being suspected, parents will be notified in writing. The school reserves the right to request a note from the child's physician releasing them to return to school, in certain cases.

All communicable diseases, including chicken pox, measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis, etc., must be reported to the teacher and/or Director so we can, in turn, make our report to other parents and the Health Department.

If a child is chronically ill with a non-infectious disease (asthma, etc.) parents may be asked to stay with the child during the daily outdoor period for a few days until the child can resume the normal routine. In case of a critical illness or injury while the child is at school, the physicians named by the parents on the "Emergency Medical Treatment" form will be called if the parents cannot be reached immediately. If necessary, the child shall be taken to the emergency room used by the specified doctor(s). For this reason, it is imperative that the school has the necessary information and authorization for medical care for each child enrolled. Accident reports are on file in the office; and parents are notified of any serious injury, with signature required. Minor incidents will be reported via a teacher note, with no signature required.

Each child must have a current Health Form. This form must be on file for every child. Specific requests for non-compliance with this requirement must be obtained from the Director at her discretion. For the Health Form to be valid, it must:

- a. show the child has had a physical exam within the last year, and be signed by the child's physician
- b. show that the child has been completely immunized (according to state requirement for the child's age); and
- c. show proof that children ages 4 years old and older who attend five days per week have had vision and hearing screening (by a qualified examiner).

## ***Lunch and Snacks***

Children will bring from home a lunch and non-carbonated beverage each day. Parents need to be responsible for seeing that foods needing refrigeration are properly bagged and placed in appropriate containers. A cold pack, marked with the child's name, needs to be put in each child's lunch box. Any lunch not eaten will be left in the lunch kit to be taken home.

Lunchtime is an important part of our school day. We use this time with students to encourage self-sufficiency and social skills.

Snacks are sometimes provided in accordance with licensing standards as a part of the regular morning program for younger children, and are provided during Discovery Time.

A list of recommended lunch items will be provided by each teacher for the appropriate age levels. Guidelines for specific age levels are provided within our licensing standards and will be provided by teachers before school begins.

## ***Medication***

If you have given your child any medication before coming to school, please inform your child's teacher.

WDS prefers not to administer medication to a child; however, if a parent finds it necessary, the director must be consulted and a permission form must be filled out. Any necessary medication must be administered in the office. Licensing requires:

- a. prescription medicine to be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, date, directions, and physician's name
- b. nonprescription medicine labeled with the child's name and date brought to school must be in the original container.
- c. under no circumstances, send medicine to school in student's backpack or lunch box
- d. record of medicine administration is kept in the office

Sunscreen and insect repellent must be provided and applied by parents before sending their child to school.

Parents of infants must mark diaper bags and each item in the bag with the child's name. This is especially important since many children bring items that are exactly alike. We must insist on this requirement being followed in order to avoid giving your baby the wrong food or bottle. Our license requires parents to fill out and keep up-to-date from month to month a "Feeding Instruction" sheet, until the child is able to eat table food. All families have the right

to breastfeed. A comfortable space will be provided for breastfeeding at the school, upon request.

### ***Naptime and Sleep***

Infants through three years olds all are offered the opportunity to sleep around 12:15, if they stay for Discovery Time. A sanitized nap mat with a clean sheet is provided for children sleeping outside of a crib. Infants are able to sleep, as needed, during the 8:00-12:00 hours. Parents of infants must sign the Safe Sleep form required by licensing. Infants must be laid down on their backs without swaddles, blankets or other loose items on a firm mattress with a clean, fitted sheet.

### ***Parent Liaison and Volunteer Information***

The UCC WDS has an active, strong Weekday School Parent Advisory Board. All board members' names and titles are listed on the website and posted in the school hallway. The board members are available to give information about volunteer opportunities and collect suggestions for school improvements.

The school has many jobs to be done. Please see the Parent Liaison to let us know how you would like to help.

### ***Parent Resources***

The WDS has several resources available to parents. Parenting workshops are offered throughout the school year. The Weekday School director and ministerial staff of University Christian Church are available to help families with needs or concerns.

### ***Pets, Books and Toys***

Unless otherwise requested or approved by the teacher, toys and books from home are discouraged in the classroom. There may be opportunities for students to bring and share their favorite toys, but even at those times toy guns or weapons will not be allowed in any classroom. Parents are notified in advance of the presence of a classroom pet.

Pets from home are not allowed to visit WDS.

### ***Prevention and Reporting of Suspected Abuse and/or Neglect***

All Weekday School staff are trained annually in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children and creating awareness of warning and factors indicating a child may be at risk. All suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services. Any parent or family member who suspects abuse or neglect of a child should call the hotline listed at the end of this document.

### ***Release Policies***

Children may be released only to persons authorized in writing on the enrollment form filed in the WDS office. The Weekday School Office must be notified of any change in drop off or pick up. Persons who pick up children will be asked to show a picture I.D. to verify their identity. Any last minute change in pick-up arrangements done by telephone must be authorized by the WDS director or staff. Children must be signed in and out daily by an adult with time recorded. In the case of non-custodial parents, a copy of custody and visitation papers must be on file in the WDS office.

### ***Referrals***

Weekday School may, at the request of staff or parents, refer a child to other programs for evaluation for assistance in maintaining the child's current placement in WDS or enrollment eligibility for specialized programming.

When professional referrals are needed or appear to be helpful, the child's teacher and the director will meet with parents for a conference. If the conference ends in an agreement to move forward with a referral, the director will provide appropriate resources for the family, as possible. Written consent will be required from the family before any information is shared with providers, agencies or other programs.

If special needs are identified, the school will work alongside the family to create a support plan for the child if they are to remain at Weekday School. That plan will only be shared with individuals who directly work with that child and will remain in a confidential file.

If it is appropriate for services to be provided in the school setting, Weekday School will make every attempt to facilitate in that process.

### ***Release of School Records and Confidentiality***

WDS will release records to other schools requesting information with the written authorization of the parent. WDS maintains complete confidentiality concerning students' school activities and records. The school will comply with requests from Child Protective Services. The school will consult our legal advisor in the case of a subpoena for student records.

### ***Special Needs***

As a non-profit, religious organization, University Christian Church Weekday School does not possess the resources, financial or otherwise, which would enable it to provide special education services. However, the school may attempt to work with individual families on special needs issues. If the school endeavors to accommodate a family with special needs, it must be understood that there are limits to both financial and logistical provisions that the school can offer. The school will examine any situation on a case-by-case basis.

Any attempt by the school to work with a family with special needs shall not be interpreted as a warranty that the assistance may continue indefinitely.

### ***Student Teachers/Volunteers***

Volunteers are welcome at WDS. Volunteer activities must be approved through the classroom teacher and/or WDS director. Volunteers and student teachers must sign in and out in the WDS office and must present proper identification. Any volunteers and student teachers are required to follow WDS staff policies for classroom practices and must pass a background check. WDS reserves the right to dismiss student teachers and volunteers if practices are not followed. Volunteers or student teachers are never left alone with children.

### ***Toilet Training***

All students 3 years and older are encouraged to be toilet trained.

### ***Transportation and Parking***

Each family will provide transportation to and from the school for their child(ren). Parents are expected to observe UCC parking guidelines for parking in the lots. The lots adjacent to the church building and Lot C are designated for families.

### ***Weekday School Board***

The board of the WDS acts with limited administrative powers and advisory powers in order to aid in accomplishing the school's purpose, as stated in the bylaws. The bylaws guide all policies concerning the constituency of the board, terms, qualifications, voting members, etc. The bylaws shall serve as the policy guide for all board actions, and may be amended by the procedures found in said bylaws. Copies of the board bylaws are available in the WDS offices.

### ***Parent Review of Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers***

The Weekday School office has a copy of Minimum Standards, which is available for parents to review at any time. All licensing and inspection reports are posted in the WDS office and available for parent inspection.

Parents may contact the local licensing office, the CPS child abuse hotline, and the Texas Health and Human Services website for information or questions concerning this program or for general licensing information.

Local licensing information: 817-321-8000

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

DFPS Website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)