



First Methodist Preschool Handbook



Revised August 7, 2009

All About Us . . .

First United Methodist Preschool and Parents' Day Out is sponsored by the First United Methodist Church of Franklin and uses the facilities of the Activity/Education Building at 143 Fifth Avenue South, Franklin, Tennessee, 37064, Phone 615-794-5386.

PHILOSOPHY – We believe that the whole child is very important. Each child's total development includes spiritual, emotional, social, mental and physical growth. We believe that the child should be provided the opportunity to develop each of these areas at his/her own pace. We believe that a child's self worth and self esteem are of vital importance. We believe that an atmosphere of love and warmth should be provided for each child. Your child's experience in Preschool is a most important experience for him/her. It is, therefore, crucially important that this event be positive, uplifting, and enjoyable. We realize the trust that you are extending to us and we sincerely desire to create a pleasant and happy growing environment for your child. All areas of interest such as music, exercise, art, story time, small group learning, and free play (inside and outside) will be part of our environment.

ADMISSION – Our program serves three, four, and five year olds who have not entered kindergarten. Children applying for admission must be three years old by September 30th of the school year and must be fully toilet trained by the time the school year begins. Registration opens first to current Preschool and Parents' Day Out children, then to the children of First United Methodist Church and Legacy children. When registration opens next to the public, applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Registration usually takes place in February for the following school year.

The Preschool adheres to the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment. Under Principle P-1-7, "We shall strive to build individual relationships with each child: make individualized adaptations in teaching strategies, learning environments, and curricula; and consult with the family so that each child benefits from the program. If after such efforts have been exhausted, the current placement does not meet a child's needs, or the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, we shall collaborate with the child's family and appropriate specialists to determine the additional services needed and/or the placement option(s) most likely to ensure the child's success." Copyright 2005 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children

The Preschool reserves the privilege of dismissing any child from the program if, after entering, the child need's cannot be met by current placement, the child is jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, or the fees for the child's enrollment are in arrears.

FEES – The current fee schedule is included as an addendum to the back of this handbook.

Fees include a non-refundable Registration fee, an annual Cultural/Supply Fee, and tuition.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT - Our discipline procedures are standard throughout our program. If a child continually misbehaves, our first step of discipline is to talk to the child on his/her level about this behavior.

If the child continues to misbehave and/or disrupt the other children, then we institute the time-out chair for him/her to sit in for a time appropriate for his/her age and or behavior. Time out is determined at one minute per one year of age (for example, three minutes for a Three Year Old child). If this discipline had no effect on the child's behavior, the parents will be consulted and the situation will be left up to the parent's discretion. At this time, if the child's behavior does not improve, the Preschool reserves the privilege of dismissing the child from the program.

Our behavior management goal is that children learn to make appropriate behavior choices. Every child is different so we have a variety of techniques to use until we find the one that "works" with the child. All aspects of child development are taken into consideration – this is a learning process. The techniques are:

Positive Reinforcement – encourages acceptable behavior. This is the most important technique.

Redirection – the child is redirected to another area or activity.

When. . .Then. . .Statements – encourages positive choices such as "When you finish picking up the blocks, then we will have snack time."

Natural and Logical Sequences – Natural consequences happen when the child naturally learns what happens. Suppose the child does not want to wear mittens outside on a cold day. We go outside and the child says that his/her hands are cold. The teacher says "Mittens are needed to keep our hands warm in winter, let's go put them on!" A logical consequence is something that happens as a result of a related action/thought/or activity. For example: If the child does not help to clean up the blocks after he/she has played with them, then the child does not get to play with the blocks the next time the block center is open.

Active Listening – This is a technique of reflecting the child's feelings. Suppose Child A takes away a toy from Child B who is naturally upset. In active listening, Child B's feelings are addressed by "You are feeling sad because A took your toy away." Naturally Child A will have been spoken with as well and most likely redirected elsewhere!

Calm Down Time – This is time away from an activity, toy, or person. When the child is calm, he or she may rejoin the activity.

Using these techniques and the discipline procedures described above generally makes for a happy learning environment.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE – Children will be met by the director at the double doors facing the parking lots between 9:00 and 9:15 a.m. After 9:15 a.m., children should be brought into the building. Children are to be picked up from their classrooms no later than 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute begins at 1:11 p.m. by the clock on the director's desk. Pick up will be from the classroom unless your child's teacher notifies you of a different arrangement. Please notify your teacher in advance and in writing if your child will be leaving with person (s) other than the parents or drivers designated on the application. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON!**

WITHDRAWAL – If circumstances warrant the withdrawal of a child, we require at least one month’s notice or payment of the equivalent of one month’s tuition.

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY – In the case of an accident or ill health, the parent or person named on the application will be notified immediately. We request that the parent sign a permission form giving Preschool personnel authorization to seek emergency help in case a parent cannot be contacted. Child who becomes ill during the day may be isolated until someone can pick him/her up. *Please do not let your child return to school until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours, vomiting has ceased for 24 hours and any secretion from the nose is clear.* As allergies are part of many children’s lives, please teach your child to blow his/her nose, cover his/her mouth and/or nose when sneezing or coughing, and to wash his/her hands afterwards. We also require a CURRENT IMMUNIZATION FORM be on file the first full day of Preschool (this is a Tennessee State requirement). You may bring the form with you to Open House with all of the other completed forms (including the health form required by the State). Your child’s physician’s office should have the necessary forms.

ITEMS YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO BEING TO PRESCHOOL EACH DAY

- 1) A backpack or book bag, labeled, and large enough to hold a folder and lunch box.
- 2) A lunch box with a “flip-top” lid thermos for milk or an alternate 100% fruit drink. All lunches must be nutritious and comply with the published food pyramid (State of Tennessee requirement) and should have little candy and no gum.
- 3) A nutritious snack in a separate container (a small paper sack is fine). We may no longer purchase bulk snacks to give to the children. From time to time we may provide food related to themes or areas of study.
- 4) Please send in a change of clothing (socks and underwear as well) in a zip-lock bag with your child’s name marked on the clothing and bag. It would be helpful to include both long pants and shorts—this should cover all seasons. This clothing will be kept at the school for use in case a change of clothing is needed.
- 5) No mats are needed since children will not nap at school. All children will have a Quiet Time immediately after lunch.

BIRTHDAYS – Birthday celebrations at school are to be simple celebrations or acknowledgements of the child’s special day. We request that the child’s actual party be held elsewhere and outside of school hours. If you wish to send a special treat on or near your child’s birthday, please let the child’s teacher know in advance of the date. Summer birthdays may be celebrated in different ways—either as half-birthdays or in the month of May. Please check with your child’s teacher to determine her preference for the class.

WEATHER – In case of snow or inclement weather, listen to the local media for the Williamson County School System closing. When Williamson County School System is out, we are out. Weather-related closings are the result of an act of nature, thus no tuition refunds will be given for days missed.

Late openings due to Weather – If Williamson County Schools open one hour late due to Weather conditions, we will also open one hour late at **10:00 a.m.** If Williamson County Schools open two hours late due to weather conditions, we will open at **10:30 a.m.**

Early closing due to Weather – If weather conditions are threatening, please pay close attention to the local media (Channels 2, 3, 4, 5 and Fox on the television and radio station WAKM) in case Williamson County Schools announces an early dismissal. **If Williamson County Schools dismiss early, we will also dismiss at the time announced for the middle and high Schools.** This is generally about an hour earlier than elementary school dismissal.

COMMUNICATION – An open line of communication is very important and beneficial to the teacher and parent. Drop offs and pick ups are very hectic times. If you wish to have a meeting with your teacher or to discuss a concern about your child, please feel free to call your child’s teacher here at the school or at home. This way you can set a time before or after school to meet with your teacher and get her undivided attention.

A scheduled conference time is held in late Winter/early Spring.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR – A monthly newsletter and calendar will be sent home for each month. Please go over the schedule with your child so he/she will know what to expect each day. Teachers may send home specialized calendars in addition to the Preschool Calendar.

PARTIES/SPECIAL EVENTS – Each classroom plans its’ parties individually. The teacher will provide a sign-up sheet well in advance of the party to give parents the opportunity to choose an area in which to participate. *The custodial staff has requested that cupcakes not be sent for parties due to the difficulty in cleaning them from the floor!*

CLOTHING – Please dress your child in as comfortable and washable fashion as is possible. This way the child may use the materials and play equipment freely. Children are very independent at the Preschool age, so send them in clothing that they can manage themselves in the bathroom. We prefer elastic waist pants for boys and girls and no belts. We will be exercising through play and music, both indoors and out, so tennis shoes would be most appropriate. **LABEL ALL COATS AND OUTER APPAREL WITH YOUR CHILD’S FIRST AND LAST NAME!** We will go outside daily, weather permitting, unless the temperature is below freezing.

TOYS/PLAYTIME – Playtime is a very important part of our day. We ask that toys from home be left at home unless it is a designated Show and Tell Day. Cuddly items for rest time are to be left in the backpack until the appropriate time. We do not allow guns or knives and ask that you help us to discourage the aggressive play that this type of toy may bring. Thank you!

BATHROOM HABITS – We know that toilet accidents are going to happen and that they are a natural part of childhood. However, children enrolled in the Preschool program must be toilet-trained. If, after the first six weeks of school, a child is having consistent accidents and is not toilet-trained, the parent will be contacted and the situation will be discussed. Pull-ups are not allowed at Preschool.

It is important that the children wear clothing that can be easily managed by the child to encourage independence in toileting. We also strongly recommend that each child four years of age or older try to cleanse themselves after bowel movements. This is a requirement in most Kindergartens and elementary schools, as such we hope to help the children be more independent.

FIELD TRIPS – We will take an occasional field trip with parental help (chaperoning and transporting). Some walking trips may be taken, at other times we will need parent drivers. State regulations restrict us from using the Church vans. The field trips are covered by a permission form to be completed at the beginning of the school year, but notice of each individual field trip will be sent to the parents at the appropriate time. All Children must comply with the latest Child Restraint regulations from the State of Tennessee. A labeled Child Restraint seat must be provided by the parent on the date of each field trip. At no time will children be permitted to sit in the front seat of a vehicle.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES – Preschool has a Weather-Alert radio on at all times. In the event of threatening weather, we have a procedure for taking all the children to the basement area of the building. We practice this with the children in such a way that it is not alarming to them. In the event of fire, each classroom exits to the outdoors and we have drills for learning how to exit and assemble in the appropriate spots. In the unusual event that the building ever need to be evacuated, we have made arrangements with the Fourth Avenue Church of Christ that our children can be taken there and assembled in a large area inside. This church is within logical walking distance. We do not expect to have to use any of these emergency procedures, but we are prepared for the eventuality.

SPECIAL ME DAYS – Every child is special and we celebrate this fact. Each teacher has a plan for recognizing each child during the school year. This is a time when the child is encouraged to bring in family photos, a favorite book or tape to share, a snack to share with the class, and a favorite toy to show. Your child's teacher will discuss her procedure with you.

M & M TIME – M & M means music and movement. This is a time of fun, music, dancing, pretending, and even eating an M & M or two! We have M & M time daily in our music and movement room with our music and movement aide.

ALLERGIES – The number of children who are highly allergic to peanuts and peanut oil has increased tremendously in recent years. We ask that no snacks or treats be sent in to school that contain these items. A peanut allergy can be a life-threatening one. Thank you for your help in helping all the children!

FEES – 2009

There is a non-refundable Registration Fee of \$40.00.

An annual Cultural/Supply Fee of \$80.00 is due in September. This fee covers art supplies, party/special event supplies, cleaning supplies, paper products, field trips, special guests, insurance, and Mother's Day gift supplies.

Late Fee: There will be a \$10.00 late fee charged for any tuition paid after the 10th of each month.

Tuition – Tuition amounts depend on the number of days a week a child is enrolled.

Two Day a week classes - \$1,350.00 annually (\$150.00 a month)

Three Day a week classes - \$1,800.00 annually (\$200.00 a month)

Four Day a week classes - \$2,250.00 annually (\$250.00 a month)

Three Year Olds attend two days a week, Young Fours and one Pre-K class are three days a week, and there is one four day a week Pre-K class. Please place the monthly tuition payment in your child's Preschool folder or in the metal box on the wall outside of Mrs. Brenda's office.

A payment book will be given to you on the day of Open House.

The payment made in August covers the week before Labor Day and the month of May. If paid monthly, payments are to be made by the 10th of each month as listed:

August	January
September	February
October	March
November	April
December	

Again, the May payment is included in the amount paid in August.

If you have any questions, please contact the Director at 794-5386.