



PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

WAKE FOREST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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“Train up a child in the way that he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to Wake Forest United Methodist Church (WFUMC) Little Chapel Preschool, a half-day preschool program for children ages 2-5. Our program exists to give your child a faith-based, developmentally appropriate preschool education.

The Bible teaches us that the discipleship and education of our children is primarily the responsibility of parents (Deut. 6). Therefore, we are here not to replace your guidance but to partner with you in educating your child. We encourage parents to visit, ask questions, and become very involved in their child's early education. Cooperation between parents and staff will contribute to a successful experience for your child.

This handbook is designed to help you understand our program's mission as well as the policies and procedures under which we operate. We will make every effort to inform you of changes in our program or in the Parent Handbook. Thank you in advance for your support as we work together toward a successful experience here at WFUMC Little Chapel Preschool.

Sincerely,

Kelly Meehan

Preschool Director

“Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them”. -Mark 10. 13-16 [NRSV]

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide our students with a nurturing preschool experience based on Christian beliefs and values. We focus on the whole child as we help him/her develop spiritually, physically, cognitively, academically, personally and socially. This is accomplished through thoughtfully planned and play-based learning as well as, developmentally appropriate activities that are designed to help foster a lifelong love of learning within each child.

Preschool Philosophy

We are committed to:

- Providing a safe and nurturing environment for young children.
- Helping preschoolers understand God's purpose, plan, and love for them.
- Providing an academic atmosphere where children are encouraged to be productive and creative learners.
- Developing an appreciation for education and a love of learning.
- Educating the whole child – cognitively, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually.
- Helping children develop a sense of responsibility and independence.
- Developing children's ability to work and play in groups, as well as independently.
- Promoting positive, healthy relationships with peers and adults.
- Utilizing positive guidance techniques to encourage appropriate, prosocial behaviors.
- Recognizing children's individual developmental needs to promote a sense of accomplishment and positive self-esteem.

“God begins His work in children” -- John Wesley

ABOUT OUR STAFF

Because young children “experience God's love embodied in caregivers,” we must create an environment where children are “embraced by God and a community of faith as beloved and accepted.” (UMC Guidelines for Weekday Preschool Programs)

At WFUMC Little Chapel Preschool, we have high standards of excellence for our faculty. Faculty is required to meet or exceed the following qualifications:

All Staff:

- Criminal Background Checks and excellent references.
- “Safe Sanctuaries” Child Abuse and Prevention Training.
- Annual continuing education on curriculum, child development, health/safety, and other related topics.
- Infant/Child CPR/First Aid certification (one or more staff).

Director:

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Early Childhood, Elementary Education or related field.
- Minimum five years verifiable experience in preschool or elementary.
- Minimum two years verifiable experience in early education management.
- Equivalent combination of education and experience.

Lead Teachers:

- Associates, Bachelor's or Master's degree in Early Childhood, Elementary Education or related field; or CDA (Child Development Associate).
- Minimum two years verifiable experience in preschool or elementary.
- Equivalent combination of education and experience.

Assistant Teachers:

- Degree in Early Childhood, Elementary Education or related field or
- NC Early Childhood Credential or Certificate.
- Minimum two years verifiable experience in preschool or elementary.

LITTLE CHAPEL PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Faith and values are at the heart of our curriculum. Children will learn about God's purpose, plan and love for them through the teachings of the Bible. We implement *The Creative Curriculum*, a research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum utilized by many high quality early education programs. The curriculum is approved by *North Carolina Early Learning Standards* and recognized by the *UMC Guidelines for Preschool*.

Goals within the curriculum include all the areas of a child's development:

- Approaches to Learning
- Language & Literacy
- Cognitive
- Social/Emotional
- Physical (Fine and Large Motor)
- Creative Expression and Art
- Spiritual

A flexible daily schedule incorporates a variety of activities such as:

- Child and teacher initiated activities
- Large and small group interaction
- Alternating periods of quiet and active play
- Daily outdoor experiences (weather permitting)
- Music and movement (Weekly "Music Time")
- Development of age appropriate spiritual concepts

CHAPEL TIME

"Chapel Time" is conducted weekly by our Associate Pastor. The pastor will tell a bible story, engage the children through discussion of real-life experiences, and lead them in songs and prayer.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Open communication with parents is a key component of the success of our program. Parents and preschool staff will communicate and work together to foster children's development. Parents and teachers are encouraged to exchange pertinent information in the child's life such as changes in routine, special events, or activities, as well as changes such as birth, death, divorce, separation, moving, houseguests, etc. Information shared with Preschool staff will be kept confidential to the best of their ability.

EMAIL is the PRIMARY form of communication. You will receive weekly communication from the Director and each classroom will have an email address. Please CHECK YOUR EMAIL REGULARLY.

Preschool Orientation

Parent Orientation Night is tentatively planned to be in-person. This could change to a virtual meeting if Covid-restrictions are in place. Our "Meet the Teachers" event will be scheduled for the following morning on a drop-in basis. Information packets with classroom-specific and administrative information will be available. Children and parents will be introduced to our faculty and have the opportunity to tour the classrooms.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal parent/teacher conferences are held twice per school year. Parents have an option to meet in person or via phone conference. Information discussed includes your child's progress, any concerns, and plans for individual development.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Children are treated with love and respect by modeling the Golden Rule, *"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."* Luke 6:31

Each child is loved as a child of God. Staff uses positive guidance techniques and models and encourages prosocial behaviors such as helping, sharing, and cooperating. **Discipline is never punishment; discipline is teaching.** Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited. The program staff builds a trusting relationship with each child that provides both emotional and physical security.

If inappropriate behavior continues, even after various behavior modification techniques have been implemented, parents may be called to come and pick up their child for the remainder of the day. At that time, the teachers will conference with parents to develop a strategy to implement at home and in school. If these methods are not successful, the child may be asked to take a break or withdraw from preschool. *Refer to the Dis-Enrollment policy on page 10.*

HEALTH AND SAFETY **Highlighted areas are COVID-19 symptoms – see Addendum.**

Child Health Records

An updated copy of your child's immunization record and a current physical examination is required prior to entering the Preschool program. *All children must be fully vaccinated as prescribed by NC state guidelines.*

Classroom Safety

Little Chapel Preschool is equipped with fire extinguishers, first aid kits, outlet covers and other protective measures for the children. Routine health and safety inspections are conducted in the classroom and on the playground. Fire, "quiet" (lockdown) and other emergency drills are conducted monthly.

Outdoor Play

Children will have daily outdoor time when temperatures are above 32 or below 90 degrees. Please dress children appropriately. In inclement weather, children will have organized indoor play.

Illness Policy

To sustain a healthy environment and reduce the spread of disease, please keep your children home if they display any of these symptoms:

- A Fever of **99.8 degrees or more**
- Chills
- Congestion or Runny Nose
- Nausea, Vomiting, or Diarrhea
- Persistent Cough or Sore Throat
- Shortness of Breath or difficulty breathing
- Headache
- Muscle or Body Aches
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Fatigue
- Head or Body Lice
- Skin rash (excluding diaper rash) or infections (such as Ring Worm)

- Eye discharge or Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)
- Symptoms of communicable diseases
- Listlessness and behavior that is out of character for your child

If your child develops a fever or becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted to pick up your child. If you are unavailable, your emergency contacts will be called. While waiting to be picked up, your child will be kept comfortable in the Director's Office, separated from the other children. Your child must be symptom free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child is prescribed an antibiotic, they must be 24 hours into their dosage before returning to school. Children who have been diagnosed with a contagious disease can be denied attendance unless they have a physician's statement indicating that they can return to school.

See Addendum for COVID guidelines.

Help us stop the spread. Please notify the Director or your child's teacher when your child is absent due to illness or is diagnosed with any communicable disease.

Medication:

NO MEDICATION will be administered by Preschool staff members.

This includes over the counter (OTC) medications and ointments.

At the time of enrollment, please inform the Director and document information about allergies or chronic conditions that may require medication or emergency medical treatment. Exceptions may be made in the case of life-threatening situations such as those that require administering an Epi-Pen or nebulizer.

Student Accidents

If your child is injured while at school, the teachers and Director will evaluate the extent of the injury. For light scrapes, bumps, and bruises, first aid will be administered. An incident/ accident report will be filled out for all injuries and signed by a staff member and parent. A copy of this report will be kept in the child's file. If medical treatment is needed, we will make every effort to contact you. In the event of an emergency, we will make sure that your child receives the necessary emergency treatment until you can be reached. Each child must have a completed **Emergency Consent Form** on file. The Emergency Form authorizes preschool to take whatever emergency medical procedures are deemed necessary if you are not present.

Emergency Procedures

WFUMC Preschool conducts monthly fire and safety drills. Each classroom has an emergency evacuation route posted in the classroom and exit doors are clearly labeled. In case of a fire, the class will evacuate to an assigned area outdoors. In case of a larger disaster or prolonged evacuation, we will implement our emergency plan. **If at any time your emergency contact information changes, please notify the office immediately.** Parents are responsible for providing written notification of Emergency Contact updates.

ALLERGY AWARE POLICY

WFUMC Preschool maintains an ALLERGY AWARE policy. **All children's allergies should be listed on registration** enrollment forms. Please make a complete list of ALL foods that your child cannot consume. Physician's statements of severe allergies and medication consent forms are required for administration of **rescue medication** (Epi-Pen, etc.). Classroom or school-wide food restrictions will be implemented, if recommended by physician. Please contact the preschool Director or your child's teacher regarding specific food allergies in your classroom prior to bringing snacks and/or special treats.

TOILET LEARNING

All children entering the Threes and PKs classrooms MUST be fully toilet trained prior to the beginning of the school year. Occasional accidents may occur, but children should be **out of pull-ups and in regular underwear** before entering the 3s classrooms. This policy does not apply to children enrolled in the 2s-3s Combination (Turtles) classroom. When possible, we will aid in the process of toilet learning at preschool. Please be sure to place your child in clothes that are easy to remove when going to the bathroom. Many toilet accidents are prevented with pull-on styles of clothing.

DRESS CODE

It is recommended that all children wear washable play clothes that can be easily manipulated by the child. Clothing should not display violence or any inappropriate logos/ print. **All children are required to have a complete change of clothing, including socks and underwear/pull-ups, in case of wet or soiled clothing.** Please label your child's set of extra clothing and place them in a plastic zip lock bag labeled with your child's name. If these clothes are used, be sure to replace them for the next school day. Please provide season-appropriate clothing. All jackets, sweaters, coats, hats and boots must be **clearly labeled with the child's name. The school will not be responsible for any lost clothing.** For your child's safety and comfort, we request that he/she wear closed-toed shoes with socks. Flip-flops should have heel straps.

PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE AND CLOSINGS

Holiday and Inclement Weather/Emergency Closings

Holidays are observed and usually align with Wake County Public Schools' traditional calendar. We reserve the right to close for holidays, weather emergencies, facility emergencies, or if mandated by state or local regulatory agencies.

- **Inclement Weather Closures:**

- If Wake County schools are closed, Little Chapel will be closed. If Wake County Schools are delayed, Preschool will *most likely* be open, *at the Director's discretion*. **Closings will not be made up unless and until they are in excess of four (4)* days. Make up days will not exceed two (2) days.** You will be notified via email and/or Facebook if preschool is closed for weather or other emergencies. Preschool closings are made for the safety of children, families, and teachers.

See Addendum for information on COVID-19 related closures.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

Enrollment preference operates as follows:

- First preference given to children currently enrolled in WFUMC Preschool.
- Second preference to the siblings of children currently enrolled.
- Third preference to WFUMC members with preschool aged children.
- All other enrollment will be on a "first come first served" basis.
- Once all spaces have been filled, a waiting list will be formed.

The following items are due at registration each year:

- Completed and Signed Registration Form
- Registration Fee*

***Registration fee is equal to one month's tuition, is nonrefundable and does not count toward monthly tuition.**

Prior to 1st day of attendance, the following must be completed and returned:

- 1 May tuition -- **must be received by August 1st**

- 2 Child's Immunization and Medical Report
- 3 Emergency Consent form
- 4 Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- 5 COVID-19 Waiver

DIS-ENROLLMENT POLICY

Little Chapel Preschool reserves the right to dis-enroll any child. Preschool staff will follow procedures as outlined in the **Behavior Guidance Policy** on page 6. Parents will be informed of specific problems and will have ample opportunity to work cooperatively with staff to correct problems before being asked to dis-enroll their child. Your child will be asked to withdraw from the preschool program under the following circumstances:

- Behavior is consistently disruptive and/or threatens the safety of others.
- Staff is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child.
- Child displays characteristics that present undue hardship to students/staff.
- Child presents with other challenges that may interfere with preschool operations.

TUITION AND FEES POLICIES

Registration Fees

Registration fees are equal to one month's tuition and are due annually. **Registration fees are non-refundable** and do not replace the monthly tuition for the upcoming school year.

Supply Fee

A **\$35** Supply Fee per family is charged annually and due by September 1st.

Tuition Policy

- Tuition is due the first day of every month. Tuition payments in the form of a check or cash should be submitted to the Director. **All checks should be made payable to WFUMC Preschool.** Online payments are also accepted through automatic bank draft or online giving. Please indicate your child's name and tuition month in the memo area.
- There will be a **\$15.00 late fee** for tuition payments received after the 5th of the month. If all tuition and fees are not paid by the 5th of the month, your child may not return to preschool until your account is current.
- **Little Chapel Preschool reserves the right to dismiss any family for non-payment of tuition or fees.**
- There will be a \$25.00 fee charged on all returned checks. You may be asked to make future payments by certified check, money order, or cash.
- **Tuition is based on 9 equal monthly tuition payments and will not be prorated for school holidays, closings, or days missed for illness or vacation.**
- A two week notice is requested before withdrawal. **Tuition payments will not be refunded or prorated for early withdrawal.**
- Tuition will not be refunded due to school closures. See Addendum.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

AM & PM Carpool Drop-Off & Pick-Up is MANDATORY – No Walk-Ins

- **Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on their Registration form or Emergency form. Parents are responsible for Alternate Pick-Up records being maintained and up-to-date.** We will not release your child to anyone not on file in the Preschool office prior to pick up. Please notify Preschool staff in writing, text, or email if anyone who is not on your pick-up list will be picking up your child. If, for any reason, we believe that the safety of the child is compromised, we reserve the right not to release them.

See Addendum for Carpool Procedures during COVID.

Late Pick Up Policy

Preschool ends at **12:00 pm**. A late fee of **\$5** will be charged starting at **12:05 pm** and is due with the next month’s tuition. Habitual late pick-ups will be addressed on an individual basis.

FOOD AND CELEBRATIONS

Daily Snacks

Preschool children have varied food preferences and/or allergies, so our students “Pack-a-Snack” daily.

Lunch Bunch: Lunch Bunch is on hold until further notice.

Holiday Celebrations: All in-person school-wide celebrations are dependent on current Covid restrictions and guidelines.

Birthday Celebrations

Parents are welcome to bring a special treat (refer to food allergies) to celebrate. Summer birthdays may be celebrated any time. **Please allow teachers one week’s notice** so they can plan accordingly. Birthday celebrations will normally take place during classroom snack times.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you for entrusting us to guide and teach your most precious children during their time with us at Little Chapel Preschool. Please sign the acknowledgement below that indicates your familiarity with and acceptance of our Preschool Policies and Procedures.

Acknowledgement of WFUMC Little Chapel Preschool Policies:

My signature indicates that I have read and agree to the terms outlined in the WFUMC Little Chapel Preschool Parent Handbook and the COVID-19 Action Plan Addendum.

Child’s Name

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Kelly K. Meehan

Signature of Director or Authorized Staff

08/01/22

Date

Note: Signed copy to be kept in child’s file.

ADDENDUM --COVID-19 ACTION PLAN

- Parents conduct “Daily Health Screening for COVID-19” checklist with children at home. Checklist included in “Meet the Teachers” Parent Information Packet.
- Mandatory Morning & Afternoon Carpool – **No walk-ins!**
- **NO ADULTS other than staff** and other educators allowed in building. Parents with late drop-offs or early pick-ups will be met at the entrance. Director will monitor the entrance.
- Staff will conduct health screenings on themselves and take their temperatures, if deemed necessary.
- Student’s temperatures should be taken at home if any symptoms are observed and/or the student has had possible exposure to Covid. See checklist in “Meet the Teachers” Parent Information Packet.
- Face Coverings Mandatory for ALL Teachers in Carpool and Classrooms. Masks are not required when outdoors.
- Masks are not required for children. Children can wear masks but must be able to independently wear, remove, and handle masks throughout the day.
- Mystery Readers, Birthday visitors, School-wide Celebrations/Holidays and other large group activities are all on hold until further notice.
- Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing –
 - Teachers will monitor children in bathrooms.
 - Handwashing songs or other devices will assure 20 seconds are met.
 - Handwashing and/or Sanitizing must occur in the following instances:
 - When entering building
 - After Bathroom/Diapering
 - Before and After Eating
 - After blowing noses, coughing, any contact with bodily fluids
 - After Playground Use
 - Throughout the day as warranted
 - Hand Sanitizer can substitute when soap and water are not available.
- Cleaning and Disinfecting:
 - Clean with Bleach/Water Solution or Disinfecting Cleaner or Wipes.
 - Teachers wipe down sinks after their class is finished in the bathroom.
 - Teachers clean tables between activities: snack, art, manipulatives, etc.

- o Use Bin for mouthed/overly-shared toys. Disinfect at end of day.
- o Books are not considered high transmission items (unless mouthed).
- o Clean/Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces daily– light switches, door knobs, frequently-touched learning stations (i.e. housekeeping center), etc.
- Children will have these **Individual** items, labeled with names:
 - o Playdough containers/bags.
 - No playdough from home until further notice.
 - o Plastic, stackable, Pencil Boxes with supplies (except 2s & 2-3s).
 - o Trays to separate activities/materials like manipulatives.
 - o Plastic Bags of Legos or other frequently-used manipulatives.
- Cooking Projects
 - o Group cooking is replaced with individual “Cup Cooking” or children will observe teachers conducting cooking projects.
- Sensory Play
 - o Group sensory play will be replaced with individual sensory activities.
- Outdoor Play
 - o Children will have daily outdoor play.
 - o Classes will have assigned times and use separate sides of playground; classes are not combined during outdoor play.
 - o Playground equipment will be sanitized regularly.
 - o **The Playground is OPEN AFTER PRESCHOOL.** (This is subject to change).
 - Families are allowed to use the playground after 12:00 pm. Families use the playground at their own risk. Children should never be unsupervised.
- Water fountain will be disabled and covered.
- Classroom windows will be open daily to allow fresh air to circulate.
- Healthy habits and good hygiene will be taught and consistently practiced as part of the daily curriculum.

COVID-19 ILLNESS POLICY

The Illness Policy outlined on page 6 of the Parent Handbook will be strictly enforced. If a child demonstrates any signs of illness during the preschool day, the child will be removed from the classroom and placed in the designated “quarantine area.” The parent or authorized person(s) will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible. Help us slow the spread of *all* communicable diseases; please keep your children home when they’re not feeling well.

Parents are required to conduct daily health checks on their children using the “**Daily Health Screening for COVID-19**” checklist in Parent Packet:

1. Have you or your children had close contact in the last 14 days with someone with symptoms of COVID-19 or diagnosed with COVID, or has any health care

professional advised you to quarantine?

2. Do you or your children have any of these symptoms?

- o Fever
- o Chills
- o Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing
- o New Cough
- o New Loss of Taste or Smell
- o Fatigue

3. Since they were last at preschool, have you or your children been diagnosed with COVID-19?

If the answer is “**yes**” to any of these health questions, children **MUST stay home** from school and their healthcare providers should be contacted.

If the answers are “**no**” to all questions, proceed to preschool. Teachers will take children’s temperatures during carpool. **If a child’s temperature is above 99.8 degrees**, he/she will not be admitted to preschool.

COVID-19 Exposure or Diagnosis in Children
Guideline for attendance

- Child exposed to someone who tested positive to COVID-19, but no symptoms:
Stay home for 14 days since first exposure.
- Child tests positive for COVID-19, but no symptoms:
Stay home for 10 days since positive test.
- Child tests positive for COVID-19 and has at least one symptom:
Stay home until 10 days since first symptom.
No fever for 72 hours without fever-reducing medication.
Symptom free for 72 hours, including runny nose, cough, shortness of breath.

PRESCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO COVID-19

If a child or staff member of Little Chapel Preschool tests positive for COVID-19, the Wake County Health Department will be notified. Little Chapel Preschool will follow Health Department advice and mandates, which may include temporary or extended closing of preschool. In the event of short-term closure due to COVID-19, tuition will **not** be reimbursed or pro-rated. If preschool is closed in May and May tuition was paid in advance, a refund can be requested.

**Wake Forest United Methodist Church
Little Chapel Preschool
COVID-19 Waiver**

I have read the Little Chapel Parent Handbook, COVID Action Plan (if applicable), and additional policies and procedures related to the 2022-23 school year. I understand that while my child is in the preschool facility at Wake Forest United Methodist Church, he/she will be in contact with children, teachers, and families who are also at risk of community exposure. I understand that even the strictest guidelines, restrictions, and precautions will not remove 100% of the risk of my child's or family's exposure to COVID-19 as the virus can be transmitted by persons who are asymptomatic and before showing signs of infection. I understand that I play a crucial role in keeping everyone in the facility safe and reducing the risk of exposure by following the Illness Policy and practices outlined in the Parent Handbook and COVID Action Plan.

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

Parent's Signature

Date