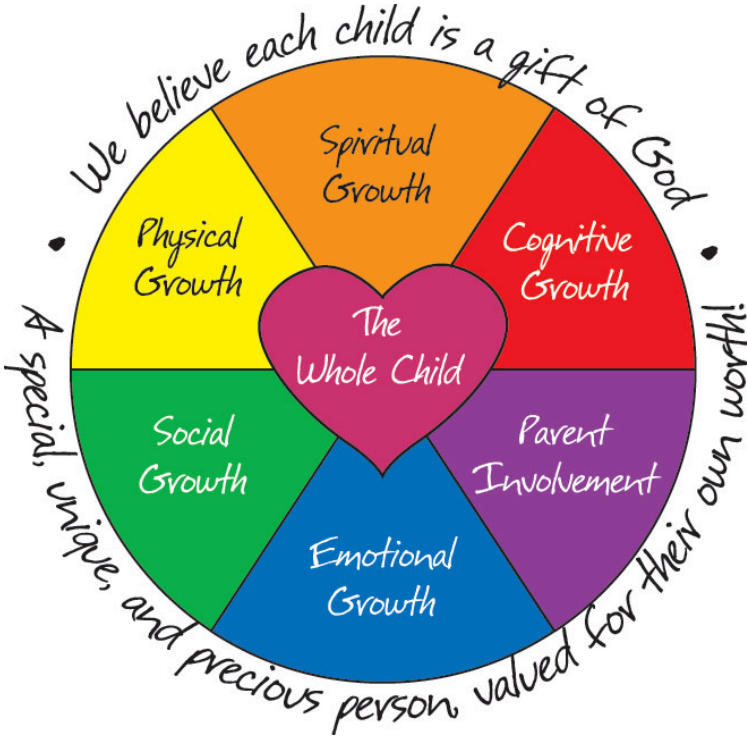


# First United Methodist Church Preschool Parent Handbook



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## **1. Mission, Philosophy, Whole Child Model**

### **Our Mission**

The First United Methodist Church Preschool (FUMC Preschool) is an outreach ministry of First United Methodist Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado. We are dedicated to surrounding children with a loving, safe environment where they will grow in their love of self, others, God, and learning.

### **Our Philosophy**

FUMC Preschool is a play-based program that respects and nurtures each child's innate creativity, spirituality, curiosity and desire for competence and connection. Most importantly, we want to foster a relationship with each child and their family that promotes trust and demonstrates God's love.

### **Whole Child Wellness Model Elements**

**Spiritual Growth**—our atmosphere surrounds children with experiences that reflect God's love for them through modeled relationships and sacred time that includes stillness, prayer, and wonder. While we are a Christian congregation, we honor and value children of all faith traditions.

**Cognitive Growth**—our enriching and developmentally appropriate curriculum encourages curiosity, imagination, creativity, and cooperation as children learn through play and firsthand experiences.

**Emotional Growth**—our supportive atmosphere gives children the tools and respect to build a positive self-image and feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

**Social Growth**—our environment provides children with opportunities for playing and cooperating with other children and adults as they develop a growing awareness of their needs, rights, and feelings as well as those of others.

**Physical Growth**—our outside and indoor play time promote children's physical development and growth.

**Parent Involvement**—as partners with families, we value working together to meet their needs. Parents are always welcome in the classroom and we encourage them to share their diverse talents and interests with the class and the school.

**In order to accomplish these goals, First United Methodist Church Preschool will hire staff that are committed to our mission and philosophy, who are qualified through the State and who feel that teaching young children is a calling and not just a job.**

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***Welcome to our program! We are looking forward to an exciting and rewarding time with your child. Our activities are planned to enrich their lives and their development. We are a play-based program that incorporates spirituality into our curriculum daily.***

**Please read the following information, discuss any concerns with the director, sign the agreement sheet on the last page and return it to the school. This copy is for your files.**

## **2. Center Policies and Procedures**

### **a. Admission and Registration**

Our school has an open enrollment policy; all children between the ages of 18 months - 6 years of age are admitted to our program, as space permits, without regard to race, religion, national origin, sex, or impairment status. However, new children will not be enrolled for the school year after February. They are welcome to enroll for the upcoming summer and fall sessions. In the event of a class being at its capacity, we will place you on the waiting list for up to six months. We are sorry that we cannot always meet the needs of parents or guardians when requested, however if you are placed on the waitlist, the Director will call you when an opening becomes available. We encourage all children to participate in all activities, including indoor and outdoor activities with the other children.

Before a child can be admitted to our program, we must receive a health form, and a current immunization record. State law requires that "A Certificate of Immunization or approved alternate Certificate of Immunization must be on file at the Childcare center the **first** day the child enters at the childcare center. A new Certificate of Immunization must be updated every new school year." We also accept non-immunized children under two conditions per state law. If immunization creates a health risk for your child, a Certificate of Immunization with the medical exemption on the reverse side must be signed by a licensed physician - **NO EXCEPTIONS**. If immunization is against your religious or personal belief, you must sign the religious or personal exemption on the reverse side of the Certificate and provide a written statement of explanation.

Registration is processed when we have a completed registration form, signed by the enrolling parent(s), and the non-refundable annual registration fee, which secures a space for your child. When a child enrolls in the program, we assume it is for the entire school year and we budget and plan accordingly. If you need to terminate your child's enrollment, a 30 day notice is to be given to the director; otherwise, you will continue to be charged your monthly tuition. (No reimbursement of tuition will be granted).

For the sake of consistency and continuity of care, children are placed in classes for the duration of the academic year, from September to May. They do not move to another class on their birthday or mid-year, as they might in a day care setting.

Children must be the beginning age of the classroom they are entering by Oct. 1 of the enrolling school year. Those children with September 1 –Oct 1 birthdays will enroll after their birthday due to state licensing requirements.

### **b. Tuition and Fee Schedule**

Tuition is due by the 9th day of each month. Any account unpaid on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the month may incur a \$50.00 late fee. If payment is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the child will not be able to continue attending classes until the office has been contacted. Please notify the director if you are experiencing financial difficulties.

A 10% reduction in tuition is given to members of FUMC, active duty military families and to the second or more sibling of a family. There is also a staff tuition scholarship for eligible FUMC employees, on a space available basis.

Prompt tuition payment is expected; regardless of how many days he/she actually attends school that month. No deductions are made for absences, illness, vacation, or snow days. Tuition rates are uniform every month. There are no tuition or registration refunds for withdrawing a child.

For the program to have full benefit and influence upon your child, regular attendance is very important. To maintain proper ratios, children will not be able to make up missed days. They will be able to attend only on the days they are enrolled.

When a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, the accounting department will contact you. A second attempt will be made upon request. If the check is returned a second time, cash or cashier's check will be required as payment for the returned check. You are responsible for any fees incurred in this process.

FUMC Preschool may be forced to close down temporarily because of a public health emergency, such as the coronavirus. This may happen because we are forced to shut down by a government agency, or because we believe it is in the best interest of our families and staff that we do so. During the spring of 2019-20, unplanned and abrupt closure, due to the COVID pandemic; we did not charge tuition while still providing "virtual preschool" circle time zoom meetings. We continued to pay our staff through the closure because we value our staff and felt strongly it was the right thing to do. Unfortunately, our financial resources have now been exhausted. If school is closed temporarily due to an outbreak again, or because the health department orders us to do so, we will provide a classroom zoom circle time. We will continue to charge tuition so that we can continue to retain our staff so that a return-to-learn in-person learning can happen with minimal disruption. If one class is closed due to a positive COVID case or outbreak and the rest of the school is open and if a parent decides to keep their child home from our program, it is still the parent's responsibility to pay the tuition at the normal rate. If you decide to terminate for any reason (including due to a COVID related closure), your spot will be forfeited, and you will need to re-enroll, assuming space availability, and pay a new registration fee. (please see: Procedure for termination)

Procedure for termination:

If you decide to terminate our program, you must give the director a 30 day notice.

**c. Calendar**

Our school year runs late August through May. Summer day camps may be offered.. Information will be available in the spring.

Late August through May, we set our calendar with School District 11's schedule in mind. There will be variations (i.e., Teacher Workdays, Easter Monday, Parent/Teacher Conferences,) as we strive to provide the most appropriate and consistent learning experience for children. Please see our school calendar for details.

**d. Schedule Changes**

It is important to provide children with a consistent class schedule for the benefit of the children themselves, teachers, and administrative and billing staff. Schedule changes will incur a \$20.00 change fee, unless extraordinary circumstances are present. This applies to the school year and to all summer sessions as well. The most recent schedule on file will stand until the end of an enrollment period unless the office is notified by the parent or guardian. Please inform the office promptly of any changes for billing accuracy. In the event that a child leaves the program and decides to return in the course of the same school year a new registration fee of \$100 will be assessed.

#### **e. Parking**

Parents are asked to park in the church parking lot located at the St. Vrain entrance. The spaces across the alley belong to the bank, and cars will be towed at the owner's expense. If more parking is needed, short-term parking is available across St. Vrain.

#### **f. Classroom Ratios and Maximum Group Size**

Bears: 18 months - 2.5 year olds, Room 119 - Staff to child ratio 1 teacher to 5 children

- FUMC Maximum group size - 8 children with 2 teachers
- Maximum Group size per state: 12 children based on square footage and age

Penguins: 2.5 - 3.5 year olds, Room 110 - Staff to child ratio 1 teacher to 8 children

- FUMC Maximum group size - 10 children with 2 teachers
- Maximum Group size per state: 15 children based on square footage and age

Leap Frogs: 3 - 4 year olds, Room 109 - Staff to child ratio 1 teacher to 10 children

- FUMC Maximum group size - 12 children with 2 teachers
- Maximum Group size per state: 20 children based on square footage and age

### **3. Our Program**

#### **a. Class Schedules and Hours**

Our program offers two, three or five-day attendance options in some classes. Preschool classes are held from 8:45 am-12:30 pm. We offer Before School Care from 8:15 am - 8:45 am, Monday-Friday in a designated preschool room. We also offer a Lunch Bunch program for those who need or would like a longer day from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm, Monday – Thursday. This program needs at least five children signed up to make it a go. Our Bears/Toddler Class is held from 9:00 am - 12:30 pm. We offer Before School Care from 8:30 am - 9:00 am, Monday - Friday in the Toddler Room.

#### **b. Signing In and Out**

It is required by law that you must sign your child in and out of the center each day he/she attends. This helps the teachers to know the whereabouts of your child especially when on the playground or during a fire drill. The sign-in sheet is located in the classroom or with the lead teacher if the class is away from their room. **Kindly sign the sheet legibly.**

Our program has times when we invite the parents into the classroom for special events/activities. The children will still be under the supervision of the classroom teacher until the parent signs their child out and walks out the preschool doors.

#### **c. Arrival and Departure**

Because First United Methodist Church Preschool strives to provide an active learning environment, punctuality is very important. We understand occasional tardiness but encourage everyone to be considerate in this area. If your child arrives late and the class is away from the room, please take your child to join their class.

Parents who arrive after their child's class has ended must pay a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, due immediately. Please be courteous to our staff as they too have families and responsibilities of their own. If a parent is more than 30 minutes late, every effort will be made to contact the parent. If no one can be reached, the staff will call the police department and/or the Department of Human Services at which time your child will be released to them.

#### **d. Religious Content**

While preschool aged children are too young to understand theological concepts about faith and God, studies have shown that these are the years when children form their concepts about God and the way God relates to them. They learn that God loves and cares for them just as the significant people in their lives take the time to love and care for them. It is this deep respect and love for children that Jesus modeled whenever He spoke about or related to children.

It is our goal to model Christ's love to all of the children entrusted to our care. Through example, rather than indoctrination, we believe children will develop a healthy relationship with God. During sacred time they will be affirmed and blessed as the beloved children they are!

#### **e. Parent Involvement**

Children will be engaged in process-oriented art, developmentally appropriate music and movement and language and culture activities that are connected to the weekly class curriculum. If you or someone in your family has an occupation, hobby or interest that would broaden and enrich the children's classroom experience, please share your ideas with your child's teacher. We welcome your input and participation.

#### **f. Visitors and Volunteers**

Parents with children enrolled in this program are welcome to visit the school at any time and are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom. This can be done many ways...read a story, help with a project, have lunch with your child...or many other ways. Please remember you are important to your child's school experience. We love and appreciate our volunteers!

Other visitors and observers, adults, and children, are encouraged to observe classes by appointment. All visitors, including parent volunteers and parents visiting a session must, by state law, sign in and out of the building on the visitor's sign in sheet located outside the office. Anytime a visitor or stranger enters our building, our staff will ask them to sign in and to wear a visitor badge. Any person who is unable to identify themselves or who does not have a legitimate reason to be at the center will be asked to leave.

#### **g. Clothing**

Dress your children in play clothes and sturdy shoes. Paint, glue, and messes are part of preschool play. Kindly leave an extra change of clothes for your child. Be sure all items are labeled with your child's name. Jackets, sweaters, hats, and gloves should be worn as weather dictates. Outdoor play is part of our daily schedule unless extremely bad weather is present.

#### **h. Items from Home**

Should your child bring personal items such as toys to school, the teacher will store them until the end of the day or ask that it be kept safe in the child's cubby. These items will be stored but may be given to the child as needed.

When a class has Show & Tell days, children are encouraged to bring books, science, art, or any item that is special to them. Guns, knives, or weapons of any type including toy weapons are not appropriate for school. We cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage of any toys or other items. Please do not send items of value such as jewelry, money, or electronic games to school.

### **i. Supervision of Children**

Whenever possible our program follows the United Methodist Church policy called Safe Sanctuaries. This means that children will be under the supervision of two teachers at all times. Teachers are responsible for the safety, care, comfort, and supervision of each child.

### **j. Discipline Policy**

Discipline is a key to learning. Children find security in consistent structure and discipline. As Christian teachers, we discipline in a way that reflects God's love. Children must be told or shown what we expect before they can meet those expectations.

Following the example of their parents and teachers, children are expected to practice kindness and respect toward each other and their surroundings. If this does not occur, discipline will consist of positive reinforcement (giving examples of what we want to see as opposed to saying what not to do), redirection, and possibly time away from a specific area. Use of physical or verbal punishment is not permitted by anyone on the school grounds, and outside time or food will never be used as a form of punishment.

If a problem is serious or a parent needs to be informed, the director will do so; however, we will try to solve minor problems and not save them up for the parent to solve. If the behavior fails to improve over time, we may have to terminate services. We are willing to work with you and will provide information regarding programs in our community that can assist you and your child. Parents are also responsible for their child's damage to school property (i.e., destroyed books, puzzles, shelf items, broken fire alarms, etc.).

### **k. Field Trips and Special Activities**

If our program plans a field trip, information and permission slips will be distributed in advance. Every child attending MUST have a signed permission slip on file with the office before the day of the field trip. Also, we do not provide transportation. A child must be dropped off and picked up at the site by an authorized adult.

Our classes will occasionally hold special activities or parties. When events are planned the teacher will put it on the calendar, discuss it with parents, and put a sign-up sheet if donated items are needed. We host an Open House at the beginning of the fall session. Other Special Events may be scheduled throughout the year.

### **l. Home and School Communication**

We strive to facilitate open communication between home and school. Families are encouraged to communicate with teachers and administration via our App (Lillio) or by email. Information is shared with families through verbal conversations, newsletters, fliers, App (Lillio), family boards, notes, posters, conferences, website, and e-mail. Teachers publish a monthly newsletter and curriculum calendar, which goes home during the first week of the month. It is then posted along with the class' daily schedule on a parent bulletin board inside the classroom. Please read this information and bring any questions to your classroom Lead Teacher. This is also a great opportunity to volunteer your time and knowledge in the classroom. If the class is studying animals, and you are a vet, zookeeper, animal trainer, etc. let them know. They would love to give you time to share with the students!

The Director also supports our families by accessing a family resource library, a limited lending closet, a parent information board, assisting families with locating community resources and assisting families with successful transition to school.

FUMC Preschool has an open-door policy and offers many opportunities to be a part of your child's early learning experience and to connect with other families. Opportunities include:

- Open house
- School events (Halloween parade, Thanksgiving Get-together lunch, Christmas Celebration, and end of the year ice-cream social)
- Church events (fall festival, Christmas treasures, Easter egg hunt, Mother's and Father's Day outing)
- Family night and family classes
- Volunteering is always welcome

#### **m. Parent/Teacher Conferences**

When you wish to talk with your child's teacher about your child, please make an appointment with the teacher to talk outside the scheduled classroom hours or arrange a phone conversation.

Preschool teachers will conduct two scheduled conferences during the school year. Please plan to attend. If you cannot make it, please make other arrangements with the Lead Teacher. The parent, teacher, or director may request additional conferences at any time. Preschool staff is ready and willing to meet with parents about questions, concerns, or communicate about the day. Please let us know how you prefer to communicate. Text, email, or in App (Lillio) messaging, are good alternatives to face-to-face communication when time is short.

#### **n. Photographs**

Upon registration, you give First United Methodist Church Preschool permission to take pictures or videos of your child/children. These pictures and videos will be used by the teacher and school only. These photographs and videos will not be used for any publicity.

School pictures are taken once a year and include both an individual and class photograph.

#### **o. Snacks**

Children will eat a mid-morning snack/lunch provided by the parent. We ask that parents provide their child with a nutritious snack. Some suggestions would be sandwiches, ravioli, or spaghetti, cheese, fruit, veggies, hummus, or quesadillas. Please also provide drinks for your child depending on the length of time that they are here at school. Water is always available.

#### **p. Birthdays**

We ask that you bring healthy birthday treats for your child's class. Rather than food, bring favors like sidewalk chalk, bubbles or play doh. Alternatively, your child could bring a favorite book to be read by the teacher to celebrate. Some food ideas that have been successful are fruit & cheese kabobs, fruit popsicles, mini-bagels or pitas with cream cheese, waffles with fresh fruit, quesadillas or veggies with dip, hummus, and veggies.

#### **Birthday Invitations**

Bring birthday invitations to school only if you are inviting everyone in the class. Kindly mail or email invitations if you invite only select children.

#### **q. Transitions**

The teachers strive to make the transitions to the following year's classes smooth and comfortable for the children. The parents are included in this process.

At the beginning of each year, FUMC Preschool sends out each family an invitation to our open house. Here, they have a chance to meet the teachers and other families and to explore the classroom at their own pace. FUMC Preschool also sends the parents a "Getting to Know You Form" prior to the first day of class. This form allows parents to share information with the teachers about their child. If a child starts after the beginning of the year, the director shows the family around the preschool and introduces them to their teacher.

#### Transition Plan for our 2.5, 3 and 4-year old's.

At FUMC Preschool, the children use the same indoor playroom and outside playground, so the children will already be familiar with these settings when they move to the other classrooms. Near the end of the school year, the classes overlap outside play for approximately 5 minutes so the children can see and meet their future teachers. Before the year is over, each classroom visits the children's future classroom to explore and meet the teachers. The teachers will pass evaluations and any special information onto the next year's teacher.

At the spring conferences, the teacher will also speak with the parents regarding readiness skills and what to expect for the up-coming class. Parents will be provided a copy of their child's conference report and have a chance to ask questions and discuss any concerns.

#### Transition Plan for the Pre-K

The teacher will provide books about kindergarten to read to the children. They will answer questions and be aware of concerns the children might have about kindergarten. At the spring conferences, the teacher will speak with the parents regarding kindergarten readiness skills and provide parents with their child's conference report. Information about kindergarten preparation will be passed on to the parents. Because our families come from all areas of Colorado Springs, the parents are responsible for looking for a kindergarten that best fits their child's needs. It is important for parents to meet with the kindergarten teacher and observe the classroom. They should identify teaching styles, classroom management techniques, and routines. Please know that expectations vary by teacher and school districts. The director will assist parents if needed.

As exciting as it is for a child to enter the world of kindergarten, experience has shown that talking about that transition can be overdone, in some cases leaving the child with a bit of anxiety about the unknown, and a reluctance to leave the comfort of preschool. It is suggested that teachers and parents be aware of the child's attitude regarding the upcoming transition.

#### **r. Teacher Gifts**

We appreciate our teachers, as do you all. We ask if you do wish to express that appreciation we would like it to be in a non monetary way. If you wish to give a gift card we ask that it is for a specific restaurant or coffee shop and not a Visa or other monetary gift. Due to IRS interpretations, we ask you NOT make cash gifts to teachers, which is considered income and taxable.

#### 4. **Health and Safety**

##### **a. Allergies**

Allergies are a serious concern. Please inform us upon enrollment of any allergies your child has, so we can list them in the class file and be sure they are correctly flagged in the emergency information log. We suggest that you teach your child about his/her allergy and encourage him/her to verbalize what they cannot eat or play with.

Every child with a diagnosed chronic condition (ex. Asthma, allergies or any medical diagnosis requiring regular medication or reactive medication) must have an Individual Health Care Plan on file that includes the following: diagnosis, symptoms, medical treatment plan, potential side effects and potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. If your child has a chronic condition, please complete an Individual Health Care Plan for him/her.

##### **b. Diapering and Toilet Training**

We provide facilities for diapering in our 18 month and 2 ½ year old classrooms. In case of accidents the restrooms are emergency changing facilities. For children in diapers or pull-ups, parents are responsible for providing diapers and wipes. If a child is being potty trained we are here to support you and your child, children being potty trained do need to be able to communicate that they need to use the potty and be able to pull down and up their own clothing. Staff will monitor and assist children when needed with wiping. As we have a number of children to attend to, if more than 2 accidents happen in the course of a day your child will be put into a pull-up. We will continue working with them each day.

We require children entering our 3 year old and above classrooms to be completely toilet learned. We defined this as wearing underwear, being able to use the facilities unassisted, including the ability to self-wipe and wash/dry hands after toileting. Staff will closely monitor toileting and provide encouragement and direction. If a special need is diagnosed at this time, the case will be reviewed according to Preschool policy.

##### **c. Medication Policy**

All prescriptive and non-prescriptive medication and individual special medical procedures can be provided only on written order or prescription from a physician to the center, with knowledge and written consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s). Medication must be kept in the original container. Prescriptive medicine containers must bear the original pharmacy label that shows the prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name, and directions for dosage. When no longer needed, medications must be returned to parents or guardians. All medicines and drugs will be kept in a storage area inaccessible to children and according to pharmacy instructions. Only staff members who have passed a medication administration class will give prescribed medication or treatments.

##### **d. Health/ Sick Policy**

This center is a well-child facility. When your child is not feeling well, please let them rest comfortably at home. Likewise, if they become ill during the school day and cannot participate comfortably in group activities, we will call you to take them home. It is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification. Children with the following illnesses must be excluded from our center.

The following are examples:

Diarrhea  
Chicken Pox  
Head lice  
Strep Throat  
Hepatitis A  
Herpes  
Impetigo  
Ringworm  
Rashes

Scabies  
Persistent Coughing  
Roseola  
Upper Respiratory Complication  
Vaccine Preventable Diseases  
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)  
Excess Congestion  
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Most of these illnesses cease to be a reason for exclusion 24 hours after treatment has begun or symptoms have disappeared. The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication. Your child must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning. In the event your child is sent home with one of the above health concerns, they will not be permitted back to FUMC Preschool without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious. Check with your doctor or the director for more information.

Sometimes it is difficult to determine when a child should stay home. Below is a list of symptoms that can serve as guidelines:

Lethargy, extreme sleepiness, ear pain, vomiting, rash with or without fever, fever above 101 degrees axillary (under the arm), persistent crying for an unknown reason, large amounts of yellow-green nasal discharge, or difficulty breathing or wheezing.

If a child becomes sick at school, they will be isolated until the parent arrives to prevent other children from getting sick.

If your child has or has been exposed to communicable illnesses such as, but not limited to, hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, rubella, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia, or shigella, outside the center, please inform the director. If a child that comes to the center has been exposed, the director must inform parents, staff, and the health department. Each child's confidentiality will be maintained.

When your child is absent from school please call the Preschool Office, 719-884-2500 or mark child absent in our App (Lillio), and leave a message to let us know whether your child is sick, at a dental/medical appointment, has relatives visiting, is on vacation etc. The director will pass the information onto the child's teacher. If we do not hear from you and your child is out for two or more consecutive days, the child's teacher will contact you.

If a child is sick for a long period of time, please inform the director or teacher. The monthly payment is still due as the child's classroom spot is being held. Some cases can be reviewed for a discounted price, please see the director.

#### **e. Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health**

In order to ensure a program-wide culture that promotes children's mental health and social emotional well-being we will support all enrolled children who experience behavioral challenges including but not limited to aggression and withdrawal with individualized strategies provided in partnership with the classroom staff and director. We will not suspend or expel students due to behavioral or mental health concerns. We will also provide resources in the community to families needing it.

#### **f. Dental Hygiene Policy and Screening**

As soon as a child's first tooth erupts, teachers/caregivers start oral hygiene with a soft toothbrush. Oral hygiene is a daily curricular activity for all children who have teeth. Staff must promote effective dental hygiene among children in conjunction with meals. Appropriate oral hygiene procedures will vary according to the age and developmental stage of each child. An annual screening will be provided for our Universal Pre-K students by our nurse. All screenings will take place in a private room in the preschool with 2 adults and with permission from parents. Needed referrals after the screening will be made.

#### **g. Hearing/Vision Screening**

Yearly we will offer hearing and vision screenings to children on an opt in basis. Allowing parents ample time to learn about the screening process and results before screening is to take place.

#### **h. Fire Drills/Safety Drills**

Fire drills are practiced school-wide on a regular basis. All the rooms are equipped with fire alarms, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. Teachers will take the sign-in book with them and perform a headcount to ensure everyone is present. A copy of each classroom's Evacuation Plan is posted by all doorways in each classroom.

We will also hold "shelter-in-place" practice at least once per year with each class. These practices will be done in a very calm, non threatening way just to ensure the children are familiar with the procedures and the terminology we would use in case of a breach of security.

#### **i. Transporting Children**

Our center does not transport children.

#### **j. Releasing Children**

No child will be released to a person who does not have proper authorization and identification. If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up your child, you will be notified immediately. The parent is responsible for listing all persons authorized to pick up their child. The original form is kept in the child's folder and a copy is kept in the classroom. Please be sure to notify the persons you list, so they are aware they must have a valid photo ID if they are asked to pick up your child.

#### **k. Inclement Weather Policy**

Closures: When District 11 (D-11) schools close for inclement weather, FUMC Preschool will be canceled. If they have a delay we will start class at 10:00 am and early drop off will not be offered. Please note: some years there are more days called than others. This is something that is out of our

control and your tuition will remain the same. If preschool is in session and D11 announces an “early pick-up”, our programs require you to pick up your child in a timely manner.

Recess is considered part of the school curriculum, and it is expected that all children will participate. If your child has a temporary or chronic condition which would warrant his/her not participating in recess, please let their teacher or the director know.

Each class goes outside for recess a maximum of 45 minutes/day, weather permitting. The general rule of thumb is that if the temperatures are from 32 to 90 degrees, then they will go outside. If the temperature goes below or above the stated temperatures, then it is the discretion of the classroom teacher and/or preschool director. Shorter length of time may be observed.

If the weather is excessively hot, the children may go out for a 15-minute playground time. Water will be made available to the children. There are shaded areas on the playground. Teachers will use discretion as to whether the children will go outside on an excessively hot day. Please apply long-lasting waterproof sunscreen to your child before bringing them to school.

Each child should wear proper clothing for the weather. A Child Care Weather Watch Chart is posted in each classroom for your view.

In the event of a tornado warning, all children and staff will be taken to an interior hallway in the basement of the church. We will remain there until the tornado warning has been lifted.

#### **I. Children with Special Needs**

We work closely with families when a specific concern arises which may affect a child’s ability to learn. We will inform and assist families with references and appropriate channels for further evaluation if needed. This applies to all families regardless of their resident school district.

Our building is accessible to the handicapped, however depending on the need, we may, or may not be able to adequately equipped to care for a special needs’ child. If we cannot accommodate a child, we will suggest alternative programs that can better serve the family and child.

The **Resource Exchange** (TRE) provides developmental support and services to children and their families through several programs, including Early Intervention (EI) which serves children from birth to age three. Family Support Services are for individuals age three and older. For more information, call TRE at 719-577-9190. **Child Find** is another free source of professional services to help evaluate your child’s speech, behavior, and learning. Child Find is part of the department of any public-school district. Your child’s pediatrician can also be a good source of information and support. These resources are highly regarded in the community. Research clearly shows that early intervention is the key to your child’s confidence and success!

#### **m. Biting**

While we recognize that biting among young children does occur, steps must be taken to try and prevent such situations. If your child bites another child, we will fill out an incident report for all parties involved and notify you at pick up or with a phone call. When biting continues to be an issue, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled, and we will try to resolve the problem. If any child bites

hard enough to break the skin that child will be sent home. A conference with the director, teacher and parents will be scheduled before the child may enter the program again.

**n. Bullying Behavior**

BULLYING in the context of this handbook; bullying is defined as a series of acts intended to hurt another person. It allows a person to gain or to assert greater power over another person. Bullying can be physically aggressive, but can also be verbal (name calling), or social (social exclusion) in nature. Any incidents of bullying will be dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. If your child bullies another person, we will fill out an incident report for all parties involved and notify you at pick up or with a phone call. If bullying continues for the second time, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled, and we will try to resolve the problem. If there is a third time, a conference with the director, teacher and parents will be scheduled before the child may enter the program again. FUMC Preschool works hard to promote positive behavior and relationships between all children. Bullying at preschool will not be tolerated.

**o. Child Abuse**

Child abuse in any form (physical, emotional, verbal, or psychological) will not be tolerated. The professional staff at First United Methodist Church Preschool is required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse to the Department of Human Services. If any staff member has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect a report will be made. If a parent suspects a child is being abused, they should notify the Department of Social Services at 636-0000. Once a report has been made, investigators have the right to interview staff and children in care and to obtain names, addresses, and telephone numbers of parents and children enrolled in the program.

**p. Child Care Licensing**

Our facility makes every effort to provide a safe, healthy environment for our children. In the event that you believe a violation of any rule or regulation occurs at our center, a complaint may be made to the licensing department:

**The Colorado Department of Human Services**  
Division of Childcare  
1575 Sherman Street,  
Denver CO 80203-1714  
**Or Call (303) 866-5358 or 1-800-799-5876**

**q. Emergency Closures**

In case of emergency closures due to building dysfunctions, weather, evacuation in case of fire, tornado, or any other disaster we will follow the following procedure. We will move to the lawn near St. Vrain Street in case of fire, the basement of FUMC for tornado, Room 110 for a shelter-in-place or First Congregational Church in case of evacuation. The teacher will take the sign-in sheets and perform a head count to ensure every child is present. In addition, they will have in their possession each child's emergency contact information. Teachers will call each child's parent, guardian, or emergency contact to notify them of the situation at hand and where and how to reunite with their child when it is safe.

**r. Reunification Plan**

Should it become necessary to move to an indoor location due to weather or hazard, we will move to First Congregational Church located at 20 East St. Vrain, on the corner of St. Vrain & Tejon Street. We will then call parents, guardians, or authorized emergency contacts to unite with the child at First Congregational church. When we are unable to reach a parent or guardian, we will call emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form. If emergency contacts cannot be reached, the child will stay with the director or a lead teacher until contact has been made.

**s. Emergency Procedures**

In case of emergencies due to a medical problem, accident, or the loss of a child, we will follow the following procedure. Call for emergency assistance (911). If necessary, we will render first aid while waiting. We will contact the child's parent or guardian. Next, we will attempt to contact the child's emergency contacts if the parents cannot be reached. We will contact the correct authorities within 24 hours.

**t. Missing Children**

Below is our procedure for locating and informing parents & authorities about missing children:

1. All FUMC employees of the church will be notified.
2. The entire building will be checked.
3. All outdoor areas will be checked.
4. FUMC will inform the police.
5. FUMC will inform parents/guardians.
6. FUMC will contact the Center for Missing Children

**u. Accidents**

If a child has an accident, even a minor injury, we will complete an accident/incident report form. The teacher will bring it to the office and explain it to the director. This pre-made form will include the time of the incident, how it happened, who witnessed it, what was done for the child, and note any observations. Accident notification to the parents will then be filled out and given to the child's parent or guardian. The lead teacher will oversee notifying the parents.

The teacher will discuss minor incidents with the parent at dismissal. In the case of an injury that requires more than basic First Aid, the preschool will notify the parents or emergency contact immediately. If the situation is a 911 emergency, 911 will be called first and followed by the parents. Parents will be informed which hospital the child is being transported to. An incident report will be filed, and copies given to the parents and the State Licensing Department. Parents will be responsible for any costs incurred.

**v. First Aid Kits**

Each classroom contains at least one First Aid Kit filled with bandages, gauze, gloves, cold packs, tweezers, thermometer, tape, CPR face shield, and wipes. The First Aid Kits are always stocked and

up-to-date. A Traveling First Aid Kit filled with bandages, gauze, gloves, cold packs, tape, tissues, hand sanitizer and water are stored in each class's backpack and is always brought onto the playground.

**w. Infection Control**

Hand washing is the most effective form of infection control. Frequent handwashing will reduce the likelihood of illness and spreading illness. Staff and children will use running water with liquid soap and friction. Each person should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds. Hands are dried with individual paper towels. Handwashing is required by all when entering the classroom, before and after eating, after using the bathroom, and after encountering bodily fluids.

All equipment is sprayed daily with a sanitizer/disinfectant solution that has been approved by the Department of Early Education.

**x. Security**

Our facility has a secure key lock system. FUMC employs security personnel that are on duty, open to close, 7 days/week. The security personnel also monitor the playground by conducting walk arounds and by computer cameras.

**Every member of our staff is dedicated to the well-being of your child. We all work together to make our program one that is filled with the good things that God has so generously provided.**

**Thank you for sharing your child with us.**

I have read the Parent Handbook and understand the policies and procedures for First United Methodist Church Preschool. Continued enrollment is based on complying with all policies.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_