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FIRST METHODIST PRESCHOOL

Mission Statement

- Emphasis on Christian Education
- Each child to grow in understanding and love for themselves, their families and others in the world
- Each child grow in awareness that God loves them and Jesus is a special friend
- Each child grow in the ability to think, solve problems and develop language skills
- Each child enjoy creative expression in music, art and play

First Methodist Preschool is licensed for children ages 4 weeks to 14 years. We accept children for care without regard to race, color, creed or national origin of the child or the child's parents.

The Preschool is regulated by the Department of Family and Protective Services. You can find out more about the regulation of child care facilities by visiting their website at www.txchildcaresearch.org.

You may contact the local Licensing office by calling 254-526-9011.

You may report the suspected abuse or neglect of children by calling the child abuse hotline at 1—800-252.5400.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Our enrollment process requires parents to complete a number of forms and furnish information on their child and themselves. This information helps assure the safety of your child and include:

- An admission form with information about the child's physician, emergency contacts, special needs and other information
- A health statement for all children
- A current immunization record.

We will maintain confidentiality of this information. Please give us updated information whenever there is a change. Every parent must sign a statement acknowledging receipt of a copy of this parent handbook. If we need to change any of these policies, you will be notified of the changes in writing before the change takes affect.

Each parent must also sign acknowledging a receipt of "A Parent's Guide to Day Care" published by Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

SCHEDULES

Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation are 7:15 am to 5:30 pm daily year round (holidays are listed below).

Calendar and Holiday Schedules

This school will be open 5 days per week the entire year. The following holidays will be observed: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving. Also, there will be Christmas holidays which will be announced each year in advance. If any of the above fall on Saturday or Sunday, the school will be closed on the appropriate Monday or Friday in line with other community businesses. You will be notified well in advance of any other holidays which we observe.

Daily Schedules

Daily schedules will be posted in each room. The schedules provide opportunities for activities by utilizing the following centers: art, music, library, manipulative, housekeeping, science, blocks and indoor-outdoor play. Enrichment opportunities include children's chapel, field trips and puppetry.

TUITION POLICIES

SUPPLY FEE

A supply fee will be charged in January, June and September. The fee due each time is \$25.00 per child.

(If a child registers at Preschool between Supply fee due dates, they will pay a pro-rated fee based on the dates registered. See Director for a schedule of these fees.)

MONTHLY TUITION

Only full time children will be registered at First Methodist Preschool (5 days per week)

Tuitions are paid in advance. Parents may pay monthly OR bi-monthly as long as tuitions are paid in advance. The monthly fees are as follows:

Infants to 36 months	515.00
3 years to 5 years	450.00
After School (K – 4 th)	300.00
K-4 th full day	450.00

There is no provision for Vacation Time or Illness Credit for any child enrolled. The monthly tuition is charged regardless of the number of days in the month.

TUITION LATE CHARGE

There will be a late charges of \$25.00 added to accounts not paid on time. There will be a 5 day grace period. Every time accounts are 5 days past due, a \$25.00 charge will be posted. Accounts that are habitually paid late are subject to additional action.

LATE CHARGES FOR AFTER 5:30 PICK UP

Children should be picked up promptly by 5:30 pm. There will be a late charge of \$2.00 per minute the parent is late. Repeated tardiness may result in a request to withdraw the child.

SUMMER TUITION POLICIES

Policy for Public School Teachers or Children Withdrawing for the Summer
Effective June 1, 2010, we have a new policy concerning Public School Teachers or Parents who want to withdraw their children for the summer. As you know we began a monthly billing process on Sept. 1, 2009 and we no longer accept part time children. However, we realize that during summer months we often have requests from parents who wish for their children to be withdrawn in the summer and return in the fall.

The following policy has been adopted for this situation:

Children who wish to withdraw for the summer will be required to pay \$100.00 per month to hold their position at Preschool. This \$100.00 fee will entitle that child to attend Preschool four times during that month. These dates to attend must be arranged in advance and are at the discretion of the director according to availability and staffing.

We will try to accommodate parents for the dates they request in advance.

Policies For Partial Months

When public school extends into a new month, parents may pay the daily rate of \$24.00 per day (under age 3) or \$21.00 per day (age 3 and up) to cover the extra days.

When public school starts in the middle of the month, the monthly fee to hold the position is \$50.00 (instead of 100.00). This \$50.00 will cover 2 drop in days from Aug. 1st through the time school starts for teachers. (For example if school starts on Aug. 23, and teachers go back on Aug. 16 – the period from Aug. 1 through Aug. 13 can be reserved for \$50.00 (2 drop in days).

The monthly rate for that partial month will be based on the daily rate of \$21.00 or \$24.00 x the number of days. (In August 2010 there would be 12 days from Aug. 16 through Aug. 31)

OTHER PART TIME CHILDREN IN THE SUMMER MONTHS

Only during Summer Months (when there is no public school) First Methodist Preschool will accept part time children (LESS THAN 5 DAYS PER WEEK) at a rate of \$25.00 per day. This rate is regardless of the age of the child or the number of hours during the day.

All Part Time drop in days must be arranged in advance and will be at the discretion of the director depending upon schedules, staffing, and ratios.

WE WILL ACCEPT CHILDREN FOR FULL TIME SUMMER ONLY ENROLLMENT AT OUR MONTHLY CURRENT RATES (\$515.00 Infant to Age 3 and \$450.00 – Age 3 and up). THERE IS A WAITING LIST FOR PART TIME SUMMER ONLY ENROLLMENT. ASK IN THE OFFICE

ILLNESS POLICY

The goal of First Methodist Preschool is to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children. In order to accomplish this we use the following guidelines from the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers:

Children are not admitted to Preschool if one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child-care center activities including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
3. The child has one of the following:
 - (A) Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - (B) Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - (C) Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness; or
 - (D) Symptoms and signs of possible illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea*, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be ill.
4. The child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease and does not have medical documentation to indicate that he is no longer contagious.

First Methodist Preschool uses the guidelines on Communicable Diseases from the Texas Department of Health. These guidelines include the following criteria: Incubation Period, Signs and Symptoms, Exclusion from Attendance, Readmission, Prevention, Treatment and Comments. Copies are available in the Preschool Office.

FIRST METHODIST PRESCHOOL PREFERS CHILDREN BE FREE OF FEVER AND SYMPTOMS FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. HOWEVER, IF THE CHILD HAS SEEN A DOCTOR AND HAS A SIGNED RELEASE WHICH SAYS HE IS NOT CONTAGIOUS, THEN HE MAY RETURN TO PRESCHOOL AFTER HIS SYMPTOMS SUBSIDE. HE WILL BE MONITORED AND SENT HOME AGAIN AS NEEDED.

The Director and Office Personnel will use their own best judgment as to when to send children home and allow them to return. The above policies will be followed to the best of their ability. However, in many cases this is a judgment call and their decision is the final authority.

* Definition of “uncontrolled diarrhea” will vary depending on the individual child, age of the child, and classroom situation. Decision will be made by Preschool office. First Methodist Preschool does not administer any oral medication. Parents are welcome to come to the school to administer medication to their own child at any time.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

CONFERENCES

Scheduled conferences may be requested to discuss the child's progress. Parents are urged to feel free to ask for conferences at any time. The appointment should be made at a time when the parents and the teachers are not responsible for the child since it is inadvisable to discuss the child in his or her presence. If you have any questions about your child's development, contact the Director.

FIELD TRIPS

Your child can not participate in any field trip without your approval and written permission. You will be notified in advance of any field trip. Infants and toddlers are never taken on field trips.

Parents are always welcome to go along on field trips. We also have several parties to celebrate holidays such as Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day. We welcome your assistance and attendance at our parties. We are always looking for ways to improve our program and welcome your suggestions.

If parents volunteer on a regular and frequent basis you may be asked to provide information for a criminal background check, complete a notarized affidavit about your background, and attend an orientation session in accordance with State Minimum Standards.

NEWSLETTERS

A monthly newsletter will be distributed to parents and will include information about school activities.

SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

All doors of our facility will remain locked throughout the day – (except for the Kaufman Street Main door at peak arrival and departure times). Everyone bringing children to Preschool will need to use the Kaufman Street main entrance.

If someone comes to the other entrances they will find them locked with signs which direct them to go to the main door. This main door will only be open from 7:15 am to 8:30 am in the morning and from 4:00 to 5:30 pm in the afternoons. If we have visitors at any other times they will need to ring the bell at the main door to get admittance. Arriving and departing children **MUST** use the Kaufman Street Main Entrance.

All our doors are equipped with panic hardware which allow easy exit from the inside in case of emergency. This meets state minimum standards and also city safety codes.

HEALTH

WEEKLY MENUS

The children will be furnished a well-balanced lunch each day. Breakfast will be provided in the morning and a snack in the afternoon. Weekly menus will be posted at the school.

Each class has a designated breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack schedule. If your child is arriving too late to participate in the scheduled breakfast or lunch time, please serve your child before arriving.

Please do not send food or candy with your child unless you are providing snack for the entire class.

BIRTHDAYS

Children enjoy sharing their birthdays with their friends. If you wish, send or bring cupcakes or a cake on your child's birthday. We will be happy to pass out birthday party invitations here at Preschool **AS LONG AS THE ENTIRE CLASS IS INVITED**. We can not give invitations out to a selected few as this could make some children feel left out. Thanks for your cooperation.

We will be glad to help you with addresses so invitations can be mailed.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Food allergies should be indicated on the Admission Application. These will be posted and called to the attention of the teacher and lunchroom staff.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

For the protection of your child as well as the other children in care, your child must have all vaccinations required by the Texas Department of Health. You must provide an immunization record upon enrollment and provide updates to that record whenever your child receives more immunizations.

For more information about immunizations, please visit the health department's website at www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

State law requires vision and hearing screenings for 4 year old children. As a convenience to our parents, we offer these screenings every April. We have staff members who are trained and qualified to perform these screenings and you will be notified if the screenings indicate a need for further testing.

TRANSPORTATION

We will transport school age children from McBay Elementary School in our bus. Staff and children must wear seat belts when they are in the bus. The bus is equipped with fire extinguishers and first aid kits. The staff carries cell phones so the center can be contacted in case of any situation. The staff also carried a notebook with emergency numbers and other important information for each child.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Clothing should be comfortable, washable, and suitable for the daily activities. A complete change of clothing for each child needs to be kept at school

Parents should notice weather conditions in deciding on appropriate wraps for the child to wear each day. On cold days, mittens and head coverings are important items of apparel. All children will be expected to engage in the outdoor portion of the session.

Clothing should be marked (to avoid loss) with the child's name. (This includes all articles of clothing to be left or worn at school as well as shoes and mittens.) All children must come to school with shoes on.

Show-N-Tell Day

First Methodist Preschool furnishes a variety of toys for your child. We would appreciate you not allowing your child to bring their own personal toys because they may be lost and damaged. Show-N-Tell Day will be held each Friday. On that day children may bring a toy, book, or tape to school. We are not responsible if these are lost or damaged.

NAPTINE BELONGINGS

Children can bring a *labeled* cover (*small* blanket, sheet, etc.) and /or a *small* pillow to be used at naptimes. First Methodist Preschool will provide cots and/or mats.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Children attending First Methodist Preschool will not be subject to harsh and/or cruel punishment, including spankings. Children will not be humiliated or subjected to abusive or profane language. No punishment is associated with food, napping, or toilet training.

Discipline and guidance will be consistent and based upon an understanding of the individual child's needs, and used to help teach the child acceptable behavior.

Children who continue to have unacceptable behavior may be asked to withdraw from First Methodist Preschool.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

HOLIDAY PARTIES AND PROGRAMS

Special activities will be available to children enrolled at First Methodist Preschool at various times throughout the year. Details will be distributed to each available activity.

Annual events include:

- Valentine's Party
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Annual Spring Open House
- Halloween Party
- Christmas Party

Parents are invited, welcome, and urged to attend all special activities.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Parents are encouraged to voice concerns, comments, complaints, etc. so that these can be handled as soon as possible. Preschool staff feels that by hearing from parents we have opportunities to make changes and improvements to benefit all children enrolled. By hearing parent's concerns, we have opportunity to investigate and communicate so that the best interests of the children are always served.

We ask that concerns be brought to the Director for handling since staff members are normally responsible for children, and are not at liberty to discuss particular items while children are present. The Director will talk to the staff members involved and follow up with concerned parents.

Administration and Communication

The parents may review a copy of the minimum standards and the center's most recent licensing inspection report located in the office. The parent may contact the local Licensing office at (800)772-2269, the PRS child abuse hotline at (800)352-5400 and the PRS website at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

STORYBOOK NOOK LIBRARY
FIRST METHODIST PRESCHOOL
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Mission Statement: The mission of the Storybook Nook Library at First Methodist Preschool is to provide age appropriate books for children and parents to take home to read together. Reading aloud is one of the most valuable gifts you can give a child. The simple act of reading to children lays the foundation for educational success. Reading aloud creates a bond between the adult and the child. The Storybook Nook Library will make books available to the families and staff of First Methodist Preschool and First Methodist Church.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Families who are enrolled at First Methodist Preschool, members of the First United Methodist Church, and Preschool staff members are eligible to use the Book Nook Library
2. Wednesdays are scheduled Library days for all upstairs groups, each group will go to the Library at scheduled times on Wednesday mornings.
3. One book per person may be checked out for a maximum of one week, the book may be taken home by the parent signing the Book Nook log located in the front of the Sign In books for each upstairs class.
4. Individuals checking out Book Nook Library materials are personally responsible for returning items to the library. They are responsible for replacing damaged or lost items at the current price.
5. All materials secured for the Book Nook are to be of highest quality and age appropriate for Preschool Age Children.
6. Gifts to the Book Nook are encouraged. You may donate monetary gifts to be used to buy books. You may also donate a particular book of your choosing keeping in mind the standards expected. These books can be designated in memory of or in honor of someone. An acknowledgement will be sent to the donor and to the honoree or honoree's family.
7. Gifts to the Book Nook will be permanent and no provisional gifts will be accepted.

STORYBOOK NOOK LIBRARY AGREEMENT

I agree to the policies and procedures of the First Methodist Preschool Storybook Nook Library and will follow these when using the library.

Children's Names

Date

Parent's Signature