

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRE-SCHOOL**

2018-2019

P.O. Box 311
Sterling City, Texas 76951
(325) 378-2080

DIRECTOR

LaNae McClure

**Please contact LaNae during Pre-School hours by calling the FUMC Pre-School. Teachers are not allowed to use cell phones during school hours. **

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Laura Enriquez
Claudia Silva
Davina Faulkner

BOARD MEMBERS

Kayton Abbott
Margaret Foley
Jessica Foster
Martha Foster
Ruthe Foster
Starr Foster
Sarah Sexton

PASTOR

Jim Nobles
Cell (361) 562-9147
Church (325) 378-3891

WELCOME

We welcome you and your family to FUMC Pre-School at the First United Methodist Church and look forward to supporting you in your role as parents. We hope that you will find FUMC Pre-School to be a wonderful place that continues to strengthen your relationship with your child and your child's relationship with the Lord.

At FUMC Pre-School, children learn academic skills, social skills, communication, and character development. They enjoy sensory play, develop gross motor skills on the playground and fine motor skills in the classroom, and participate in enrichment activities.

Most importantly, we strive to help the children know how much God loves them and how He created each of them special and unique. Bible stories and Bible verses are taught daily in all classrooms.

As with any service organization, however, we must set forth policy to promote the common good and ensure compliance with state rules and regulations. This handbook is written as a guide to summarize helpful information and to highlight our policies. We encourage you to keep it on hand and use it as a reference, but it is not intended to take the place of open, personal communication. We encourage you to voice any concerns you may have to the Director.

PHILOSOPHY

At FUMC Pre-School, our philosophy is based on a “commitment to excellence, as well as a commitment to our children, teachers, parents, and program.”

We are committed to providing the very best for each child in a Christian-based environment. We recognize that each child is unique, and our program encourages each child to explore and investigate at his or her own pace. Each child is surrounded by resources to stimulate curiosity, promote knowledge, and foster pride in individual accomplishment.

We are committed to providing our teaching staff with training, supervision, resources, and respect as they plan and implement creative and challenging activities for young minds.

We are committed to providing a warm, nurturing, safe, and loving environment at FUMC Pre-School while keeping parents actively involved in their child’s growth. We encourage parents to interact with our staff on a daily basis.

We are committed to providing age and individually appropriate programs that allow children to make choices. We also provide an environment where self-concepts are enhanced, independence is encouraged and individuality is respected. This promotes an appreciation for education and love for learning. We offer a thematic, whole language approach to learning by integrating curriculum through various centers that promote learning through multi-sensory experiences. Our learning approach allows each child to reach a higher level of thinking and understanding by creating an environment that is exciting, dynamic and fun.

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE

FUMC Pre-School is a ministry of the First United Methodist Church. We affirm that the Bible is our sole authority for spiritual instruction. We strive to follow the teaching of the Bible in all matters. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. We reject any teaching, tradition, or practice that conflict with the Word of God.

OUR PROGRAM

FUMC Pre-School School is not only a fun place to play, we are also an educational program designed to teach and develop the educational, spiritual, developmental, and social skills every child needs!

We are aware of the supportive role we play in the development and nurturing of your child's positive self-esteem. To facilitate our role, we plan activities that allow each child to experience successes, then we celebrate these successes together. Your child will participate in the following activities while at FUMC Pre-School:

1. Academics

Children are taught age-appropriate skills in all of the FUMC Pre-School Classes using Abeka Christian Curriculum. In the **2 and 3 year old class**, the curriculum prepares your three-year-old for preschool with a program precisely designed to address your child's cognitive development, pre-reading and numeracy skills, language acquisition, and school readiness.

Academics (cont.)

The curriculum also strengthens children's social, emotional, and spiritual development by leading students to know that God made them and gave them great gifts.

The **4 and 5 year olds** use the Abeka Preschool curriculum based upon the Bible, this complete preschool curriculum contains engaging lessons that help your child discover and learn social studies, language arts, math, phonics, and science from the viewpoint of the Creator. Arts and crafts, music, story times, outdoor excursions, and other exciting learning activities enhance each lesson's objectives and theme. Concepts are reinforced through games, songs, poems, and drama to prepare your preschooler for kindergarten in a Christian environment.

2. Singing/Music/Pledge of Allegiance

Children will participate in some type of singing/music activity each day. This involves singing new songs, playing musical games, and participating with band instruments appropriate for young children. We will also say the Pledge of Allegiance each day.

3. Readiness Skills

The teacher will work with the children on a wide range of readiness skills such as colors, shapes, numbers, alphabet sounds and recognition. These skills will be taught in fun ways including stories, games, art and music. Some skills may be taught in English *and* Spanish.

4. Art

Children work often with crayons, glue, scissors, paints, play dough and other materials in creative ways. This encourages development of fine motor skills.

5. Free time/Playtime/Physical Activity

Time will be set aside each day for free time/playtime/centers/physical activity, both inside and outside, as weather permits. We understand the importance of exercise for our students and strive to be outside 45 minutes in the morning and afternoon. In inclement weather physical activity will occur in the gym area. This time may be used to finish projects that have not been completed, as well as play using ride-on toys, playground equipment, etc.

6. Reading/Story Time

The ability to listen, to enjoy, and to participate in storytelling is a basic building block in early childhood education. Stories will be read by the teacher as well as by scheduled volunteers from the community.

7. Naptime

Children will participate in a supervised rest period in order to relax their bodies and regroup for other activities. Parents are asked to provide a blanket, nap mat and pillow for napping. Please select a smaller sized pillow and blanket to fit into your child's classroom storage cubby.

Children who have not fallen asleep within forty to forty-five minutes (and children who awaken) will be allowed to get up and do quiet activities while the other children nap.

The children will nap from 12:20-2:30 p.m. If your child is only attending half day, please pick your child up by 12:05 p.m. Please try not to interrupt naptime, if at all possible.

8. Centers

This is a time of child-led play using our classroom centers set up by the teachers. Centers may include art, dramatic play, blocks, home living, building, and other activities. This self-directed time allows children to practice goal setting and trial-and-error testing. It stimulates the learning process through pretend play and is an opportunity to learn how to share and cooperate with others.

9. Special Parties

Special parties and activities will be held throughout the year. If applicable, a Pre-School Graduation will be held at the end of the year for those children moving on to Kindergarten. (For information on Birthday Parties, see page 17.) Other special activities may be scheduled throughout the year. We regret that some of these may be on days that your child does not attend. If a special party or activity falls on a day that your child does not attend, a note will be sent home and your child will be allowed to attend during the special party or activity hours. We ask you to use the sign-in and sign-out policy for the party just as you would for regular attendance if you are dropping off your child for the party and then returning to pick them up in 1 hour.

10. Screen Time Policy

Our curriculum contains a video series of character education shows. Screen time occurs occasionally during exercise and music time. We incorporate bible story videos into the curriculum. Screen time will occasionally be used for a special party. Screen time will not exceed 1½ hours a day.

OUR STAFF

The FUMC Pre-School staff is the heart of the Pre-School. All of our staff meet or exceed the State of Texas Childcare Licensing requirements. Our staff is highly encouraged to obtain a yearly Flu vaccine as well as the Pertussis/Whooping Cough vaccine. The Pre-School is a 3 Star Texas Rising Star facility, as well as a Texas School Ready grant recipient.

Each year our staff members complete at least thirty hours of continuing education through professional conferences and in-service activities.

ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Enrollment

Enrollment packets must be completed and registration fees must be paid in order to enroll your child in FUMC Pre-School. Please complete all of the forms. If something does not apply, please write N/A. We are also required to have complete and up-to-date immunization records in your child's file.

Children will be placed in the appropriate classroom based on their age as of September 1st and on the availability of the classroom space.

Enrollment will be on a "first come, first serve" basis. An open enrollment date for current FUMC Pre-School families will be held prior to opening enrollment to the public. However, once enrollment is opened to the public, the "first come, first serve" policy will apply to everyone.

Enrollment (cont.)

A waiting list for each class will be maintained when enrollment is full. If a spot becomes available, the next family on the wait list will be contacted.

Admissions

FUMC Pre-School serves children ages 18 months through Pre-Kindergarten. We accept any child whose needs can be met in our setting and is able to participate and substantially benefit from our program without risk to himself/herself or to the other children.

FUMC Pre-School accepts all children, regardless of race, creed, color, religious belief, national origin, sex, or the presence of mental or physical handicap, providing our school has the staff and equipment required to meet the child's needs and who we feel will be able to participate and substantially benefit from our program without risk to himself/herself or to the other children.

FUMC Pre-School offers three classes, 18 months -2 ½, 2 1/2 -3 year olds and 4-5 year olds. The maximum class size for the 18 months is 9 students, 2-3 year old class is 15. The maximum class size for the 4-5 year old class is 17. Students attending 5 days a week are granted a spot each day.

Updating Information

It is the responsibility of the parents to keep us informed of any information changes so we can maintain up-to-date files. This would include, but is not limited to, immunization updates, changes in name, address, workplace, emergency numbers, pick-up authorization or a change in parents' marital status. For your convenience, updating this information is available without staff assistance by easily completing an Information Update Form, which is located on the Information Table, and placing the form in the drop box located outside the director's office door.

Enrollment Visit

FUMC Pre-School encourages each child new to our program to schedule a Visitation Day prior to his/her start date. This visit allows the child to meet his/her new teachers and peers, explore the classroom, and become familiar with the daily routine and activities beforehand. Additionally, parents can complete necessary enrollment forms and address any questions to the Director. This visit must be planned in advance and is contingent on the availability of space on any given day.

Registration Fee

An annual non-refundable fee of \$45.00 per child is required, which is due at the time of initial enrollment and again each year as enrollment continues. This fee applies to both full-time and part-time ("drop in") enrollees. Your registration fee holds your child's spot in the class you choose at registration.

First Right of Refusal

Students currently enrolled will have the first right of refusal for their current position for the following school year. When registration for the following school year opens, the student (or the student’s sibling) will have the option to keep his/her place for the upcoming year.

Tuition Payments and Policies

Your registration fee holds your child's spot in the class you choose at registration.

Tuition prices may increase year to year. Increases in tuition ensure that we can provide our teachers with cost of living increases, help us keep our classrooms in good condition and allows us to update and replace toys and materials in the classrooms.

Tuition is due the 1st day of each month. A tuition payment box is located outside the director’s office door for your convenience. Please make your checks out to FUMC Pre-School. A bookkeeping fee of \$25.00 will be charged for any check that is returned from the bank due to insufficient funds. Your tuition payment guarantees that your child’s place is reserved, so if you are on vacation or if your child is sick during the month, your tuition remains the same.

\$88/month	one day a week
\$176/month	two days a week
\$264/month	three days a week
\$352/month	four days a week
\$440/month	five days a week

Tuition Payments and Policies (Cont.)

After 12:00 p.m. of the 5th day of the month your payment is considered late and a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed. Additional \$10 fees will be assessed on the 10th, 15th, 20th, and 25th until the balance is paid in full. If tuition becomes 30 days delinquent the student will be suspended from FUMC Pre-School until the payment is received. You may meet with the director to discuss a payment plan if necessary.

Tuition covers your child's spot in the class, and therefore remains the same each month including holidays, closures, and absences. No refunds will be given.

When enrolling your child you must specify the day or days in which he/she will attend. If you would like to switch days one week or bring your child an additional day you will be required to contact the director seeking approval and pay the "drop-in" fee.

Sibling Discount

A sibling discount will be given to families with two or more children enrolled. When siblings attend on the same day, twenty-five percent (25%) will be deducted for each *additional* child's tuition fee. (Discount does not apply to Registration Fee.) You may not trade days between siblings. The day you signed each child up for is his/her day and he/she is the only one who can use that spot without approval by the director and paying the "drop-in" fee.

Drop – Ins

If you do not have a standing reservation, you may call the Director on the morning you would like to use the FUMC Pre-School program. If an opening is available, the director will have you come as a “drop-in.” You will be charged a daily rate of \$25.00 payable when signing in your child.

Absence

If your child will be absent, please inform the Director by 8:15 a.m. so that a “drop-in” may fill your position. If you plan to arrive **after 8:30 a.m.**, you **MUST** call or text the Director or your child’s spot will be made available for a drop-in student. We encourage you to have your child to school by 8:30 a.m. so they will not miss instructional time. All Children attending for the day must be present by 10:00 a.m. or will not be allowed to stay.

Right to Suspend or Dismiss

FUMC Pre-School reserves the right to suspend or dismiss children for unmanageable behavior such as hitting, kicking, biting, cursing, etc., or for educational or medical needs for which the school does not have the expertise to manage. For these circumstances, we will try to give you two weeks’ notice to make other arrangements unless we determine the situation is not in the best interest of your child or the other children in the classroom. We also reserve the right to discontinue service to a family if financial obligations are not met by the prescribed due dates.

Withdrawing a Child

Parents may withdraw their child at any time provided they submit a written notice of withdrawal fifteen days in advance. Fifteen days after the notice is received, their child is considered withdrawn and the parents no longer owe tuition from that point onward.

Since the Pre-School divides tuition into monthly payments, parents should be aware that a tuition payment could become due during the fifteen days notice period. Any tuition payments due before the fifteenth day are still considered owed. Children for which tuition is overdue may not re-enroll during the current school year or register for the following school year until the overdue payments are received.

Experience with preschoolers has shown that one way to make drop-off time less traumatic for a child is to discuss your leaving and returning with your child, followed by a quick hug and goodbye instead of a lingering or repeated farewell. Our teachers are experienced in helping children work through this time and typically we find that they are happy and playing very soon after drop-off. Rest assured, we will contact you if your child remains upset. Most of us are moms too and we certainly sympathize with how difficult this can be.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Policies

Parents are required to sign-in their child when arriving and then out when departing on a daily basis. Your sign-in/sign-out time and signature are to be entered legibly. If you arrive to the Pre-School after 8:30 the morning you will sign in with the Director and the Director will take your child to their assigned class. Children will be released only to adults authorized on their Enrollment Application. **Written permission must be obtained before releasing the child to an adult not previously authorized.** In emergency or short notice situations, families may use the **Remind phone app to let the director know in writing** who is authorized to pick up a child.

Proof of identity will be required for authorized pick-ups if the employees do not recognize or know the person or persons authorized for the pick-up. Children or siblings under 18 years of age are not permitted to sign themselves or their sibling in or out of the Pre-School. Local police will be contacted in cases in which employees suspect that the child is being released to parents or any other person who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you have not arrived to pick up your child by 4:00 p.m. and we are unable to reach you at work, home, or by cell phone, a person from your emergency list will be called to pick up your child. If no one comes CPS will be called. In order to support effective communication between children, parents, and staff, no cellphone usage is permitted during pick up and drop off. Pre-School staff are not allowed to sign students out and take them anywhere in their personal vehicle.

Hours of Operation

Operating hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday during the months included in the Sterling City ISD instructional school year. **There will be a \$5.00 late charge for each 15 minutes after 4:00 p.m. that you are late picking up your child.**

School Holidays/Bad Weather

FUMC Pre-School will follow the Sterling City ISD (SCISD) school calendar in most cases. We may occasionally close for severe weather. We will cancel our classes for bad weather if SCISD schools do so or if conditions are such that travel would jeopardize the well-being of our families and staff.

Should bad weather or other emergencies (power failures, tornadoes, blizzards, etc.) arise during the day, please refrain from calling us except for extreme emergencies, as we will be attending to your child. We will follow our posted Emergency Preparedness Plan. We will notify you if you need to pick up your child. If you cannot be located, we will try to reach another emergency contact authorized by you for pick-up.

Weekly tuition remains the same each week, regardless of school closures due to inclement weather.

FOOD

Meals and Snacks

ALL CHILDREN NEED TO BRING THEIR OWN LUNCH AND TWO SNACKS. Please send food in a container labeled with your child's name. Please send your child's snack in a separate container labeled with their name and "snack" printed on it, so teachers will know which item to feed during snack time. Teachers have many students to assist at lunchtime so easy-to-open containers and meals that students can open and/or assemble themselves are appreciated. Please remember that we do not have microwaves in our classrooms. Pack nutritious food that is ready to eat (i.e., nothing that needs to be heated prior to eating). Please include a cold pack to help keep food at the correct temperatures for food safety purposes. Foods and liquids hotter than 110* Fahrenheit must be kept out of children's reach. Please do not send glass bottles or any other type of glassware in your child's lunch. Please avoid red drinks and red Jello. NO SODAS, Please. We provide an adult sized seat that enables a mother to breastfeed her child. Mothers do have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care.

Meals and Snacks (Cont.)

The Department of Human Services and USDA guidelines suggest that you send a protein, fruit, and vegetable in your child's lunch. Sample menus are listed below:

Packing a Safe Lunch

Packing a safe lunch is easier than you may think! Here are some examples:

Example 1

- baked chicken leg (cold)
- cucumber circles
- cantaloupe slices
- oatmeal cookie
- low-fat milk



Which foods in this lunch need special handling?

Answer: The chicken, cut vegetable, cut fruit, and milk.

Send this lunch safely with your child by putting the milk into an insulated bottle and packing the entire lunch into an insulated lunch box with a frozen ice pack.

Example 2

- ½ peanut butter and jelly sandwich
- yogurt cup
- baby carrots
- 100% orange juice (in a juice box)



Which foods in this lunch need special handling?

Answer: The yogurt and the peeled carrots.

Send this lunch safely by packing it in an insulated lunch box with a frozen ice pack.

Example 3

- leftover lasagna
- canned fruit cup
- water



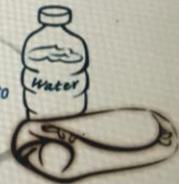
Which food in this lunch needs special handling?

Answer: The lasagna.

Send this lunch safely by heating the lasagna and putting it into an insulated container. Or send the lasagna cold in an insulated lunch box with a frozen ice pack.

Example 4

- bean and cheese burrito
- sliced strawberries
- water



Which foods in this lunch need special handling?

Answer: The burrito and cut strawberries.

Send this lunch safely by making the burrito the night before and storing it in the refrigerator. In the morning, pack the entire lunch in an insulated lunch box with a frozen ice pack. The burrito can safely be eaten cold or reheated.

Food (cont.)

Children 2-years-old and younger should have their food pre-cut into safe, bite-sized pieces. Foods such as Grapes, or hot dogs should be cut in **lengthwise pieces**.

FUMC Pre-School is a nut –free school.

NO POP CORN or gummy type fruit snacks are allowed for any age due to choking hazard.

We will encourage children to eat their food; however, we cannot force children to eat. If your child has a recurring eating problem, we will let you know. Our curriculum includes nutrition education and teachers talk about healthy food choices during lunchtime.

FUMC Pre-School serves water with snack and has water available for the children throughout the day. Please send a water bottle with your child daily. We will sometimes provide food for special occasions and this may include a special drink such as juice or lemonade.

Food Allergies: Parents must inform us of any known or suspected allergies of which we should be aware.

Our staff is trained on food allergies and we follow the Food Allergy Emergency Plan. The plan must be posted where food is served and prepared.

The Food Allergy Emergency Plan must include:

The child's name

What food the child is allergic to

Signs of allergic reaction if given the food

How to treat this reaction

Alternative food to be given when substituting

Signature from the child's health care professional

Clothing

Please send your child in comfortable clothing appropriate for the weather. We go outside, play hard, and do some messy craft activities so please do not send your child in anything that cannot get dirty.

Jewelry is discouraged and we are not responsible for lost items. Male students are not allowed to wear earrings at the Pre-School.

Clothing that children can manage easily (i.e. button/unbutton, zip/unzip) promotes independence and self-confidence. Shorts under dresses are encouraged.

Comfortable shoes that are **closed-toe/closed-heel** are preferred since the playground has rocks that can get inside shoes and cause discomfort and pain to little feet.

A change of clothing is required for children still in diapers or potty training (including socks and shoes). We also request that you send a complete change of clothes for children already potty trained to keep in case of emergency.

Cubbies, hooks, and/or baskets are provided for each child's clothing and belongings. If your child loses any item of clothing, please inform us immediately.

Visitors/Volunteers

Your family is part of our big FUMC Pre-School family and we love to see your faces in our hallways, too! Parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom. We feel blessed when parents volunteer to help out with special events, projects, parties. Please contact the Director to schedule a time to help or visit.

Birthdays

We recognize that birthdays are a very special occasion for children. We encourage you to celebrate this time with your child by bringing a simple treat such as cookies and juice to be shared with classmates. **However, all food brought for parties must be commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen inspected by health officials.** Please make arrangements with the teacher prior to this special day. Many children have food allergies and it is important for you to know this prior to bringing food for parties. If you send invitations to school with your child, please consider inviting all of the girls or all of the boys or all students in the class. If you do not wish to invite that many children, we ask that you distribute your invitations outside of school.

Guidance and Discipline Policies

A critical area of our curriculum is helping children gain self-control. This goal is best achieved in a loving, supportive environment where children are treated with respect and consistency.

Self-discipline is a prerequisite for success in life. We learn discipline through self-control. Christian discipline is learned by submitting to authority at home, school, and church. Our positive discipline approach begins with redirection. We will talk to children about their choices and help them learn appropriate behaviors and language to meet their needs. Older children will be taught problem-solving skills when they experience difficulty.

Guidance and Discipline Policies (cont.)

Teachers may use time out as a last resort. Time out will be no longer than one minute per year of the age of the child.

After time out, the teacher will talk to the child about what happened and help them learn what they can do differently next time they are in a similar situation.

If a child injures another person, an incident report will be completed for the parent or guardian's signature. If a problem persists, the Director will contact the parents and work with them to design and implement a more detailed discipline plan to resolve the situation. Please refer to the Challenging behavior policy.

Discipline will be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;
and
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

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

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements
3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements
4. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age

Guidance and Discipline Policies (cont.)

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited at FUMC Pre-School:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age

We cannot write enough guidelines to fit every child or situation. Therefore, each child is treated as an individual, and parents are expected to work as partners with the FUMC Pre-School staff in helping the child practice self-discipline in the classroom.

We recognize that children often respond to changes and situations they do not fully understand. It is important that you keep the FUMC Pre-School staff informed of matters that may be affecting your child's behavior. In this way, we can offer support when they are at our school. Our goal is to assist you in raising a happy, well-adjusted child. We can accomplish this goal best through mutual respect, communication, and support.

Aggressive and Challenging Behavior

The FUMC Pre-School is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children, the program engages solely in positive redirection helping children learn appropriate behaviors when expressing their needs. We believe that all behavior communicated a need or feeling when the need or feeling is acknowledged an appropriate response can be learned. We provide opportunities for the students to develop self-control/regulation.

We are proactive and have set a process in place to minimize challenging behavior. The following are the steps we follow:

1. We acknowledge the child's feelings and needs.
2. We clearly state the boundaries, expectations, and limits.
3. We discuss acceptable behavior.
4. We offer the child logical choices.
5. We provides opportunities to practice the appropriate behavior.

Challenging behaviors are defined as behaviors that are harmful to the child/teacher, hurtful/harmful to others and destructive to physical environment.

Aggressive and Challenging Behavior (cont.)

First Occurrence: Caregiver will visit with the child regarding the inappropriate behavior, and the expectations of the program. The caregiver will ask the child what contributed to that behavior. After listening to the child and validating the underlying feelings both caregiver and child (when age appropriate) will develop a strategy to address the situation in an appropriate manner in the future.

Second Occurrence: The caregiver will visit with the child regarding the inappropriate behavior, request the child state the expectation and the possible appropriate choice he/she could have made in responding to the situation. At this time, the caregiver will discuss with the child (when age appropriate) the possible logical consequences if this behavior is repeated. If the child refuses to respond to the caregiver's questions then the child may need to explain the situation to the parent.

Third Occurrence: The Director will meet with parents and child (when age appropriate) to discuss the possible consequences of the child's continued disruptive/noncompliant behavior. The parents will be advised if the behavior does not stop the student may be asked to leave the program.

Fourth Occurrence: After the 4th occurrence, the parents will receive written notification that their child may no longer attend the program.

Biting Policy

As we know, biting is a common occurrence among children ages 2 and under who do not have language to express their feelings. Biting occurs for many reasons whether it is teething, a lack of language, frustration, attention-getting, being overly tired or simply just trying to get a reaction from someone.

Even though biting is a perfectly normal stage of development during childhood, specifically for children ages 2 and under, it is required by the Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing Division that FUMC Pre-School maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children in care.

If biting occurs, the bitten area will be washed with soap and water and the child will be comforted by their teacher. The teacher will then discuss the incident with the child who bit and follow our discipline policy as stated above. An incident report will be completed for both children involved. Parents or guardians will be asked to sign the incident report at pick-up.

Biting Policy (cont.)

If a specific biting incident continuously occurs, the following procedures will take place...

- If your child bites 2 times (as long as the skin on the other person is not broken) during any one day, then your child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
- If at any time the skin is broken due to a bite, then the child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
- If the biting continues, the Director will contact the parents and work with them to design and implement a more detailed plan to resolve the situation.
- If the biting continues after the detailed plan is implemented, or the biting is adding undue stress on the other children and/or the environment, it may become necessary to dismiss your child from FUMC Pre-School. This is not something that we like to do and please know that this would be the last resort.

Crying

If a child cries and is inconsolable for 30 minutes, the Director will contact the child's parent(s). If this is a persistent problem, then the child may be dismissed at the discretion of the FUMC Pre-School.

TOYS

Toys are provided in each classroom. For hygiene reasons, and to avoid unnecessary disruptions, please leave personal toys at home. Also, no candy, gum, money, guns, or other weapons are allowed in school. Your child may be asked to bring a toy for special occasions such as show-and-tell, PJ Day, and other classroom events. In those cases, please remember that the toy may be shared with other students and could be carried to other rooms. Labeling toys and personal items is always a good idea. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FUMC Pre-School holds monthly fire drills and quarterly natural disaster drills. In the event of an emergency evacuation away from the premises. The director will instruct teachers to load children into any vehicles available to remove the children from the Pre-School to the emergency evacuation location. The teachers will be responsible for acquiring the emergency class back packs with parent and emergency contact telephone numbers for each child in care and the authorizations for emergency care for each child. The director and staff will notify parents and coordinate necessary supervision and continued care of the children until a parent, guardian, or an authorized individual picks up the child from the evacuation location.

Our emergency evacuation location is Sterling County Sheriff's Office at 610 3rd Street in Sterling City. 325-378-4771.

Medical Emergency

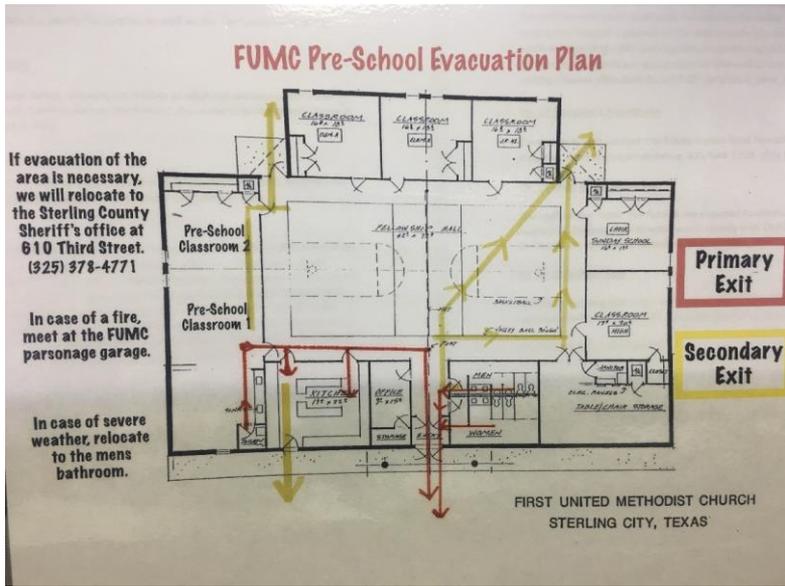
1. First Aid Kits are located in each classroom and teachers are required to carry one during recess. A first aid kit is also located in the office.
2. Whenever a child is seriously hurt or sick, the child will be brought to the Director's office.
3. In a true emergency we will call 911.

Weather Emergency

1. In the event of severe weather, such as a tornado, children and teachers will take shelter in the men's restroom of the building.
2. Teachers will take attendance and do an immediate name-to-face attendance from their sign in sheet. They will make every attempt to keep children calm and still during the storm.
3. The Director will initiate an immediate search of the school.
4. Once the all-clear sign has been given, the Director and church staff members will check the facility for damages then resume class as usual.

Fire Emergency

1. Fire Extinguishers are located throughout the Pre-School.
2. In the event of a fire, or other disasters necessitating the need to evacuate, we will quickly move the children away from the disaster area and to the nearest outside exit.
3. Students and teachers will evacuate following Our Fire Evacuation Plan. The Director will call 911 and check the building to make sure everyone has evacuated.
4. Teachers will take an immediate name-to-face attendance from the sign in sheet.



Intruder Emergency

In the event that FUMC Pre-School has an intruder/volatile person in the building, the Director will attempt to calm the person and keep them as far away as possible from the area where children are located. The Director will call 911 and alert the teachers as quickly as is safely possible and teachers will lock their classroom doors and keep children as far from doors and windows as possible. Teachers will keep the children calm, quiet, and hidden until an all clear signal is given. Intruder drills are conducted three times a year.

LICENSING AND SAFETY

FUMC Pre-School is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. We work closely with our local licensing representatives to ensure that our programs meet and exceed the minimum standards outlined by the State. A copy of the most recent Licensing Inspection Report is posted on the bulletin board. Additionally, if you are unclear regarding rules and regulations governing childcare in Texas, please ask for a copy of our “Minimum Standards.” a copy of the state minimum standards is also posted on the wall or can be accessed online at:
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/child_care_standards_and_Regulations.

Complaint Procedures

If at any time you have a problem or a concern that you feel is not being addressed properly, **please first contact the FUMC Pre-School Director**. Questions or concerns that are not satisfactorily resolved between the parent/guardian and the Director should be brought to the attention of the Pre-School Board. The Board will schedule a meeting to address the concern(s) within two weeks of the initial complaint. The Board requests that the parent/guardian provide a written explanation of the complaint which can be placed in the child's cumulative file.

The Board also asks that, upon expressing a concern or complaint, **parents/guardians approach the Director and/or Pre-School Board member amicably and at an appropriate time and location**. If an issue is such that it must be addressed during Pre-School hours, the Director and parent/guardian will discuss the matter confidentially (i.e., the issue will not be addressed in the classroom in the presence of the children attending Pre-School). As we are committed to providing a warm, nurturing, safe, and loving environment at the Pre-School for our children, we wish to uphold this mission and provide positive adult interactions in the presence of *all* children attending our Pre-School.

Parents may also contact Aileen Garcia, at the local licensing office at 432-638-2693 or Chila Houston, licensing representative, 432-684-3209,

chila.houston@hsc.state.tx.us

Child Abuse Reporting

FUMC Pre-School is required by Texas State Law and Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) to report immediately to law enforcement or Child Protective Services any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child.

All employees are required to have annual training on preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children. The center will stay up to date on methods for increasing employee and parent awareness on issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect. These methods will also include increasing employee and parent awareness on prevention techniques for child abuse and neglect. The center will also have strategies for coordination with appropriate community organizations, who are knowledgeable in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, including actions that the parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should take to obtain assistance and intervention. We will assist parents in calling police or the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400) and/or woman's shelter.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND OR NEGLECT PROCEDURES & POLICIES

The school will report to Social Services any suspected child abuse and/or neglect and will use the following procedures and policies for reporting suspected child abuse and/or neglect:

PROCEDURES

1. Observe child for any unusual marks, bruises, bites, or signs of abuse or neglect.
2. Document any signs of abuse/neglect and parental response in students file in office.
3. Notify the Director immediately of any questionable abuse/neglect.
4. If deemed necessary, the Director will call the parent for further clarification.

POLICIES

1. Teachers and/or the Director will record detailed notations in the child's personal file, including dates, times, a description of the incident, conversations with parents and the child, and/or observations of possible signs of child abuse/neglect.
2. In case of suspected abuse/neglect, the Director or teacher will notify the authorities. All suspected cases of child abuse/neglect will be reported to the proper authorities.
3. The Director will report to the State Licensing Authority.

Missing Child Procedures

1. Notify FUMC Pre-School Director IMMEDIATELY.
2. Initiate an indoor search. Director will assign staff to branch out over the immediate outdoor area being certain to keep children in the center well supervised.
3. Director will notify parent if child is not located immediately.
4. Director will notify police and give them a complete description of missing child.
5. Description of the event will be written down and placed in child's personal file.
6. Director will notify the State Child Care Licensing Authority by phone of any incident involving a lost or missing child.

Gang Free Zone

We are required to notify you that under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

PRS child abuse hotline can be reached at 800-252-5400, or access the PRS website at www.tdprs.state.tx.us.

The local licensing office may be reached at 432-638-2693 or Chila Houston, licensing representative, 432-684-3209, chila.houston@hhsc.state.tx.us .

Child Custody Situations

In cases of divided child custody or legal visitation, we must have a copy of the court order on file with the FUMC Pre-School. Any variation from the court ordered custody or legal visitation will require prior **written** consent from the custodial parent, otherwise, release of the child will be denied.

Fire Drills

Fire Drills will be conducted at Pre-School on a monthly basis at various times of the day. Each classroom has an outlined evacuation plan and a designated meeting area outside the center. Staff members are trained in evacuation procedures.

Incident Report

If any major or minor injury should happen while at FUMC Pre-School, an Incident/Illness Report Form will be completed detailing the incident and the care administered.

In the case of minor incidents, parents will be notified upon picking up their child (whether their child was the inflictor or recipient). In the event of a more serious injury, we will contact you immediately.

Video Surveillance Policy

Video surveillance is installed in the classrooms for the health and safety of your child. Only the director, the licensing authorities or law enforcement will view the video.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

Disease and illness can often be shared and easily spread in schools due to the large number of children, and the ages of these children, spending hours together in one place every day, and exposure from school-age siblings to disease and illness. Additionally, we realize the personal contact and interaction of young children and our faculty is such that germs are shared on a regular basis. Even with appropriate hygiene practiced regularly, both at home and school, illness and disease can spread in school environments. We have established a Health Care Policy to help us reduce/minimize the illness or disease exposure to the children, staff, and families. **It is to everyone's advantage that the health policies and procedures of our school be respected and adhered to at all times.** This will ensure a much healthier environment for children, parents, and faculty at FUMC Pre-School.

****No child may be left who has a fever, cold, cough, contagious skin disease or communicable disease. Please do not send your child to FUMC Pre-School if he/she does not feel well, or has had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within the past 24 hours (minimum!).**

FUMC Pre-School will consult the Texas Department of Health's "Communicable Disease Reference Chart for School Personnel" if and when clarification is needed regarding an illness or disease.

Health Care (Cont.)

If your child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be isolated from the group and you will be contacted to pick up your child **within the hour**. As some of our families include working parents, it is advisable to have an alternate care plan in place should your child become ill.

Attendance is at our discretion. FUMC Pre-School may exclude any child from care whom we feel to be: 1) physically or emotionally unable to participate in daily activities or 2) requiring one-on-one attention that may compromise other children's care.

Daily Health Check

Faculty will conduct daily health checks to screen and protect the children in our care. If your child is observed with a SYMPTOM, an Incident/Illness Report Form will be filled out informing you of the symptom and you will be reminded of our policy regarding attendance versus exclusion.

Health Care Policy Requirements of Parents

A permanent registration form must be filled out and signed prior to the child's first day at Pre-School. This form contains important emergency information and a Medical Release allowing us to seek medical aid for your child in case you cannot be reached. **We must have on file an updated medical record of your child's immunizations that must be complete and signed by your doctor.** Immunizations must be received according to the guidelines of the Texas Department of Health.

Health Care (Cont.)

The State-required medical form stating that a child is able to participate in childcare must be completed and signed by a physician not more than one year after admission.

The State-required vision and hearing screening must be completed on children who are four years of age upon enrollment, and also on those children who are four years of age by September 1 of each year.

We have carefully outlined our policies and procedures regarding illness versus attendance:

****Keep your child at home when symptoms of illness or disease are present.** We know it is not practical or realistic to expect parents to keep children at home every time they have a runny nose. (NOTE: This IS referring to a “clear” runny nose, as with allergies, not a “green/yellow” runny nose, as with a cold!) However, it is equally impossible for staff to: 1) provide one-on-one care for ill children without compromising the care of other children and, 2) be relied upon as medically trained professionals.

Keep Us Informed

Tell us if your child has been exposed to an illness or disease. Faculty can then be prepared and alerted to the specifics of an illness or disease.

Report Illnesses or Diseases

Let us know when an illness or disease is diagnosed so we can take preventative measures to protect the health of the other children. Let us know the danger signs to look for and any precautions we might take.

Absences

If your child will be absent, please contact the Director. Children who have been ill and have required medical attention (i.e., have been taken to the doctor), **must provide a written authorization** from a doctor, P.A., or nurse practitioner concerning when they may return to care.

COMMON ILLNESS PROCEDURES

1. Fever

Any child with an oral temperature of 100.7 degrees Fahrenheit or more, or 99 degrees Fahrenheit or more under the arm **shall be excluded from care for the remainder of that day and the following days until free of fever for 24 hours (minimum)**. We will **not** administer Tylenol or any other medication.

2. Vomiting

A child having any occurrence of vomiting while in our care **will be excluded from care that day and the following days until having gone 24 hours (minimum) without any further occurrences**. Vomiting is more than spitting up. It can be caused by an obstruction, flu, respiratory infection, medication, allergic reaction, etc., and does indicate medical attention may be needed. We may exclude a child from care if we feel the situation, illness, or disposition of the child warrants this action.

3. Diarrhea

If a child has any occurrence of loose stools while in our care, **we will exclude them from care that day and the following days until having gone 24 hours** (minimum) without any further occurrences. Watery, loose stools generally indicate a bacterium, virus, or parasite may be present. **Children having diarrhea caused by teething, medication, or food intolerance should not be in care if their condition cannot be stabilized within 24 hours.** If diarrhea is being controlled by Pedialyte, Imodium, BRAT diet, etc., the stooling will slow, but the child may still be contagious, thus we feel that the child should not be in our care.

4. Eye Discharge/Pink-Eye/Conjunctivitis

Any child having drainage, discharge, or pink and itchy eyes will be immediately excluded from care. Pink-Eye is Conjunctivitis and can be caused by many germs and viruses. Children must be seen by a physician and **treated for 24 hours (minimum)** prior to returning to care.

5. Head Lice

Any children suspected or diagnosed with head lice will be excluded from care until **one** treatment of RID, KWELL, etc., have been applied. Parents must complete two treatments 7 days apart or use as directed by the chosen treatment product. Students cannot stay at school with live lice. We also require parents to wash all the child's personal belongings (blankets, coats, hats, stuffed animals, pillows, etc.) prior to returning to care.

6. Respiratory or Nasal Drainage

Any child having progressive symptoms of a respiratory infection (nasal mucus, watery eyes, congestion, etc.) for three consecutive days will be excluded from care at our discretion. We will **not** administer medications intended to treat these kinds of symptoms. Any child having these kinds of symptoms **must** be able to participate in regular activities or they will be excluded from care. Also refer to “runny nose” description/instructions on page 18.

7. Severe or Progressive Coughing

Any child having severe or prolonged coughing that interrupts their daily activities will be excluded from care at our discretion. If the child has a high-pitched, croupy sound associated with the cough, we will: 1) require medical advice prior to continuing any administration of cough medicines or prescriptions, and 2) will exclude them from care until symptoms disappear or are stabilized.

8. Skin Rash, Lesions, or Diaper Rash

Any child having an undiagnosed rash or lesion will be excluded from care until diagnosed and/or treated as necessary. As with many illnesses, the effects on a child may be such that the child is unable to be in care, even though they may not be contagious (ex. diaper rash can be a real discomfort!). If diaper ointment is necessary and sent to the preschool, please label with your child’s name. In those circumstances, attendance is at the discretion of the faculty.

9. Communicable Diseases

Any child having symptoms of a known communicable disease will be excluded from care immediately. These include, but are not limited to:

Strep throat	Chicken pox	Measles
Bacterial meningitis	Diphtheria	Hepatitis
Pneumonia	Mumps	Rubella

Children diagnosed with a communicable disease may return to care when cleared by a physician or nurse practitioner **through written notification**. If their illness requires antibiotics, they must be treated for 24 hours (minimum) prior to returning. (Strep throat is an exception that requires a minimum of 48 hours of treatment.) Please report any communicable or contagious diseases immediately so we may inform other families of the germ, as well as contact the local health department for further guidance and information.

10. Participation without Restriction

Any child unable to participate in regular activities may be excluded from care at our discretion. If a child needs special attention, has severe diet restrictions, is needing to stay indoors and/or have limited activity, etc., their care may be such that the care of other children is significantly compromised. Thus, we feel it appropriate for children to be kept at home until such time as they are able to participate in regular activities.

Medication Management

Our teacher(s) cannot accept responsibility for administering a child's medication. Blanket authorizations from a physician are allowed **only** for certain chronic or life-threatening conditions requiring medication. These authorizations must include a signed statement from the child's physician or a prescription indication that the treatment is for the above-mentioned life threatening condition. Ex. Inhaler, blood sugar, breathing treatment or Epi- pen.

Record Keeping

FUMC Pre-School maintains records of all medication, parent consent forms, administration logs, and non-prescription authorization forms. We also record major illness and minor and major injuries or incidents.

Major Emergencies

In case of a major emergency the director or a staff member will call 911. Staff will stay with the injured child while other staff are supervising the other children in care.

Minor Emergencies

In the case of minor injuries such as small cuts, bruised strains, or bumps, a Pre-School staff member trained in first-aid will take the appropriate steps for treating your child's injury. The staff member will fill out an Incident/Illness and you will be notified of the incident when picking up your child that day. We will inform you immediately if the injury is of a more serious nature or if your child requires any additional medical attention.

Minor Emergencies (cont.)

When a child must be picked up from school due to fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or communicable illness, his/her sign-out time will be noted and the child will not be allowed to return before the outlined 24-hour waiting period has been met. If your child continues to run fever, vomit, etc. after picking him/her up from Pre-School, please be considerate of the other children and keep him/her at home for at least 24 hours after his/her last episode of vomiting, diarrhea, etc. We thank you in advance for your cooperation!

MISCELLANEOUS

Animals

Animals brought to the Pre-School must have health papers on file in the Pre-School office. Prior arrangements need to be made so all families can be notified the day before the animal is coming to the Pre-School.

Parent Conferences

Although it is our desire to make your experience at FUMC Pre-School an enjoyable one, we realize that situations arise where you feel a concern needs to be addressed. Please feel free to **call and make an appointment** with the Director at any time. Unscheduled conferences take the teacher's attention from the rest of the class and could result in an accident.

Parent Notifications

Families will be notified of announcements, messages and reminders through the Remind phone app. The director also post important notices on the front door of the building and at each sign in/out sheet table.

Diapers/Toilet Training

For children in diapers, FUMC Pre-School requires that you supply **disposable** diapers for your child while they are in our care. For those children starting toilet training, we approach this as a team effort between parents and teacher. We understand that consistency is the key to success. Do talk to us so we can best support and encourage the training process. If your child is toilet training, you will need to supply all disposable diapers, pull-ups, and additional clothing should your child have any "accidents."

If you have a need for using cloth diapers due to allergies, skin problems, or other special situations, please discuss this with the Director. Please note, the State Health Department does not allow for the rinsing or laundering of soiled diapers or training pants in child care facilities.

All students' diapers will be checked every hour. This will be done by opening up the diaper, not by using a feel technique or by checking the indicators on the outside of the diapers. Diapers and pull-ups will be changed every other time (every 2 hours) even if they are not soiled. If a parent does not want their child's diaper changed every hour, the parent must provide a written note stating that they do not want their child's diaper changed unless soiled. A log of the actual time of each diaper change will be kept each day for all kids in diapers or pull ups.

Pocket Possessions

We ask you to be alert for small objects that may occasionally go home in the pockets of your child. Please return any items to us as soon as possible as each item contributes to the program offered at FUMC Pre-School.

Trashables to Teachables

There will be times your child's teacher will ask you to bring items from home to support the activities in the classroom. These items may be used for props in the dramatic play area, for art projects, to reinforce the topic of the week, or simply to take apart and put back together. Some items requested might be: dress-up clothing, food boxes or containers, paper towel or tissue holders, egg cartons, milk/water jugs, appliances (minus the cords). We would appreciate your participation!

We Want to Hear From You

Please share with us any relevant information concerning your child that would help us better meet their needs, such as the death of a loved one, major changes in your family situation, exciting or unexpected new things your child is doing at home, disposition, or behavior changes that may have occurred.

Suggestions and Comments

We welcome your suggestions and your comments regarding our school. Please feel free to talk to our Director with your ideas or drop a written or typed suggestion in the payment/suggestion box. We want to continue to improve our programs and services to meet the needs of the families we serve. Our Policies are renewed annually and updated as necessary.

Communications

You may “like” us on Facebook@Sterling City FUMC Pre-School or visit our website @ www.scfumcpreschool.com We use the Remind Texting app, posted notices above the sign In/Out sheets and/ or the entrance doors to disseminate information. The director keeps a phone log of parent communications. You will have access to important messages from the staff and updates.

Conclusion

We have provided this Parent Handbook to clarify the policies and procedures of FUMC Pre-School and its operations. If you have any questions, please contact the Director. We hope you and your child/children have an enjoyable and memorable early childhood experience in our care.

Thank you for choosing FUMC Pre-School