

**Union United Methodist Church
Tots /Preschool / Kindergarten**

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Irmo, South Carolina 29063**

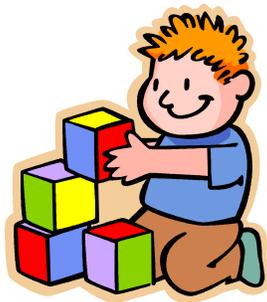
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Learning Through Play

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/FAX NUMBER/TAX ID
2. TABLE OF CONTENTS
3. DIRECTOR'S LETTER
4. MISSION STATEMENT/PURPOSE/PHILOSOPHY
5. PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN AIMS
 - A. Physical Development
 - B. Social Development
 - C. Mental Growth Development
6. PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN AIMS
 - A. Emotional Development
 - B. Spiritual Development
7. PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN POLICIES
 - A. Asthma/Allergies
 - B. Birthday and Holiday Parties
 - C. Carpool Procedures
 - D. Child Discipline
 - E. Conferences
 - F. Emergency Information
 - G. Employees / Field Trips
 - H. Grievance Procedures
 - I. Health Requirements
 - J. Hours of Operation
 - K. Inclement Weather
 - L. Insurance Regulations
10.
 - M. Kindergarten Recognition
 - N. OSHA Guidelines
 - O. Parent Participation
 - P. Personal Belongings
 - Q. Pick-Up Authorization
 - R. Receipts
 - S. Record of Immunization
11.
 - T. Registration
 - U. Show and Tell
 - V. Signing In and Out
 - W. Solicitations/Endorsements
 - X. Toilet Training
 - Y. Tracking
 - Z. Tuition
12. Z. Tuition
13. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS
 - A. Early Bunch
 - B. Lunch Bunch
14. C. Enrichment Classes
15. A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

We all know if a bridge is not structurally sound, it will eventually collapse. Likewise, if relationships are not built on a sturdy foundation, they too will fail. I want to assure you that our staff will willingly begin the home/school relationship with an open sharing approach, which leads to a trusting relationship. You have made a wise choice in choosing Union United Methodist Preschool/Kindergarten. We look forward to loving, playing, and teaching your child.

We are looking forward to a happy association with you and your child. When your child attends preschool and kindergarten here, he or she comes to build habits and attitudes which will be a help in learning skills all through the education years. This is a place where your child will learn to work and play with others, develop skills at his or her own rate of growth and express ideas through group living, creative activities, language experiences, music experiences, science, health and safety, mathematical concepts, social sciences, and physical development.

Clearly, ongoing interaction and support from both family and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. You can help by sharing information about your child with us, especially during any crisis or period of change. In turn, we will alert you to anything out of the ordinary that we might notice about your child. Only by sharing information can we build a bridge strong enough to support our children.

May the Lord richly bless both you and your child this year.

*Yours in Christian Service,
Barbie Creswell*

**Union United Methodist Church
Preschool / Kindergarten**

MISSION STATEMENT

In partnership with the congregation of Union United Methodist Church, the community and the parents of our children, the mission of Union United Methodist Church Preschool and Kindergarten, is to enable all children to be in a secure, caring and nurturing Christian environment. This is accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities, challenging instructional programs characterized by innovative teaching, active learning, and anti-bias curriculum for all God's children.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Union United Methodist Preschool/Kindergarten is to give children their first exposure to education and social development within a Christian environment; to make available to each child a wide variety of educational experiences to meet his individual needs at his own developmental level; and to socially guide the child to respect others while striving for personal excellence. In order to accomplish these goals, the essential element is an atmosphere in which to promote a strong Christian foundation on which to build a future. Union Preschool and Kindergarten is a ministry of Union United Methodist Church. We are thankful for the opportunity to extend our ministry in the area of preschool education.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The intent of our program is to encourage and support the development of the individual, and to provide opportunities for self-exploration and discovery within a Christian environment. An assumption of the program is that children are active and curious; it is our goal to provide learning experiences designed to stimulate the child's creative learning abilities.

The overall development (cognitive, social, emotional, and physical) of the child is considered and planned for through a variety of activities. It is our objective to learn the needs of the individuals in our program and to plan for the successful fulfillment of these needs. Positive development of the child's image of self is of prime importance in the program and is a priority in all aspects of program planning.

The young child is a member of his family. It is our aim to work with the family in creating the best possible environment for the child while he is at school.

Preschool and Kindergarten Aims

Early Childhood Education is effective when it takes into account and provides adequately for the unique educational needs of young children. Specifically, these needs center upon the mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and social characteristics of young children.

Union Preschool welcomes all children and does not discriminate because of race, religious, physical, or mental differences. However, our facilities, equipment, staff training and ratio numbers limit our ability to meet the needs of some students. Therefore, admittance and continuance in our program will be considered and reviewed on an individual basis by the Director.

Physical Development

An environment conducive to the physical development and well-being of the preschool/kindergarten child provides opportunities for the child to:

- find acceptable outlets for tension and emotions
- develop muscular control, coordination, and grace
- enjoy being a participant in physical activities
- develop a sense of rhythm
- learn to care for his body and to value physical health
- learn and practice rules of safety

Social Development

A preschool/kindergarten room in which democratic living is practiced will help the child to:

- understand his home and community
- learn from the group
- respect rules and understand the process of ordered social relationships
- share and take turns
- practice politeness, thoughtfulness, and orderliness
- solve his own problems
- respect the rights and property of others
- achieve an understanding of the fact that people are alike, as well as different

Mental Growth Development

An environment that contributes to the mental growth and development will assist the preschool/kindergarten child to:

- expand his perception of the world
- express himself orally
- develop listening skills appropriate for differing activities
- express his ideas clearly
- express himself through dramatic play
- increase his vocabulary
- enjoy books and poetry
- learn many songs, poems, and stories
- follow instructions

- increase his ability to plan and evaluate
- develop perceptual discrimination, reasoning, and memory

Emotional Development

A preschool/kindergarten climate should provide a happy, realistic, interesting, and friendly environment for the child. Efforts are made to:

- help him accept guidance and authority
- help him learn to live away from home and family
- help him develop a sense of humor
- help him discover and use socially acceptable behavior patterns
- give him the opportunity to experience the joy and relaxation derived from self-expression and physical activity
- help him develop a positive self-image

Spiritual Development

The preschool/kindergarten program will help your child to:

- grow in his knowledge of God; His love and care; to find ways of expressing his love to God
- strengthen his appreciation of God's creation
- grow in his ability to communicate with God



Preschool / Kindergarten Policies

Asthma/Allergies

If your child suffers from asthma or allergies that require an inhaler or epi-pen you must complete medical release information forms. You may request these from the preschool office.

Birthdays/Holiday Parties

You are invited to share in your child's birthday, if you wish, by coming to the class as arranged with the teacher. You may want to provide a special treat for the class. We ask that you DO NOT bring favors or goodie bags for the children. DO NOT BRING BALLOONS.

Parents are asked to send a wrapped gift for our Birthday boxes. This gift should cost no more than \$5. Please label the gift "boy" "girl" "either".

We will not send any party invitations through the Preschool/Kindergarten.

You will have the opportunity to donate a book or CD to our school library in honor of your child on his or her birthday. We ask that you allow your child to help you choose a hardback book or CD. Your child may bring it to school on the day designated for his or her birthday party. It will remain in your child's classroom for his or her class to share. Your child's name will be placed in the book or CD denoting that it was given to our library in honor of your child on his or her birthday. All books and CDs donated will be listed in the newsletter each month.

We will have a Fall, Valentine, and Easter party. End of year activities will be determined by age level.



Carpool Procedures

There are 3 separate carpool lines:

- ❖ One carpool line is for those children whose classes are housed in the Wesley Center/gym (3's and 4's). It is located behind the Wesley Center Gym.
- ❖ The second carline is for those children whose classes are housed in the Educational Building (1's and 2's). It is located in the front of the Education Building.
- ❖ The other carpool line is for Kindergarten. It is located in the front of the Wesley Center Gym.

It is imperative that these carpools cooperate and remain separate!

REMEMBER . . .

1. The entrance by the church sanctuary is a one way only drive.
2. Come inside by 11:35, if you are not going to use the carpool line, so the office staff can get your child to you before carpool starts at 11:45. Always park in the parking lot behind the playground when you are coming into the Wesley Center. The limited parking in front of the church is for the Education Building (younger children's) carpool. Please do not park in the Handicap places. If you park and come inside, make sure you lock your car and hide any valuables. Please adhere to the 24-hour pastor's no parking signs, and do not park/leave your car unattended on a curb marked in yellow. The Irmo Police Department will monitor and ticket these areas.
3. Have doors unlocked and children unbuckled by the time you stop at the unloading area. It is our safety policy to load and unload from the back right passenger side of your vehicle.
4. Please do not carry on a conversation with staff at carpool time. It is important to keep the carpool line moving.
5. Pull out of the loading area to the parking area to buckle up your children.
6. When the carline is empty the staff will return to their classrooms to assist their teacher. If you arrive after this time, please park and walk in to get your child. Carpool drop-off ends at 9:00 a.m. If you arrive with your child after this time, you will need to park in the back and walk your child in the front door by the office and take them to their classroom. For safety's sake, we are trying to keep all doors locked on the outside from 9:10 a.m. until 11:40 a.m. and from 12:10 p.m. until 2 p.m. The front door nearest the office remains open with the use of your security code except during afternoon carpool. If you forget the code, ring the doorbell located on the right hand side of the entrance door. **Do not allow your child to walk in the building alone.**

7. Do not use a cell phone while in the carpool line. It interferes with the radios used to call carpool numbers. We will be unable to answer the school phone during carline, because all staff members are working carline.
8. Keep your carpool sign from year to year. Always have and use your carpool number. **No handmade signs.**

If you do not want to use the Carpool Line, you must:

1. Park in the back, bottom parking lot (behind the gym);
2. Come inside no later than 11:35 a.m.;
3. See the office staff who will assist you in getting your child.

Child Discipline Policy

Union United Methodist Church Preschool/Kindergarten is committed to providing children and families with quality learning and care in a safe and loving environment. A major part of the obligation is to use a system of discipline that will provide a positive learning experience leading each child to develop a strong sense of individual worth and responsibility. The following are guidelines for handling discipline:

1. No corporal or physical punishment
2. No limits on behavioral expectations that is not developmentally appropriate
3. Use of consistency, fairness and patience
4. Use of encouragement for positive behavior
5. Use of logical consequences instead of punishment. Acceptable consequences are removing child from one play area to another or limiting play privileges.
6. A child's parents will be involved in the disciplinary process only when uncontrollable behavior and/or behavior that is potentially harmful to the child or others persists.

Children are supervised by sight as well as sound at all times.

Conferences

Parents are encouraged to frequently talk to the teacher and/or director about their child's progress and well-being. Communication is extremely important to us. The teachers are available for face to face and/or phone conferences. Please call as you feel the need and share your concerns with us. A Parent/Teacher Conference date will be held sometime in November. Make sure to sign up for a time slot during parent orientation.

Emergency Information

A staff member who is trained in First Aid and CPR will be at the school during school hours. The following medical release shall be signed and on file with the Center:

"I give permission to Union United Methodist Church Preschool/ Kindergarten to make whatever emergency (i.e.: first aid, disaster evacuation) measures are judged necessary for the care and protection of my child while under the supervision of the center. In case of a medical emergency, I understand that my child will be transported to the appropriate health care facility by the local emergency unit for treatment if the local emergency resource (police, rescue squad) deems it necessary. It is understood that in some medical situations the staff will need to contact the local emergency resource before the parent, child's physician and/or other adult acting on the parent's behalf."

It is the responsibility of the parent (s) to notify the center in writing of any change in address and/or phone number for home, cell, business and emergency contacts.

Employees

We do not hire provisional employees.

Field Trips

Due to concerns from the staff and parents, field trips will no longer be part of our program. Outside programs will be scheduled to visit us.

Grievance Procedure for Parents of a Student

1. The parent/s shall consult with the teacher verbally concerning the issue or problem.
2. The parent/s shall consult with the teacher in writing concerning the issue or problem and send a copy to the director.
3. Failing to reach a settlement with the teacher, the parent/s shall set a conference with the director/assistant director.
4. Failing to reach a settlement in conference with the director/assistant director, the parent/s shall submit a written statement of the situation to the preschool committee requesting a review of the grievance. The preschool committee will review the grievance and contact the parent with a report.

We ask that all parties involved keep the matter confidential.

Health Requirements

The health of the children is a combined responsibility of the parents and the school. Communicable childhood diseases are inevitable in the early school years. They can, however, be kept to a minimum if you will be on guard for the usual symptoms before sending your child to preschool. Further, **the school should be notified promptly whenever your child is exposed to a communicable disease.** A child showing illness (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) will be promptly isolated from the other children. You will be called and expected to come for your child as soon as possible. **Children should be fever/vomit free without medicine for 24 hours before coming back to school. Medications will not be given by the staff.**

Criteria for Students Remaining Home Due to Illness

1. Communicable or contagious disease
2. Sore throat or swollen glands accompanied by fever
3. Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
4. Earache accompanied by fever
5. Undiagnosed red eyes or drainage from eyes
6. Fever of 100 degrees or above
7. Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
8. Untreated head lice or scabies

Hours of Operation

The hours of school are from 8:45 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. You must pick up your child before 12:00 p.m. A late fee of \$1 per minute is charged and should be paid to the teacher who kept the student. This policy also applies to Kindergarten pick up at 12:15 p.m. and Lunch Bunch and Enrichment pick up at 1:50 p.m. You must pick up your child by 2:00 p.m. at the latest for Lunch Bunch or Enrichment.

Inclement Weather

Union United Methodist Preschool/Kindergarten will follow Lexington District 5's closing due to weather. If Lexington District 5 has a late starting time due to weather, Union United Methodist Preschool/Kindergarten will be cancelled for that day. During thunderstorms or heavy rain, our carpool will not take place. Please no umbrellas! For the safety of your children, the director reserves the right to make decisions regarding school closing when threatening weather arises. We do not make up any days that are lost.

Insurance Regulations

Because of our insurance regulations, children not currently enrolled cannot be allowed to attend class with their friends or relatives. We have a certificate of liability insurance.

Kindergarten Recognition

End of the year recognition for 5 year olds will be held in May . Please NO cap and gowns.

OSHA and DSS Guidelines

Requires:

- No rinsing out of soiled clothing.
(Blood, etc.)
- We will send the soiled clothing home in
a closed/sealed bag for parents to dispose.

Union Preschool and Kindergarten is a licensed program through the S.C. Department of Social Services. All regulations are part of our procedures and policies. Confidential records are housed in the Director's office. They may only be viewed by our staff, parents of the child or an authorized employee of the state (DSS, DHEC).

Parent Participation

Parent participation is welcomed at Union!! The following are just a few suggestions of ways parents can be involved in activities: aid in the classroom activities, prepare and send snacks for a class, assist with parties and activities, assist with office responsibilities (copy papers, inventory supplies or books, repair damaged equipment, etc.), help on a work day. Parents are always welcomed and invited to any of our special events at school. (Feel free to plan to attend if you would like.)

Personal Belongings

Many children have similar clothing. It is strongly suggested that you label your child's clothing. Children should dress comfortably and suitable for play. We also ask that you protect your child's feet by sending him/her in tennis shoes and socks. Please do not send toys, guns, stuffed animals or anything of value. We cannot be responsible. Please do not send umbrellas to school with your child. Raincoats and ponchos are recommended.

Pickup Authorization

Your child can only be released to those persons designated by written request or those on your emergency pick up card. A parent may pick up their child unless we have a court order stating otherwise. If any person picking up a child seems impaired or intoxicated they will not be allowed to leave the premise with the student. If unable to locate a parent/relative after one hour the local police will be notified. Children should bring a note to school when there are special instructions for the teacher. It is mandatory that a written note be received when there is a change in transportation. This is for your child's safety.

Receipts/ Returned Check (NSF) Charge

Routine receipts will be issued for cash and money order payments only. For payments made by check, your cancelled check will serve as your receipt. If your employer's payroll plan allows you to receive a pre-tax deduction for child care expenses, we will be happy to provide you with a receipt with our tax ID number on it at your request. Please attach a note to your payment each month or send an email request to diane.hamilton@unionunitedmethodist.org. We will print a receipt and place it in your child's folder or email it, generally within 1-2 days. If your employer provides a specific form for this, we will be happy to complete any necessary payment information, sign it and place it in your child's folder, generally within 1-2 days. There is a \$25 charge for returned checks. If more than two (2) are received, further payments will be on a cash only basis.

Record of Immunization

All children enrolled in the Preschool/Kindergarten are required by DSS to present a "Certificate of Immunization." The certificates must be on file with the Director within one month of your start date and be kept up to date throughout the school year. These records are obtainable only from a doctor, military clinic, or local Health Department and may be faxed to Union at 732-6945. Five-year-old preschool children are required by law to receive a 2nd dose of the measles shot (MMR). **These forms must be on a South Carolina certificate** and religious exemptions are not accepted per the Methodist Church Discipline. A confidential file for each student will be located in the director's office.

Registration

In house registration for school year will be held on the last week of February prior to enrolling in September. This registration time is for current parents and members of Union United Methodist Church. The first week in March registration will be open to the public. The registration fee is paid at enrollment and is non-refundable.

Show and Tell

Each teacher may set Show and Tell according to her classroom schedule. Make this a learning experience for all by carefully and thoughtfully choosing an item that corresponds with the weekly or monthly unit of study. You will receive a monthly calendar from your child's teacher which will aid you in this selection process. We ask you to refrain from allowing your child to randomly grab a toy or article as he/she is going out of the house on Show and Tell day. Show and Tell can be a meaningful experience with proper forethought.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

A person may pick-up a child in one of two ways. First, we do a carline where every student is assigned a carpool number and we match the number in the car with the student's number. Secondly, if you walk in to pick up a student, we ask that you bring your driver's license and we will check to make sure you are on the pick-up authorization card. For the safety of your child, we have installed a security system on the entrance doors. Each parent will be given an access code so that they can enter the building during school hours. This system will be deactivated during carpool and you will not be allowed to enter the buildings until carpool is finished. Please sign-out if you pick up early. The sign-out sheet is located by the Kindergarten office. Visitors are to check with the Director as they enter the Wesley Center. All parents and visitors are required to wear nametags while on the premises for an extended time.

For your child's safety, no one will be admitted to the buildings during the Carpool pickup times:
11:40 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Solicitations/Endorsements

We will not allow any solicitations, or endorsements through the Preschool/Kindergarten Program.

Toilet Training

Children must be toilet trained prior to entrance to all classes for 3 year olds and older. "Pull-ups" are defined as diapers.

Tracking

When students arrive attendance is taken with a class roll. When leaving the classroom, students are counted before they leave, during the transition and once they arrive at their destination. Tracking sheets are done for each class. Each student's name is listed and checked off during every transition with a face to name recognition.

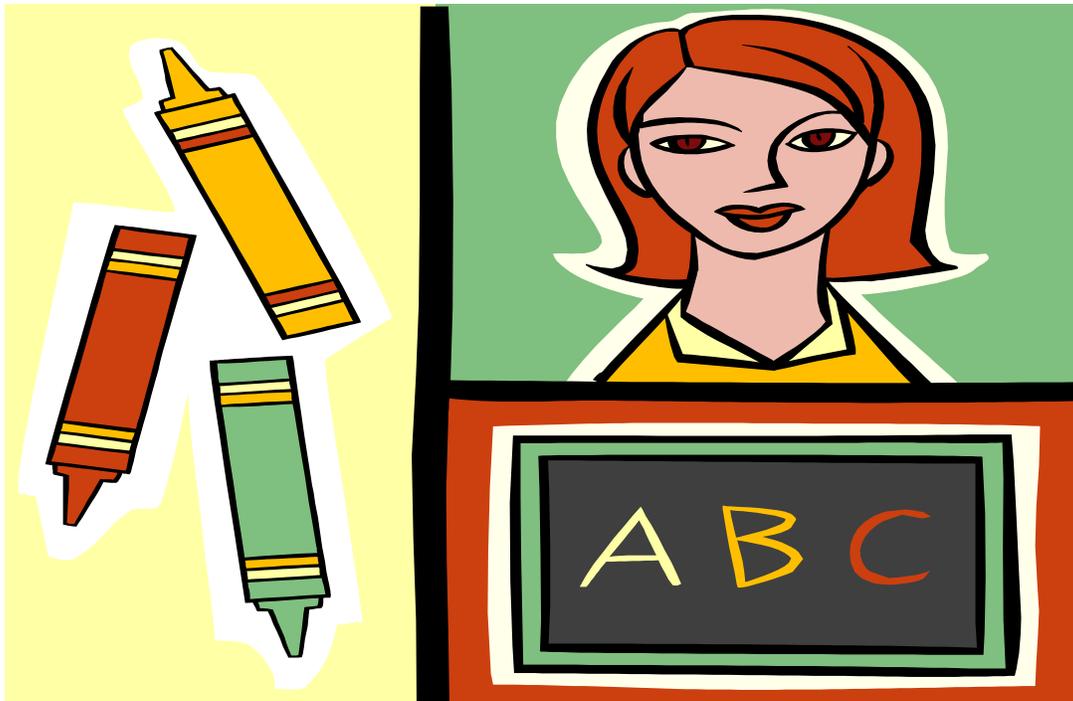
Tuition

We are frequently asked whether tuition is prorated during months with holiday breaks and other school closings. Monthly tuition is the same each month; holidays and other closings are figured into the cost of tuition and averaged out over the course of the year so that tuition is the same each month, August through April. A full month's tuition is due and payable on the 15th of the month, August through April, regardless of the number of days attended during the month. If your child is absent during the payment period, please mail your check. A late fee of \$2 per day after the 25th will be charged. If your account has a balance at the end of the month, your child will not be able to attend until the account has been paid in full or arrangements for payments have been made with the director. We will offer automatic withdrawals out of your account for your convenience. Checks may be sent to the school, pinned on the child, or mailed to:

Union United Methodist Church Preschool/Kindergarten
P.O. Box 765, Irmo, SC 29063

Please put your child's name on the check, as well as the month of payment. When a child is enrolled, tuition is payable until the office is notified by the parent that the child is being withdrawn. Withdrawals must be in writing and a minimum of two weeks' notification given before withdrawing. We only accept cash or checks. Automatic withdrawals will be offered as an alternative.

Tuition for Four and Five-Year-Old Classes: All four and five-year-old children enrolling are required to pay one month's advance tuition by May 15. This payment will be credited to the September account **and is not refundable should the child not enroll**. Your child's place cannot be held unless regular monthly payments are made. This includes the last month of kindergarten as well.



Additional Programs

A. EARLY BUNCH

Early Bunch is an early morning (before school) extended care program for children. During this time, your child will have play/activities supervised by our regular staff.

Early Bunch begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 8:45 a.m. when children go to their regular classrooms. There will not be carpool drop-off for early bunch. Please enter through the back doors of the Wesley Center and walk your child to the early bunch teacher any time after 7:30 am to sign them in.

Your child should have already eaten breakfast prior to their arrival at Early Bunch or school.

Once registered on our regular/permanent list, the full month's fee for each day enrolled will be payable on the first of each month, regardless of the number of days attended. Any changes or withdrawals must be made through the kindergarten office by written separate note or by speaking with one of the clerical assistants or directors no later than the 25th of the month before the month the change is in effect. As part of our regular/permanent list, your child will attend on the same days of the week each month and they must be in school those days.

Early Bunch will cost \$20 for each day of the week enrolled each month, in addition to the regular tuition cost. Please note that any student whose account has a balance due for tuition or other fees for the current month will not be allowed to attend until the account is paid up to date or payment arrangements have been made with the director.

Drop-ins for Early Bunch are accepted as space permits. Drop-in cost is \$10.00 per day. Reservations for drop-ins are made by calling the kindergarten office and speaking with one of the clerical assistants or directors. Messages may be left on our voice mail. Once you have reserved a drop-in space, payment will be expected for this reservation even if your child does not attend.

B. LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch is an extended care program on selected days for children enrolled in our three, four, and five-year-old classes. Children attending Lunch Bunch will bring their own lunch with drink, and play indoors and outdoors (weather permitting) with children from their regular class as well as children from other classes. Our regular staff will supervise them.

Lunch bunch carpool pick-up begins at 1:50 p.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. Late pick-up fees will apply beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Once registered on our regular/permanent list, the full month's fee for each day enrolled will be payable on the first of each month, regardless of the number of days attended. Any changes or withdrawals must be made through the Kindergarten office by written separate note or by speaking with one of the clerical assistants or directors no later than the 25th of the month before the month the change is in effect. As part of our regular/permanent list, your child will attend on the same days of the week each month and **they must be in school those days**.

Lunch Bunch will cost \$35 for each day of the week enrolled each month enrolled, in addition to the regular tuition cost. Please note that any student whose account has a balance due for tuition or other fees for the current month will not be allowed to attend until the account is paid up to date or payment arrangements have been made with the Director.

Drop-ins for lunch bunch are accepted as space permits. Drop-in cost is \$15.00 per day. When reserving a drop-in space, please speak to one of the clerical assistants or directors in the Kindergarten office. Messages may be left on our voice mail. Once you have reserved a drop-in space, payment will be expected for this reservation even if your child does not attend.

C. ENRICHMENT

Enrichment classes are being offered this school year for students attending our 4-year-old classes and our 5-year-old kindergarten.

Enrichment is an extended care program where students can stay until 1:50 p.m. on selected days. They will bring their own lunch and drink and participate in a play and learning time that is a bit more structured than our Lunch Bunch program. Carpool pick-up will begin at 1:50 p.m. and end at 2:00 p.m. Late pick-up fees will apply beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Students may enroll in one or more classes offered in this program. Enrichment will be for the same class or classes each month for the entire school year and students must be in school on those days. Changes in days and/or drop-ins will NOT be available. Once enrolled, fees for these classes will be due on the first of each month regardless of the number of days attended per month for the entire school year. Please note that any student whose account has a balance due for tuition or other fees for the current month will not be allowed to attend until the account is paid up to date or payment arrangements have been made with the Director.

Enrichment will cost \$45 per month. Enrichment class offerings are: Math and More, Discovery Days and Passport to Fun.



A Message for Parents

Have you heard, “I don’t want Mary to go to that preschool/kindergarten; all they do is play”?

This shows a lack of understanding of the growth and development of young children. PLAY is the WORK of young children. Mary is learning without PRESSURE. The pressure-cooker-type program can do more harm than good. Real learning takes place in steps or phases. The child must complete each step before he is ready for the next. Then, too, the child will retain only that for which he is ready.

Remember, we are not building the whole house. We are building a foundation.

We have an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit in their child’s classroom. **Visitors are required to sign in outside the office.**

Your child is very special to us. Please help to make this a wonderful school year by:

1. Helping your child to anticipate happy experiences.
2. Showing interest in his/her accomplishments, things he/she brings home, or what he/she wants to tell you.
3. Feeling free to confer with the teacher about anything concerning the child. Report any upsetting experiences that will help the teacher to understand better the child’s actions at school. Reporting happy experiences is also helpful.
4. Helping your child to attend regularly except when he/she is ill.
5. Encouraging your child to do things for himself/herself, allowing him/her plenty of time. Teach him/her to put on, take off, and hang up his/her jacket/sweaters, put away his/her toys, to eat regularly and properly, to establish regular toilet and sleeping habits.
6. Dressing your child comfortably in play clothes and shoes.
7. Praying for our preschool staff, the children, and your family.

Children are placed in classes based on their age as of September 1. Requests to be placed in a particular teacher’s class or in a class with a particular child will be considered if presented in writing, but are not guaranteed. Children generally remain in the same class throughout the entire school year.

