

First United Methodist Church Preschool  
201 S Road St. Elizabeth City, NC 27909  
252-335-7615  
**2025-2026 HANDBOOK**

**F.U.M.C. Preschool Program Mission Statement**

We, the Preschool Staff and the members of First United Methodist Church, pledge to provide a safe Christian atmosphere in which young children can learn and develop socially, emotionally, academically, physically, and spiritually.

The F.U.M.C. Preschool program welcomes all children regardless of race, religion, or sex.  
**QUALITY CARE OF CHILDREN IS OUR NUMBER ONE CONCERN.**

We use developmentally appropriate instructional methods and tools to help children learn how to relate with other children and adults and how to grow in their own skills and abilities.

**Teachers will plan activities to:**

- Encourage children to express themselves through materials, movement, and language.
- Encourage children to develop positive attitudes toward teachers, school, and learning.
- Encourage independence.
- Encourage children to explore the environment and to develop curiosity and questioning ability which will promote future learning.
- Encourage children to develop good self images and feelings of success.
- Encourage children to learn by example and teaching.

**Enrollment Information**

Enrollment begins each year in February for the upcoming school year.

Registrations are taken in the following order:

1. Children of FUMC members.
2. Children of FUMC staff members and Preschool Board members
3. Children who are currently enrolled and their siblings.
4. Open enrollment to the public

## **Tuition and Fees**

Yearly Registration Fee: \$100

Two Day Program: \$175 per month

Three Day Program: \$200 per month

Five Day Program: \$285 per month

Tuition is due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Invoices will be billed monthly through our software system, Brightwheel. Tuition can be paid through Brightwheel using an automatic bank withdrawal or a credit card. Transaction fees for using an automatic bank withdrawal is \$.89 per transaction. Credit card transaction fee is 2.9%. Personal checks, written to FUMC Preschool, or cash are also accepted. Please place cash or check inside an envelope with your child's name clearly written on the outside and place it in your child's folder. A late fee will be assessed for accounts not paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> at a rate of \$10 per week. If your account falls 30 days past due, we will ask you to return once payment is received and your account is brought current.

Late fees will be assessed for not picking up your child promptly at the end of each school session. If preschool staff must wait beyond dismissal time for your arrival, you will be charged \$5 for every 5 minutes.

Payment of all late pick-up charges are due within five (5) days of receipt or extra fees will be applied.

Accounts with checks returned to us for non-sufficient funds, closed accounts, etc., will be charged a \$35 fee.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up Instructions**

We look forward to our time each day with your child, but ask for your cooperation regarding drop off and pick up times. Please note the appropriate times for your child. We ask that you use the time on your cell phone as a basis to synchronize your watch with any preschool staff.

### **Drop Off Time**

8:45-9:00 am

Please do not bring your child before the scheduled drop off time as this is our teacher's preparation time. Although you are always welcome to drop off your child after 9:00 am, please keep in mind that they will miss instructional or center play time.

### **Pick Up Times**

We know there are times that you need to pick up your child before the end of the school morning however we ask that you keep early pickups to a minimum as they interrupt their learning time.

Toddlers: 11:35 am -11:45 am

Two Year Olds: 11:35 am - 11:45 am

Three Year Olds: 11:45 am-11:55 am

Four Year Olds: 11:55 am-12:05pm

## **Authorized Pick Ups**

Your child will be released only to those named on your authorized pick-up list. Preschool staff reserves the right to ask for picture identification before releasing children.

**If you have any changes to your child's transportation arrangements, please send it to your child's teacher or the director.**

## **Chapel**

All classes will have a chapel program. We want to instill the knowledge of Bible stories, lessons, and biblical concepts (love, forgiveness, patience, etc.) to our children. Each class also has a daily devotion during circle time and will recite a blessing before snack time.

## **Sharing Time (Show and Tell)**

Some teachers may have your child bring in an item from home to share with the class. Please do not have your child bring any toy items to school that are scary, resemble weapons, are valuable, or may get easily broken.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a wonderful way to learn, see and touch! Field trips will be age appropriate and within reasonable travel distance. Planned trips will be announced in advance and permission slips will be sent home. A small fee may be charged to attend. Siblings may not be allowed on some of our field trips.

## **Visitation**

We encourage parental involvement in your child's educational experience. Parents are welcome to observe their child's classroom at any time. However, if you accompany your child into school in the morning, refrain from staying as the teachers begin the school day. If you wish to talk extensively with the teacher, please schedule a time so that you and the teacher can have an uninterrupted conversation. For security reasons, all of our accesses are locked. You will need to use our preschool entrance and ring the bell to access the preschool.

## Conferences

All parents of four year olds will receive progress reports in February and will have the opportunity for a scheduled parent-teacher conference in April. At any time throughout the year, please feel free to request a conference if you have questions or concerns about your child's progress and experience.

## Special Needs/Developmental Delays

It is very important to let us know about any special needs or delays that your child may have. FUMC Preschool strives to do our very best to benefit the child, classroom, and teachers. There are some needs/delays that we are not equipped for nor are our teachers certified for.

Please note that screenings will be provided for children who have special needs to ensure the best possible outcome for them as well as the preschool.

## What Do We Need/Need to Do?

### Brightwheel

If you haven't already done so please download the Brightwheel app. This is the way the director will communicate with the entire school or entire classrooms. You will also be able to view your child's billing and access information such as this handbook, school calendar, supply lists, etc.

### Backpacks

Your child will need a regular sized backpack (one large enough to accommodate a standard size folder) to handle each day's work and notes for parents. A folder will be provided and sent home daily. Check backpacks for your child's folder every day for notes and information, this is how we communicate with you! **Please label your child's backpack.**

### Snacks

A snack time is scheduled each day for your child's class. You are responsible for providing your child's snack. **Please label your child's lunch box, water bottles and food containers.** Consider a snack that will be easy for your child to handle and will provide energy for the rest of the morning. Please do not send whole grapes, popcorn, whole hot dogs, or other foods that are known choking hazards to children. We ask that you send a healthy snack. Please do not send gum, candy, or soda. We are happy to help your child open packaging, but please be considerate of the teacher's time and do not send unpeeled oranges, microwavable popcorn, or other snacks that require time consuming preparation.

Provide drinks in spill proof containers, not glass.

We also ask for your sensitivity and concern for children in our preschool with food allergies. Parents will be notified of any allergies within their child's classrooms.

### Clothing

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes that they can fasten and unfasten independently. We will play outside, weather permitting, and incorporate daily crafts in the classroom where paint or markers may get on

your child's clothing. **Please label all jackets, sweaters, coats, etc.** At the beginning of the year, please send an extra outfit (shirt, pants/shorts, underwear and socks) in a labeled zip lock bag. We will hold it for the year in case of an emergency. Teachers will ask for another set of weather appropriate clothing as we enter the colder months.

### Diapers/Potty Training

Children that are in the process of potty training, please be mindful of how you dress your child. Pants with buttons, zippers, belts are not easy for young children to do quickly and on their own. Pants that can be easily pulled up and down are appropriate for children who are learning bathroom independence. **If your child is not potty training at home, please continue to use diapers at school.** Pull-ups do not hold as much liquid as a diaper and, unless they have velcro on the sides, also require teachers to remove/change your child's pants, socks and shoes, a longer process when we have multiple children to change. Pull-ups are a great choice for those children who are almost bathroom independent.

Our three year old classrooms do not have changing facilities. We strongly encourage potty training and independence of using the bathroom in the three year old classrooms so that the constant changing of diapers/pull ups does not run into instructional time. **To better help this process, students must be potty trained or able to use the bathroom with minimal help ( no changing of diapers/pull ups due to constant accidents) after the return of Christmas break.** If your child is not potty trained after the return of break, we may ask you to return once bathroom independence is completed.

**All children must be potty trained to enroll into the Four Year Old classes, unless there is a medical reason and a note is provided by the child's doctor.**

### Withdrawals

Written notice is required for withdrawing your child from FUMC Preschool programs. As stated on the registration form, two weeks' notice is required (equivalent to ½ month tuition). Please note that any withdrawals after April 30 will require payment of May tuition in full.

## Health and Wellness Policies

**For the safety of our staff and all children that attend our school, we require that immunizations be current.** We require that a copy of your child's immunization record be submitted prior to the beginning of the school year.

**Immunization records must be dated within 12 months. The preschool director will request an updated immunization record if the one you've provided is over 12 months old. FUMC Preschool Board of Directors will NOT grant religious exemptions only those that are medically necessary as documented by a medical doctor.**

In an effort to keep our preschool as healthy as possible, please keep your child at home if they have noticeable signs of illness. Children will not be permitted to stay at preschool with the following symptoms:

Elevated temperature within the past 24 hours

Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours

Pink Eye

Contagious rash

Suspicion of communicable disease (chicken pox, measles, impetigo, strep throat, lice, etc.)

Inability to participate in preschool activities

Please be respectful of other families in our preschool by keeping your child at home during illness. Your child is welcome back when he/she is ready for a full preschool schedule.

Please contact the director if your child has a communicable disease so that other families can take precautions. All personal information will remain confidential.

## Discipline

At all times we will love and care for your children. We will also promote acceptable behavior to ensure that all children are safe and comfortable. During class time, our teachers will offer close supervision, give their attention to the children, offer praise and encouragement, and redirect behavior if needed.

If children are disrupting the classroom or putting other children at risk, a time out approach will be used. A time out approach is a temporary removal of the child from the situation.

We will follow three steps:

1. Remove the child from the activity/situation to a quiet place within the classroom.
2. Explain to the child why he/she has been removed from the activity.
3. Encourage the child to return to the activity when he/she can stop the inappropriate behavior. The length of time for time out will not exceed one minute per year of the child.

If the behavior does not change, the teacher will remove the child from the classroom and the child will stay with the director. If all techniques do not change the behavior, preschool staff may request a conference with the parents to determine the best course of action.

## Dismissals

The preschool may discontinue admission to class if the child fails to adjust to group experiences or if the parent fails to:

Provide current health and immunization information

Pay tuition and fees in a timely manner (past 6 weeks)

Keep program policies and procedures

## Celebrations

Children enjoy special days and parties. The preschool will observe these holidays:

Fall Party in October (no costumes), Thanksgiving in November, Christmas in December, Valentine's Day in February, and Easter in Spring

Your child's teacher will let you know how you can help.

## **Birthdays**

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday. Let your child's teacher know when you would like to have a party. Your teacher will need advanced notice. You may provide a special snack to share with the class, as long as classroom allergies are taken into account. Please do not bring balloons or piñatas. Please choose age appropriate snacks, themes and other miscellaneous items. If parents choose to provide treat bags, children will not be allowed to open them until they get home.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

FUMC Preschool follows the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank School System (ECPPS) for school closures. Even if you do not have school-age children, it is your responsibility to monitor information about school delays and closings. Please listen to local TV and radio for school closings mentioned for ECPPS. Teachers will also send out a text message announcing the closure and a school-wide message will be sent via Brightwheel from the director. Missed days will not be rescheduled.

In the case of delayed openings due to weather (whether it be a one or two hour delay), FUMC Preschool will base delays/closings on a case by case basis to ensure the safety of students and staff.