

My School

Oak Park United Methodist Church



2017-2018

Parent Handbook

My School

Oak Park United Methodist Church “My School” Preschool

My School is a Christ-centered environment where the heart and spirit of your child can grow and thrive. Our activities are child centered and age appropriate so that the individual child can experience a wide and variety of “hands on” learning experiences. You will be amazed by the self-confidence and self-esteem gained from a program where your child’s love of learning is fostered through doing, touching, and exploring.

We believe that:

- Every child has a right to a safe, healthy, nurturing environment.
- Children learn through play; therefore we plan our curriculum with a caring and creative environment.
- The role of a child’s teacher is essential to the development of a child; and therefore the teacher is a highly valued professional.

Hours of Operation

2-Day Hours: T-TH 9:00 - 12:00noon

3-Day Hours: T-W-TH 9:00 - 12:00noon

School class hours are from 9-12 with an early bird drop-off at 8:15 a.m. and an extended care option available until 2:00 p.m. for children ages 2 and up. The “Early Bird” drop-off is an additional \$6 per day and “Stay and Play” extended care option is an additional \$10.00 per day for a permanent place. If you wish to have your child stay on an as needed basis the cost will be an additional \$12.00 per day. Extended care fees will be accessed at the end of each month and are due with the following month’s tuition on the 12th. You will need to send a drink and a lunch with your child for the extended care option.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

We ask that your child enter the building through the school doors on the right side of the church building. You will be asked to sign you child in and out each day. Please use the clipboards on the left side of the school entrance for the sign in and out procedure.

The doors will be unlocked 5 minutes before class each morning. Please do not bring your child before this time. Teachers are preparing for their classes and will not be available to receive your child.

We appreciate your timeliness. We ask that all children to be picked up promptly at the appropriate pick up times. There will be a charge of \$1 per minute per child after 12:05 or 2:05 depending on your regular pick up time.

If you are arriving late to school or need to pick your child up early please ring the doorbell located on the My School door and a staff person will let you inside.

Tuition

Tuition and extended care fees are due by the 12th of every month. They will be considered late after the 15th of each month. A late fee of \$15.00 will be assessed for the payments received after the 15th day. When fees have become two weeks past due and no payment arrangements have been made, the child will be dropped from the preschool to allow someone on the waiting list to take the space. If the 12th falls on a non-school day, tuition will be due the following school day.

Monthly tuition is due every month regardless of child's attendance, short months, holidays and/or vacation days.

There will be \$25.00 charge for all returned checks. A money order will be accepted for returned checks. If a check is returned more than one time, cash only will be accepted for the tuition.

A written notice is required two weeks prior to withdrawing a child from the preschool. Tuition money that has been paid for the month will only be refunded on a prorated schedule IF the 2 weeks notice has been given.

Release of Children

We will only release children to the child's parents or those who have been designated in writing by the parents. If possible, please notify us in advance if someone other than a parent will be picking up the child. The person who picks up the child MUST be listed on the registration form and have a photo ID. We require a photo ID to ensure your child's safety.

School Holidays

My School follows the same calendar as the Temple Independent School District. We will be closed any and all holidays that they observe. We may have additional holidays or other school closings if necessary for staff training.

For the safety of your children, we will also close due to inclement weather. Your child's teacher or a director will notify you by phone if the school is not operating. You may also check the My School Facebook page for any notifications.

Please see the "My School" 2017-2018 calendar for a detailed list of holidays and dates.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

You will be notified immediately to pick up your child if he/she becomes ill while at preschool. We ask that you please be prompt in picking up your child if an illness does occur.

We cannot care for a child who:

- Has an illness that requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the safety of the other children
- Has uncontrolled diarrhea
- Has an oral temperature of 100 degrees or greater, or an axillary (armpit) temperature of 99.4 degrees or higher
- Has any episodes of vomiting
- Has a communicable disease
- Cannot participate comfortably in school activities

The child may return to school when they have been symptom free for 24 hours or if a doctor has given a statement saying they may return to school.

Dispensing Medication

If your child has an epi-pen on file for allergic reactions, the epi-pen must be labeled and in the original container. A doctor's note must accompany any medication and be given to the directors. Any other medication exceptions must be discussed with the directors and cleared by the board.

Procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies

In the event of a critical illness or injury we would:

- Call 911
- Administer CPR or first aid when needed
- Contact parent or emergency contact if no parent can be reached
- Contact child's physician

Parent Notification

Good communication is an important step in bridge between home and school. A folder will be sent home daily. Please keep your teacher informed of any significant changes in your child's life that might affect them at school. Inside the folder you will find your child's behavior chart. Please make sure to look inside the folder every day and initial the appropriate date. Please send the folder in your child's backpack each day to school.

A monthly calendar/newsletter from the director will be sent home that will keep you up to date on all upcoming events. A calendar will also be provided so you will know the weekly themes that the teachers will be working on in class. Please make sure to check your child's backpack for these items.

Accidents

Children often receive minor injuries (small cuts, scrapes and bruises) during the course of their active play. If this occurs you will receive an "ouch report" in your child's folder to inform you about the injury.

We will contact you IMMEDIATELY in the unlikely event your child sustains a serious injury. Licensing rules require that we complete a written report on serious injuries or incidents. You will be asked to sign the report and then will be given a copy.

Discipline and Guidance

We use a positive approach to discipline. Our goal is to create a loving relationship between the child and teacher.

Our discipline plan is:

- 1) Individualized and consistent for each child
- 2) Age appropriate for child's understanding
- 3) Used to teach the child acceptable behavior and self-control

Our teachers will use praise and encouragement when:

- 1) Focusing on positive behavior
- 2) Having to redirect behavior
- 3) Giving expectations of daily activities

The teachers may have to separate a child from the group for a short period of time.

This will:

- 1) Give a child time to reflect on making a better choice
- 2) Give time for a cool off

****Limited to 1 minute per year of the child's age****

There will be NO harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline are prohibited:

- 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 hand or instrument
- 5) Putting anything in or on a child's tongue
- 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
- 9) Putting a child in time out for inappropriate periods of time for the child's age.

My School's goal is to provide a positive and safe learning environment for all children. If a child's behavior is consistently disrupting learning, the child will be removed from the learning environment and the directors will contact the parents. A behavior modification plan will be put in place after the child has been sent home once for aggressive behavior towards students or staff, destruction of school or church property or biting. A child's record is for their entire time at My School and does not re-set each school year. If your child is placed on a behavior plan, we strongly suggest that they see their pediatrician for additional insight.

Suspension/Dismissal from school will occur when:

- 1) The child has had 3 separate instances of biting another child or staff member
- 2) The child has been sent home from preschool 3 separate times
- 3) The child has been sent home 2 times after the behavior plan is implemented

Food Services

Snacks will be served everyday at a scheduled time for each class. You will be asked to provide snacks a few times throughout the year. A "snack bag" will be sent home on the Thursday before for you to fill the bag. We have a severe nut allergy on the My School campus. We can not allow any food that contains peanuts/nuts. Please do not send any nut items with snacks or in your child's lunch if staying for the extended care program.

On occasion, the teachers may ask the parents for a few items for a cooking activity.

If your child has a food allergy, please make the My School staff is aware of his/her needs.

Children attending school on Wednesdays will sometimes have an additional snack that is a thematic cooking activity. It will coincide with the weekly theme/letter of the week.

Potty Training

Since the preschool is only a two/three day program, we are unable to provide the consistency to potty-train your child. However, we will attempt to assist you as your child begins this process. We ask that you always send a Pull-Up in your child's bag each day until they are able to consistently make it though the school day without having accidents. If your child is having regular accidents, we may choose to put him/her in a Pull-Up. Those enrolled in the PK3 and PK4 classes must be potty trained before school starts.

Personal Belongings

Please send a backpack with your child every day to school. Please keep a change of clothes inside the backpack (even if they are toilet trained) as occasional accidents or spills do happen. Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes if an accident has occurred and no clothes are available.

Please also remember to send your child's school folder to school everyday since this is one way of communication between home and school.

Clothing

Parents are encouraged to dress their children in comfortable and washable clothes. The children will have many opportunities to get "messy" during the course of the day. We also ask that you send your child in closed toe shoes since the children do go outside on a daily basis, weather permitting.

Immunization Requirements

For the protection of your child as well as the other children in our care, your child must have all the vaccinations required by the Texas Department of Health. You must provide an immunization record upon enrollment and provide updates when your child receives more immunizations. We do not accept vaccine waivers.

For more information please visit the health department website at www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.

Hearing and Vision

My School does not provide vision and hearing screening. It is the responsibility of the parent to get the appropriate testing done from a local doctor. The Texas Health and Safety Code requires preschools to show proof that annual vision and hearing screenings have been performed on all enrolled children who are four or older on September 1st. This screening must be completed within 120 days of the start of school.

Enrollment Procedures

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

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

We will maintain confidentiality of this information. Please give us updated information whenever there is a change. We will ask that you fill out a new registration form every year to make sure we have the most up to date information.

We will also have you sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the policies and procedures. If we need to change anything in this handout we will do so in writing and distribute a copy to all parents.

Transportation

We will not provide any transportation to or from the preschool. It will be the responsibility of the parents. We will take a “walking field trip” on occasion. All walking field trips will be held on the church property.

Water Activities

Parents are required to sign a permission slip in order to participate in various water activities. You will find the permission slip on the back page of your registration form.

Procedure for Questions and Concerns

We ask if you have questions or concerns that you try to discuss them with your child’s teacher first. If your question cannot be answered by your child’s teacher please contact the directors to discuss your concern. If your concern is still not being resolved we ask that you make an appointment with Pastor Jonathan or the School Board president, Jill Arnold. You can contact them at (254) 773-3021.

Parent Visits

We have an open door policy at our school. Parents are welcome to come in at any time during the school day. If you plan on volunteering on a regular basis in the classroom, the state requires that ALL volunteers fill out a background check. Please see the director for the appropriate paperwork.

Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays! If you would like to bring a special snack on your child’s birthday please make arrangements with your child’s teacher. Gifts should not be given at school. Invitations at school can only be given if every child in the class receives one.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Our school will have monthly fire drills and a tornado/disaster and lock down drill every 3 months. All classrooms have fire/disaster evacuation plans posted. You may check each room to see the appropriate evacuation routes and disaster plan.

In the case of an emergency where the school has to evacuate the grounds (i.e. gas leak, flooding) we will transport children to Temple Bible Church located at 3205 Oakview Drive Temple, TX 76502. Temple Bible Church's telephone number is: 778-3233.

We will use Oak Park's mini bus and Temple Bible's mini bus to transport children as quickly as possible. Depending on the amount of children, teachers may also need to transport children to the appropriate site. All parents will be contacted immediately by the child's teacher or the school director if such a plan has to be put into place.

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

All staff at My School must attend annual training to increase awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect. If preschool staff suspects abuse or neglect, then actions will be taken to ensure the child's safety.

You (the parent) may also report the suspected abuse or neglect of a child by calling the child abuse hotline at: 1-800-252-5400

Gang Free Zone

My School is located in a "Gang Free Zone." A gang free zone means that gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity 1000 feet of My School (where children gather and are present) is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

School Safety

We are committed to the safety, welfare, and protection of all children participating in our program from abuse or harassment of any form: physical, mental or sexual abuse.

Our program is licensed by the State of Texas, which requires that all teachers have a criminal background check done every 2 years. This background check is provided by the state. Staff members are also trained annually on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Contact information for the local Licensing office, DFPS Child Abuse Hotline, and DFPS websites are posted in the lobby. Staff can help locate community resources if needed.

My School does not permit anyone to open or conceal carry in our facility. On-duty law enforcement officials are excluded from this policy.

Nondiscriminatory Policy

The preschool program does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, or sexual preference.

Child daycare operations are public accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title III. If you believe that such an operation may be practicing discrimination in violation of Title III, you may call the ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301(voice) or (800) 514-0308 (TTY).

Reviewing Standards and Reports

My School is regulated by the Department of Family and Protective Services. The director's office and all classrooms have a minimum standards book. At any time you may ask to see a copy of the DFPS Licensing Inspection Report or the Minimum Standards Book.

You can find out more about the regulation of child care facilities by visiting their website at: www.texaschildcaresearch.org.

You may also call the local office at (254) 526-9011.

You may report the suspected abuse or neglect of a child by calling the child abuse hotline at: 1-800-252-5400.

Please feel free to contact the preschool directors with any questions or concerns.

Director: Amanda Ferrell

Assistant Director: Beth Lueckemeyer

Head of the Board: Jill Arnold

Preschool number : (254) 773-7067 Church number: (254) 773-3021

Email: myschoolOPUMC@gmail.com

Child's Name: _____

I have received a copy of the parent handbook and agree to the operational policies in place at My School.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that My School's Emergency Evacuation Plan is to safely transport all children to Temple Bible Church: 3205 Oakview Drive Temple, TX 76502 if the need arises. I will be notified as soon as possible.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that My School is a "Gang Free Zone".

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that My School is not responsible for the nutrition value of the food brought by parents for snack time.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that snacks and lunches need to be nut free for the safety of all children on the My School campus.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____