

Davidson United Methodist Church Preschool



January 25, 2021

Dear Parents,

As another school year begins, I find myself excited by the great opportunities that lie ahead. I am privileged to be a part of this staff and to lead such a vital ministry of this church.

I would like to welcome those of you who are new to our preschool. We are honored that you have chosen us to partner with you in the education of your child. It is an awesome responsibility that we will do our best to fulfill.

We also welcome those of you who are returning to our program. We hope that you are excited as you begin a new year.

You will recognize the faces of our veteran teachers, but you will also see new faces that have joined our staff. I am pleased that our team continues to grow stronger as new teachers bring their gifts and talents to our program.

I want to encourage each of you to come by my office at any time. One of my most important jobs as a director is to be available to you, the parents, to answer any questions or concerns that you might have. You may also call me. If I am unavailable at that time, please leave your name and number on my voicemail and I will return your call as soon as possible.

This handbook contains very valuable information for parents. Please take the time to read it carefully so that you will be familiar with our policies and procedures. Also, you will want to keep it in a convenient place for future reference.

I look forward to working with you and our staff to make this year a great one for your child!

Sincerely,

Tara M Condon
Director of Preschool

E-mail: tcondon@davidsonumc.org

Post Office Box 718 | 233 South Main Street | Davidson, NC 28036
704-896-0082 | www.davidsonumc.org/WeekdayPreschool

MISSION STATEMENT

The Preschool is an outreach of Davidson United Methodist Church. We serve families and children of the church and the surrounding communities as space permits. We are guided in our work with children by the belief that each child is a unique gift of God, worthy of love, respect, and encouragement.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that young children learn the foundations of trust, love, faith, hope, and forgiveness as they interact with caring adults and other children in a nurturing environment. We believe that children learn best with a low student/teacher ratio. We believe in the importance of encouraging growth of the whole child including the physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and cognitive development. We believe that development is a sequential interrelated process and that each child has an individual pattern and timing of growth, learning style, and family history. We believe that children need to be able to identify and communicate their feelings, needs, and desires in order to begin to function positively in society. We believe that children have important rights as human beings. We believe that children must learn respect for others and appreciation of differences. We believe children must learn problem solving skills rather than correct answers. We believe that it is the job of teachers to prepare the environment with a rich variety of opportunities for concrete “hands on learning.” Our curriculum is based on the belief that “children’s work is play,” and our daily program includes art, music, language, science, math, physical, and community experiences. We believe that it is important to have families take an active part in the Preschool. We believe that learning is a life-long process.

Our Beliefs about Children

We believe that in order for children to thrive, their basic needs must be met.

Therefore, we will provide for the physical and mental health and safety of each child. We shall accomplish this through the establishment of a warm, consistent, and caring environment where children feel secure and can develop a sense of love and trust.

We believe that children need to develop a sense of self-esteem and competence to maximize their potential, and that growth and learning are natural thrusts in human development.

Therefore, we will help children feel that their thoughts and ideas are valued, and we will encourage their expression.

We believe that children need a nurturing caregiver.

Therefore, nurturing skills will be assessed in hiring staff and utilized in interactions with the children.

Our Beliefs about Learning

We believe that it is important to encourage the development of the whole child.

Therefore, we will provide opportunities for learning that include cognitive, affective, and moral experiences. Individual interest will be pursued as a means to affect learning.

We believe that for young children, active involvement in the process of learning is as important as specific content.

Therefore, we will provide rich opportunities, encouragement, and support for children to explore the environment and develop, express, and satisfy their curiosity.

We believe that children need to be able to identify and communicate their feelings, needs and desires and determine how they can function positively within the context of their social environment.

Therefore, we will assist them to develop important personal and interpersonal skills necessary for social living.

We believe that cooperation skills are becoming increasingly important in contemporary society.

Therefore, we will provide a cooperative, supportive environment where children will learn to function successfully, first as independent, then as inter-dependent beings.

We believe that children are unique individuals.

Therefore, we will work with each child individually, recognizing personal strengths and weaknesses and encouraging individual potential and growth. Personal competencies will be developed both in individual and group contexts.

We believe that children need a stimulating, yet orderly and organized, environment to explore.

Therefore, we will provide a rich environment, including attractive interior surroundings, a wide variety of learning materials and play things, and opportunities to explore the natural environment.

We believe that children have important rights as human beings.

Therefore, discipline and interactions in our program will offer children choices and/or explain reasons for rules and expectations. Since children need to learn self-respect and respect for others, cooperative, considerate, and appropriate behavior will be afforded to and expected from each child.

We believe that a sense of community is important to social development.

Therefore, we will develop this atmosphere within our program and children, staff and parents by encouraging parental input, teaching children interpersonal skills and placing children in family groupings.

We believe that children must learn respect for others and an appreciation of differences.

Therefore, we will assist them in understanding and enjoying individual and societal diversity.

We believe that children must learn to make decisions and accept responsibility for those decisions.

Therefore, children will be involved in decision-making process: identifying the problem considering alternatives, making a choice, and evaluating the consequences.

We believe that children must learn problem-solving skills rather than "correct answers."

Therefore, we will teach children to understand and consider different possibilities and to explore alternatives.

We believe that a child's development is greatly enhanced through parental involvement in their care and education.

Therefore, we will communicate with parents on a regular basis; encourage parental participation in our parental education component; and actively seek parental input on important decisions regarding the school.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Medical Health Form- Your child may not attend school without this form.

This form was mailed to you in early April. In most cases, it is not necessary to schedule a doctor's visit for your child. Just drop off the form along with a stamped envelope addressed to the school, and your doctor's office will complete the form and mail it directly to us.

If you are new in town and waiting for a doctor's appointment, please come see me, and we will come up with a plan that will allow us to go forward. **We are not allowed to accept your child without this important information.** The Preschool Committee and Director will strictly enforce this requirement.

Emergency Cards(two cards per child) Due no later than September 7, 2021.

It is vital that we have this information immediately. In the event that your child becomes ill, we must have all information needed to locate a parent or other responsible party.

There are two copies of this card so that one may be kept in your child's classroom and the other in the Preschool Office.

If at any time during the school year this information should change, please make sure that the changes are made to both cards (classroom and office).

Parking Safety

In order to assure the safety of all of our students, we ask that every parent be extremely cautious in the parking lot.

- 1. At no time should children be left unattended.**
- 2. We also ask that all parents refrain from talking on their cell phone while driving in our parking lot!**
- 3. If you have a sick child with you when you come to drop off or pick up your child, please call the preschool office so that someone can meet you to assist your preschooler into or out of the building.**

During a past school year, I am aware of an incident at a preschool where a toddler got away from her mother and was bumped by a car as it was being backed out of its parking space. Thankfully, the child was not injured; however, the scare that it brought to all involved was very real. These preschoolers are so small and our cars are so big these days that it difficult for drivers to see our children. We must all be alert and use extreme caution in the parking lot.

**Parking under the covered driveway or at the curb nearest the building is prohibited at all times!
Emergency vehicles cannot get to our buildings if cars have been parked in these areas.**

ADJUSTMENT OF CHILDREN

For some children, leaving parents for the first time is very difficult. We understand this is an important step in your child's development. It can be difficult for the child and for the parents as well. We want to work with you during this transition. We have found that the best way to enable your child to adjust more quickly is for parents not to linger. Assure them that you will be back shortly to pick them up and then leave quickly. If your child is very upset, please sit in my office to give him/her time to begin the adjustment. Our two-way windows will allow you to monitor the situation closely. If your child continues to be upset after a reasonable amount of time, we will work with you to shorten the mornings so that easing-in can be more gradual.

Easing In

Easing in will take place in all classrooms. The goals of easing in are to give your child and teacher the gift of small groups and regular, but short periods of time to adjust to leaving you and becoming accustomed to school, teacher, and friends. Educators find easing in the most respectful approach to support your child and teacher.

Easing in means that your child will be at school for only 1.5 hours rather than 3.5 hours for a few days. Half the class will attend from 9:00—10:35 a.m. and the other half from 10:55—12:30 p.m. Each age group will have a different number of days of easing in due to maturity levels. If your child requires more time than this to ease in, please talk to the Director and we will work with you.

Easing in Schedule

TTh Toddlers	September 7,9,14,16
MWF 2-year-olds	September 8,10,13
T/TH 2-year-olds	September 7,9,14
MWF 3-year-olds	September 8,10
MTTh 3- year-olds	September 7,9
T/TH 3- year-olds	September 7,9
T-F 4- year-olds	September 7
TK	September 7

POLICIES OF DAVIDSON UNITED METHODISTCHURCH PRESCHOOL (DUMCP)

Fee Schedule

Tuition is set on a yearly basis and paid in advance. For your convenience, the tuition has been divided into nine payments. Payments are due as follows:

	Due Date	Monthly Tuition
Registration Fee	Due at time of registration	2-day 2's.....\$217
Payment #1	Due May 1, 2021	3-day 2's.....\$267
Payment #2	Due September 1, 2021	2-day 3's.....\$213
Payment #3	Due October 1, 2021	3-day 3's.....\$259
Payment #4	Due November 1 2021	4-day 4's.....\$306
Payment #5	Due December 1, 2021	5 day 4's.....\$354
Payment #6	Due January 1, 2022	TK. \$364
Payment #7	Due February 1, 2022	Toddlers.....\$240
Payment #8	Due March 1, 2022	
Payment #9	Due April 1, 2022	

A bill will NOT be sent. A late payment charge of \$10.00 per child will be added for all tuition fees received after the **10th of each month.** There will be a \$10.00 fee for checks returned for insufficient funds.

Make all payments by CHECK (no cash accepted), payable to DUMC Preschool. Teachers are not allowed to accept tuition checks. Place your check in the locked box located outside the Preschool Office. If for some reason you are unable to make a payment, please contact the Director. If your account is in arrears more than a month, you will need to contact the Preschool Office to make arrangements for payment. An account more than three months in arrears could result in your child's dismissal from the program.

Withdrawals

If a child must be withdrawn from the program, please note that:

- a) Registration fees are NEVER refunded.
- b) If a family moves to another city from the Lake Norman area after registration, one month of the pre-paid tuitions will be refunded by the school **if a 30-day notice is given.**
- c) If a family withdraws a child from DUMCP after registration without moving from the Lake Norman area, there will be no refund of any monies.
- d) Any attendance during the month constitutes a full month's tuition.
- e) All withdrawals must be in writing.

Every parent has received a copy of this policy at the time of acceptance into our program and a signed copy is a part of your child's registration folder.

Registration

1. Registration takes place in February for the following school year.
2. Children's class levels will be based on their birth dates. The cut-off date will be August 31.
3. Registration and acceptance into the program will be based on space available, as determined by the Davidson United Methodist Church Preschool Committee on a yearly basis.
4. Registration requests received after the spring registration will be taken on a "first come, first served" basis where space permits or placed on our waiting list.
5. Registration forms must be filled out completely and submitted by the registration deadline TBD.
6. Registration fees will be set for fall at the beginning of the calendar year. **ALL REGISTRATION FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**
7. Class placement is done with great care to provide balance in both gender and age. We are unable to honor requests from parents for specific teachers or pairing with friends.

School Hours

After easing in, all children will **arrive at 9:00 a.m. and leave at 12:30 p.m.** Lunch will be a part of our daily schedule. Children will not be allowed in classrooms before 9:00 a.m., as this is the teachers' time to prepare for the day.

Sign In and Sign Out

1. All children are to be walked to their classrooms. Be sure to make eye contact with the teacher before you leave your child.
2. Sign in your child on the clipboard located outside of your child's classroom door. In the event that you are not going to be available at the telephone numbers designated on the green cards, we require that you give us a telephone number where either you or a designated contact may be reached that day. This is vital for your child's safety.
3. At no time is a child to be without an adult until he/she is in the care of his/her teachers.
4. All children are to be picked up at their classrooms and signed out.

Late Pick-ups

For non-emergency situations, parents who are more than five minutes late picking up their child will be subject to our late pick up policy.

First occurrence: Parent will receive a written warning.

Second and subsequent occurrences: After the five-minute grace period, a late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed. An additional \$5.00 will be added for each five minute interval thereafter. The fine will be assessed for each child in the family or carpool.

Under extreme circumstances, please notify the Director so that your child can be reassured and information given to teachers.

Written Messages

Any important information concerning your child must be put in writing and sent to school in your child's tote or book bag. We cannot accept verbal messages. Written messages are necessary when your child is to be released to someone other than a parent or pre-authorized person. Include this information in a note to your child's teacher in their bag. This bag is critical. Teachers will check it daily and communication will be sent home in this bag along with your child's artwork. In addition, we will also send home a monthly newsletter to keep parents updated on upcoming events for the month.

Conferences

Conferences will be held once a year for all children. We will hold this conference after the winter holidays and before spring. If needed, the teachers of 4 and 5-year-olds may hold conferences in late fall. If parents feel the need for a conference at anytime, please notify your child's teacher. Communication is very important to us to serve your child's needs.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is special. We want to celebrate this special day with you and your child at school. To keep the emphasis on the child, we encourage parents to plan a simple party with your teacher. Parents are welcome to share this time.

1. Discuss a special treat with teachers.
2. **Balloons or favors are not allowed.**
3. **No invitations for home parties are to be given out at school.** Shortly after school begins, you will be given a class list with addresses so that you may mail invitations for your private parties.

Toilet Training

This is directly tied to your child's developmental growth. Readiness is comprised of interest and awareness on the child's part, as well as muscle control. We will work closely with parents during this process, sharing information and support.

Change of Clothing

Boys and girls should wear comfortable, washable play clothing. **All children are required to wear tennis shoes to school each day.** This policy was created to help assure the safety of your child.

Due to safety, the following items **MUST** remain at home:

- umbrellas
- long dresses

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN: Please send a labeled diaper bag with a change of clothes, including socks, and three diapers or training pants.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN: Sometimes clothing becomes dirty or wet during snack time or while using the restroom. Please send extra clothes for older children in a large plastic zip bag that stays at the school and is changed seasonally. These clothes should include underwear, socks, shirt, pants, and if possible, a pair of old shoes.**FOR ALL CHILDREN: Please label jackets, sweaters, and lunch box**

Visits and Opportunities for Parent Involvement

We welcome and encourage you to visit our classrooms. **The first half-hour of the school day is a transitional time for your child; therefore, we ask that you remain outside the classroom during this period.** We encourage parents to:

- Participate in their children's birthday celebration at school.
- Share special talents or material.
- Serve as Room Parent.
- Serve on Preschool Committee.
- Serve on Parent Council or one of its committees.
- Attend parent seminars and other school sponsored events.
- Attend scheduled parent/teacher informational meetings.
- Help with small repairs and other service opportunities.

Field Trips

The 2- and 3-year-old classes will only take walking trips.

Four-year-olds and TK will have the opportunity to participate in activities that are brought to DUMC, such as presentations by Discovery Place, the Raptor Center, or other presenters in the areas of science and or social studies, etc. These activities take the place of outgoing field trips.

Fundraising

We use money raised through Harris Teeter's "Together In Education" plan and proceeds from St. John Photography's fall and spring photos to provide additional funds for our scholarship program. We encourage all parents, staff, and Preschool Committee members to participate in these endeavors.

Posting of Notices of Services

No notices or fundraising flyers are to be posted on the walls or in children's school bags other than those sponsored by the Preschool or Davidson United Methodist Church.

School Pictures

School pictures will be taken each year, subject to negotiation with photographers. This fall, individual portraits will be taken. In the spring, the photographer will return for individual and group shots.

Toys from Home

Since toys from home can be lost or cause friction among children, please leave your child's toys at home. A younger child may bring a small "cuddlie" for comfort purposes.

Teacher/Child Ratios

2:8	Toddler room
2:11	2-year-olds
2:12	3-year-olds
2:16	4-year-olds
2:16	5-year-olds

(Some exceptions may be made where circumstances are deemed necessary by the Preschool Director.)

Scholarships

Funds are available for student scholarships. If you need assistance to keep your child in the program, please complete an application available from the Preschool Director. Applications are reviewed by the Scholarship Committee and are kept strictly confidential.

Medical Guidelines

If your child has a cold, fever, or feels sick, PLEASE keep them at home to protect the other children. Any illnesses should be reported to the teacher. This will keep the school informed of any childhood diseases, viruses, etc. Let us know if your child has allergies. **If your child is not well enough to go outside, please do not send them to school and request that we keep them inside while the class goes outside.** We do not have the staff to stay with one child while the rest of the class is outside.

There will be NO REFUND for sick days.

There is some element of controversy regarding guidelines for keeping children out of daycare. Preschool, however, is different in that it is usually an optional childcare situation. Hopefully, some simple guidelines can help to prevent the spread of viral illnesses among preschool participants without being unduly restrictive.

1. Any child with a fever should not attend preschool until they have been free of fever for at least 24 hours.
2. Any child with vomiting should be kept at home until the child has been free of vomiting for 24 hours.
3. Any child with diarrhea—that is, loose watery bowel movements of increased volume and frequency, should be kept home until the problem has been resolved and until the child has had no diarrhea for 24 hours.
4. Cold symptoms such as a runny nose and cough are highly contagious to small preschoolers. Please keep your child home when:
 - Coughing is severe
 - Sneezing is frequent
 - Nose is running frequently
 - Fever exists
5. Any child with pink eye (red eyes with drainage) should be kept at home until the child's healthcare provider has cleared him/her for readmission.

Our best measure controlling the spread of infection is frequent hand washing. Soap, water, and paper towels should be readily available to all persons who are handling children.

Medication

Teachers are not allowed to give medication. If your child has a health concern that would be life-threatening, please make arrangements with the Director concerning this condition. We must have written verification of this condition and a medical authorization form completed by a doctor and parent in order for the medication to be administered. The medicine will be kept locked up in the office.

Immunizations

Children attending the preschool must comply with the North Carolina Immunization Law. Please provide a copy of your child's immunization record by September 1. Children will not be permitted to attend classes without providing this record.

**SCHOOL CANCELLATION POLICY
(DUE TO SNOW, HURRICANE, POWER OUTAGES)**

In the event of inclement weather, we will generally follow the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) course of action for closing school. Note: In the event that CMS chooses to use a two-hour delay, DUMC Preschool will make an effort to operate on an abbreviated schedule. There are a few times when conditions here at DUMC are such that we could be open. There are also times when Charlotte Mecklenburg is open and we do not feel that conditions here are safe to open. Preschool is not required, but is a choice.

In the event that we choose not to follow the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools course of action, you will be notified in the following ways:

- 1. The Director will leave a message on the Preschool Voicemail (704-896-0082).**
- 2. You will receive a call from your child's teacher.**

You will receive personal notification from us only if we are differing from Charlotte Mecklenburg's decision.

Make Up Days

The first two days missed by any individual class due to inclement weather will not be made up. If additional days are missed, the Preschool Committee will consider each on a case by case basis to determine if those additional days will be made up. We cover several school districts and therefore cannot follow one or the other. Given these conditions, the Committee will make the best and realistic call we can meet. The days of attendance and the use of rooms locks us into a practical call with little or no room to adjust our schedule or make up. We do not want to make promises we cannot keep. The safety of all of us is our central requirement for making our call.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Fire

In the event of a fire, emergency evacuation policies are posted on the back of each classroom door. All teachers are familiar with their evacuation plan and routine fire drills are practiced. Alternate plans are also posted in the event that the initial plan cannot be carried out.

Tornado

The DUMC Preschool is equipped with a National Weather Service radio with an audible alarm and is monitored during threatening weather conditions. In the event a tornado warning is issued during school hours, children will be moved to interior rooms and hallways within the building. All teachers are familiar with these emergency procedures as adopted from the American Red Cross and the National Weather Service.

Nuclear Power Plant Emergency Plan

DUMC Preschool lies within a ten-mile radius of the McGuire Nuclear Station; therefore, emergency policies/evacuation procedures have been adopted. DUMC Preschool is registered with county emergency management officials. In the event of an alert, sirens are sounded and local radio stations inform the public of what to do. DUMC Preschool is in Zone H; their reception center is Troutman Middle School off I-77 at Exit 45 in Iredell County. If an evacuation is ordered, all attempts will be made to transport children to the reception center by individual cars and church van. If enough transportation cannot be secured, local county emergency vehicles will respond.

We have adopted these policies to assure the safety of all of our children. We encourage all families to also have emergency plans at home and practice them often.

Lockdown Policy

DUMC Preschool, in conjunction with the Davidson Police Department, has adopted an emergency procedure for the lockdown of our facility. This procedure would be used should a situation arise that necessitated a lockdown of the school. The teachers, staff, and students may practice this procedure during the school year.

WEEKDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Preschool of Davidson United Methodist Church is governed by the Preschool Committee. Its purpose is to oversee the operations of Davidson United Methodist Church Preschool and to serve as a liaison between the school and the church. It establishes and monitors school policy regarding student enrollment, staff compensation, health and legal requirements school calendar, tuition, and budget matters.

Committee members for the 2021-22 school year are:

Committee members have not been announced yet. If you are interested in participating as a member of the Preschool Committee, please contact the committee chair, Cameron Gardner at camerongardner82@gmail.com.

DUMCP 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR

8/30,31, 9/1,2,3	Teacher Workdays
September 7	First day of School
September 7 & 8	Orientation & Parent Night
September 16	CMS Teacher Workday
November 2	CMS Teacher Workday
November 11	Veteran's Day Holiday
November 24-26	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 17	Last day of classes before Christmas Holidays
January 3	DUMC/CMS Teacher Workday
January 4	Classes resume
January 17	Martin Luther King Holiday
January 24	CMS Teacher Workday
February 21	President's Day
March 28	CMS Teacher Workday
April 8	Last day of classes before Spring Break
April 19	Classes resume
May 26	Last day of classes for students
May 27	Teacher Workday

- All days that DUMC is closed for students are in bold print
- DUMCP is closed for students and teachers on CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools)Teacher Workdays

