

# COVENANT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL

*A Toddler and Pre-K program serving 12 months to Pre-K*

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation>

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

Revised August 3, 2023

### **COVENANT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL**

4410 Duval Road

Austin, TX 78727

*www.covenantpreschoolaustin.com*

**Jan Glosser, Director**

*Preschool Office: (512) 346-6366*

*Fax: (512) 346-3197*

*E-mail: [preschool@covenantaustin.org](mailto:preschool@covenantaustin.org)*

## **2023 - 2024 Preschool Administrative Council Members**

President:	Julia Schacherl, jcschacherl@gmail.com
Vice President:	
Secretary:	
Social Media & Communications Coordinator:	Ashlyn VandeVanter, ashlynvandevanter@gmail.com
Administrative Coordinator:	Wei-Shan Ochs, weishanochs@gmail.com
Service Coordinator:	Victoria Lewis, victoria.sluyter@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator:	Anaid McDonald, ganaid@hotmail.com
Church Liaison:	Sue Whisenhunt, Whisenhuntsue@gmail.com

### **Pastor**

Reverend Wilson Pruitt  
Church Office: (512) 346-3124

The Texas Health and Human Services Department licenses the Covenant United Methodist Church Preschool. The program meets all minimum standards set by that department. A copy of the minimum standards is available for review in the Director's office as well as a copy of the most recent licensing inspection report.

*Local Licensing office: (512) 834-3195  
Texas Health and Human Services: [www.hhs.texas.gov](http://www.hhs.texas.gov)*

*No document can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As needs and responsibilities of the Preschool change, the Preschool Administrative Council reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the manual as it deems appropriate. If an inconsistency is found or a policy is not clarified by this manual, suggestions for amendments may be brought to the attention of the Director or another Preschool Administrative Council member who will then bring them to the Preschool Administrative Council for consideration. CUMC Preschool intends to comply with all federal and state laws governing personnel practices.*

<b>Section 1: An Overview of Our Preschool Program</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Mission Statement	5
1.2 Governing Bodies	5
1.3 Program Structure	6
1.4 Pre-K Program	7
1.5 Physical Activity and Screen Time	7
1.6 Class Descriptions	8
1.7 After School Programs	8
1.8 Toilet Trained Children	9
1.9 Cloth Diapers	9
1.10 Importance of Self-Care	9
<b>Section 2: Enrollment Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Placement	10
2.2 Withdrawing a Child from CUMC Preschool	11
2.3 Removal from the Program	11
2.4 Admissions Procedures	11
2.5 Updating Your Child’s File	12
<b>Section 3: Tuition and Fees</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Tuition	13
3.2 Tuition Deposit	13
3.3 Late Fee	13
3.4 Supply Fee	14
3.5 Registration Fees	14
3.6 Billing Statements	14
3.7 Tuition Assistance Program	14
3.8 Fundraisers	14
<b>Section 4: CUMC Preschool 2023 - 2024 Calendar</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Hours of Operation	15
<b>Section 5: Classroom Operating Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>16</b>
5.1 Health Checks/Ready to Learn	16
5.2 Arrivals and Departures	16
5.3 Snack and Lunch Policy	17
5.4 Special Events	18
5.5 Allergies	18
5.6 Breastfeeding Policy	18
5.7 Clothing	18
5.8 Personal Belongings	19
5.9 Water Activities	19
5.10 Parties	19
5.11 Teacher Absences	19

5.12 Student Absences	20
5.13 Additional Aides in the Classroom	20
5.14 Discipline	20
5.15 Discipline and Guidance Intervention Policy	21
5.16 HHS Discipline and Guidance Policy	22
5.17 Biting and Other Developmental Behaviors	23
<b><i>Section 6: Parent/School Communication</i></b>	<b>24</b>
6.1 Parental Code of Conduct for Communication	24
6.2 Parent Surveys	25
6.3 Parent Conferences	25
6.4 Parent Involvement	25
6.5 Room Parent(s)	26
<b><i>Section 7: Emergency Procedures</i></b>	<b>27</b>
7.1 Illness or Injury	27
7.2 Employee Immunization Policy	28
7.3 Medications	29
7.4 Lice Policy	29
7.5 Inclement Weather and School Closings	29
7.6 Evacuation	30
7.7 Adults Under the Influence	30
7.8 Child Care Centers are Gang-Free Zones	30
<b><i>Appendix A: Skills Development Reference</i></b>	<b>32</b>
Skills Developed in 1 Year-old Classes	32
Skills Developed in 2 Year-old Classes	32
Skills Developed in 3 Year-old Classes	33
Skills Developed in Pre-K Classes	34
<b><i>Appendix B: Emergency and Evacuation Plans</i></b>	<b>35</b>
Evacuations	36
Procedures in Time of Emergency	36
Communication During an Emergency	37
Evacuation from Premises	38
<b><i>Appendix C: Prevention and Responding to Child Abuse</i></b>	<b>40</b>
Reporting Child Abuse	40
Preventing Child Abuse	40
Recognizing Child Abuse	41
<b><i>Appendix D: Pest Control Notification</i></b>	<b>43</b>
<b><i>Appendix E: Healthy Lunch Ideas</i></b>	<b>44</b>
<b><i>Appendix F: Early Childhood Education Resources</i></b>	<b>45</b>

## **Section 1: An Overview of Our Preschool Program**

Covenant United Methodist Church Preschool (CUMC Preschool), in response to the needs of its community, began its program in the fall of 1989. The program serves parents and children by providing a half-day program for toddlers and preschoolers in a Christian setting.

### **1.1 Mission Statement**

The fundamental mission of CUMC Preschool is to nurture and support the whole family. The beliefs that form the groundwork for our mission are:

- A. Positive interaction with both the parent and child will affect our community as a whole. We believe that a Christian foundation provides the basis for this positive interaction.
- B. Children should develop a high self-esteem which is gained through confidence in God, their environment, their caretakers, and by being encouraged in the mastery of their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills.
- C. A child's play is his/her work, accomplished in a Christian, low-stress, non-competitive setting.

Our goal is to provide a secure environment that encourages a child to grow and flourish. To accomplish our goal in accordance with our beliefs, we will strive:

- A. To maintain high quality staff.
- B. To provide the necessary tools and surroundings for children to learn from their successes as well as their setbacks.
- C. To promote parent involvement.
- D. To educate staff and parents about development stages and age-appropriate expectations.

### **1.2 Governing Bodies**

The Preschool is a mission of Covenant United Methodist Church. As such, the CUMC Church Council has ultimate authority over the program. The president of the Preschool Administrative Council is the permit holder of the state license as determined by HHS guidelines and is the person designated to speak for and act on the organization's behalf. The Director is hired by the Staff Parish Relations Committee of CUMC with input from the Preschool Administrative Council. The Director manages the staff and facilities. The CUMC Preschool Administrative Council will approve all center policies and procedures, approve an annual school calendar, make all financial decisions relating to the preschool, approve the budget and ensure that the Director adheres to the budget, oversee the Director of the program, and ensure that the Preschool adheres to the Minimum Standards for Day Care as set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The Preschool Administrative Council is made up of seven voting members which are volunteers drawn from church members and parents plus two non-voting members which include the Preschool Director and a Teacher Representative.

Annually, the Preschool Administrative Council will elect a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Church Liaison, a Volunteer Coordinator, Service Coordinator, an Administrative

Coordinator, and a Social Media & Communications Coordinator. Of the seven voting members, two must be church members and the Preschool Administrative Council may draw the remaining four members from church members or parents of the program. Every effort will be made to meet the requirement of two church members. If this is not possible, the Pastor will need to approve a decision to include fewer church members. All voting Preschool Administrative Council members will serve a two-year term beginning in June, and terms will be staggered to ensure continuity within the Preschool Administrative Council.

The Pastor of CUMC, as the Chief Executive Officer of the church, is not usually directly involved in day-to-day procedures or policy-making decisions, but must be kept informed of program activities and policies. Any suggestions made by the Pastor must be given careful consideration by the Director and by the Preschool Administrative Council.

If a parent has an issue that cannot be satisfactorily resolved with a teacher or the Director, the parent should request a hearing at the next Preschool Administrative Council meeting. The request must be submitted in writing to the President of the Preschool Administrative Council. The requests should explain the nature of the concern and include all relevant details. The Preschool Administrative Council will then review and investigate the issue. To be included in the agenda, letters must be received at least one week before a Preschool Administrative Council meeting. The Preschool Administrative Council meets each month. If a parent has an issue that cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the Preschool Administrative Council, the parent should request a meeting with the Pastor of CUMC.

### **1.3 Program Structure**

The CUMC Preschool gives children a setting in which they can feel secure and happy. Activities are tuned to each child’s developmental level and often apply to scheduled study units. Each child’s daily schedule incorporates a balance of the following types of activities:

Structured	Unstructured
Indoor	Outdoor
Informative	Creative
Individual	Group
Observing	Participating
Active	Quiet
Teacher-directed	Child-directed

Preschool teachers choose activities that will expand a child’s horizons in the following areas:

Physical	Using large muscle groups in outdoor and indoor play. Using small muscles to manipulate toys, puzzles, and creative materials.
Social	Enjoying others and relating to people and friends. Sharing, giving, and receiving. Learning self-control and independence. Being encouraged to respond in positive ways and discouraged from negative actions.
Emotional	Building confidence and self-esteem. Understanding limits. Expressing feelings appropriately. Accepting their own feelings and feelings of others.

Cognitive	Exposure to new ideas and experiences. Improving language skills through interaction, discussion, and song. Observing, comparing, and differentiating. Using artistic activities to find outlets for imagination. Experiencing fantasy through dramatic play and listening and following directions. Thinking and reasoning. Exploring the uses of the senses. Appreciating music.
Spiritual	Becoming aware of God and His teachings. Observing and responding to the Christian attitude reflected by the teachers and staff. Participating in chapel and prayer. Listening to Bible stories and singing Christian songs.

#### **1.4 Pre-K Program**

A Pre-K program is offered to 4-year-olds and young 5's to help prepare them for Kindergarten. The goal of our Pre-K program is to provide a balance of cognitive experiences and effective learning opportunities, thereby promoting a positive self-concept and growth in social skills. We encourage development of each child's ability to process information, solve problems, develop concepts, and acquire new language and vocabulary.

It is said that a preschool-age child learns or remembers about ten percent of what he or she hears, about fifty percent of what he or she sees, but up to ninety percent of what he or she does. Accordingly, the Pre-K program provides for a wealth of student involvement through sensory experiences of exploring, comparing, classifying, ordering, generalizing, and manipulating real objects.

To explore new concepts and expand vocabulary, the Pre-K program offers many teacher-directed opportunities such as creative dramatics, student plays, storytelling, reading, games, art and music activities. Each child is provided with many opportunities to improve his/her visual and auditory discrimination skills, both of which are necessary for reading success.

The Pre-K program incorporates center-based activities. With centers, a child learns to be self-directed and to take responsibility for following directions, completing tasks, sharing materials, cleaning up, and communicating. The centers in the Pre-K classroom focus on such areas as housekeeping, reading, small and large manipulatives, art, math, and science. The centers help develop vocabulary and teach concepts that are acquired through teamwork.

Our Pre-K curriculum expands a child's immediate experience of self, home, and family by including special classroom visitors. These activities seek to incorporate the child's increasing interest in his or her community and world.

#### **1.5 Physical Activity and Screen Time**

State Licensing requires that our students play outside during their school day. Weather permitting, children will play outside for a minimum of one hour each day. When the heat index is in excess of 100 degrees, outdoor play will be shortened. Our playground is well-shaded and drinking water will always be available. Outdoor play will be shortened when the wind chill drops below 32 degrees. Outdoor play will not take place when it's raining or when there is

thunder/lightning. Thirty minutes must pass after the last thunder crack before going outside. There will be adaptation for children with special needs.

In the case of bad weather, we will provide moderate to vigorous physical activity in the Fellowship Hall for an equivalent amount of time. Children will be with students their same age or only one year younger or older during active play. Older children may occasionally be given an opportunity for screen time in the case of a bad weather day or if a particular video supports the unit being studied by the class. An alternate activity will be offered to students when screen time takes place. Children under 2 years old will not participate in screen time.

## **1.6 Class Descriptions**

Children are assigned to classes based on their age as of September 1. Additional classes and activities may be scheduled at the Preschool Administrative Council's discretion. Class size may increase if a new teacher is hired with a child needing to be in a class. Also, children of substitute teachers may need to be in a class while their parent is teaching school.

<b>Class Name</b>	<b>Child's Age by September 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Ratio (Students/Teachers)</b>	<b>Days Per Week</b>
<b>Ones</b>	12 to 23 months	5 / 1 (plus 1 floating aide)	2
<b>Twos</b>	24 to 35 months	9 / 2	2
<b>Threes</b>	36 to 47 months	9 / 1 (plus 1 floating aide)	3 or 4 days per week
<b>Pre-K</b>	48 months to 5 years	9 / 1 (plus 1 floating aide) OR 16 / 2 (plus 1 floating aide)	4 days per week

The floating aide is available for all teachers as needed. Lead teachers and/or aides will actively supervise students from one classroom to another, to and from the restroom, and to and from the playground.

## **1.7 After School Programs**

The after-school programs are very popular and thus space is usually limited to the first 10 students on the sign-up sheet. The sign-up sheets are usually out on the bulletin board in the hallway at the beginning of the month or end of the previous month.

### Stay 'n Play:

The Stay 'n Play class is held two days a week from 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm. The starting date will be announced at the beginning of the year. During the class the children will have access to a variety of art materials, gross motor and fine motor play and storytime. It's a lot of fun! The cost of the class is \$10.00 per child per class, which is due on the day of class. This class is only offered to 3-year-olds and Pre-K students.

### Explorers Class:

The Explorers class is held two days a week from 1:30 pm to 2:15 pm. The starting date will be announced at the beginning of the year. During the class the children will participate in hands on science and nature activities. Some activities in the past have included dropping eggs on



different surfaces to determine on which surface the egg will break, launching handmade rockets, and creating a 'balancing man' that uses pennies to balance on an edge. The cost of the class is \$10.00 per child per class, which is due on the day of class. The Explorers class is limited to students in a 3-year-old or Pre-K class.

Other after school activities may be provided depending on parent interest.

### **1.8 Toilet Trained Children**

Only our 1's and 2's classrooms are equipped with diaper changing tables, so we strongly encourage parents to work with their older children and have them potty trained before enrolling in the classes for older children. If you have an older child who is not using the potty independently, please let us know when you register for a class so that we can make sure we have proper staffing available.

*This policy applies to children ages 1-5:*

Some children who use the potty routinely at home can sometimes have difficulty using it at school. We understand that toileting accidents are common, but if your child has more than one accident in a week, or if the child begins to have frequent accidents, we will ask you to bring the child either in diapers or in Pull-Ups with Velcro sides for ease in changing. When the teacher feels confident that the child is ready to use the toilet at school she will inform the parents. Some parents may be inconvenienced by this policy, but at school our priority needs to be sanitary classrooms. Keeping the accident contained in a Pull-Up or diaper keeps the room clean. It is also less embarrassing to the child. All students must wear either a diaper, a Pull-Up or underwear under their clothing at all times.

### **1.9 Cloth Diapers**

Because of the time and sanitary issues involved with cloth diapers in a classroom setting, we require that you bring disposable diapers for your child's school day.

### **1.10 Importance of Self-Care**

As children get older they are able to perform many more duties by themselves. By age 3 many children will be able to use the potty and wash up themselves. Although we do have aides helping in our classrooms, our staff may not always be available to help your child with using the restroom. If your child is in a 3-year-old or Pre-K class, prepare them for these self-care tasks. Make sure they wear clothes that are easy to remove and put back on when using the potty. Teach them how to wipe after using the potty and to wash their hands afterwards. They may not do the best job at the beginning, but after a few tries they will be able to perform these tasks independently.

## **Section 2: Enrollment Policies and Procedures**

CUMC Preschool does not discriminate against any child because of his race, color, sex, creed, or his parent's political beliefs. If a child has special needs to be taken into consideration, the

Director, Preschool Administrative Council and teacher(s) involved will review the circumstances to determine whether our facility can meet the needs of that child while maintaining a quality program for the other children in the classroom. All children between the ages of twelve months and five years old by September 1 are eligible for the program if the center is able to meet his/her needs.

Children may not be enrolled on a partial time basis, i.e. two days in a three-day class, three days in a four-day class. Exceptions might be allowed with approval of the Director, teacher, and Preschool Administrative Council for instances such as staffing requirements or vacancies in programs after the midpoint of the year.

## **2.1 Placement**

The Preschool places children in classes based on available spaces and priority. Children have priority (and thus will be placed first) if they meet the following criteria:

Priority A	Children of teachers
Priority B	Children of Preschool Administrative Council members
Priority C	Currently enrolled children
Priority D	Children with siblings who are currently or were previously enrolled
Priority E	Children of a church member

### **During the Current School Year**

If a parent wishes to enroll a child in the middle of a school year and cannot be placed immediately in a class, he or she is added to the waiting list. The waiting list is maintained on a first come, first served basis except for children with priority. Children with priority are moved to the front of the waiting list. Children of a newly hired teacher are placed immediately provided room can be made for them.

### **Pre-Registration for the Next School Year**

Students are placed in classes as space in the class permits. Children with priority are placed first, new enrollees second. When there are more registration requests than there are available spaces in a class, children are selected as follows:

- Children with priority are placed based on their priority level.
- If there are not enough spaces for all the priority children, then the children are placed within their priority level via a lottery. Any children not placed are added to a waiting list in their priority and lottery order.
- If spaces do still remain, children from the current waiting list are notified of any openings. The openings are filled on a first come, first served basis.
- If there are still more spaces, newly enrolled children will be placed on a first-come, first-served basis.

In addition, parent participation in the Preschool is a key factor in determining which children are placed in full classes.

## **2.2 Withdrawing a Child from CUMC Preschool**

Children are enrolled in the Preschool for the full nine-month school year.

Please Note: Family vacations do not release parents from tuition obligations. To maintain a child's spot in the Preschool, the monthly tuition payments must be paid.

Parents may withdraw their child at any time provided they submit a written notice of withdrawal thirty days in advance. Thirty days after the notice is received, their child is considered withdrawn and the parents no longer owe tuition from that point onward. Since the Preschool divides tuition into monthly payments, parents should be aware that a tuition payment could become due during the thirty days-notice period. Any tuition payments due before the thirtieth day are still considered owed. The tuition deposit will only be returned if 30-days notice has been given and we are able to fill the vacancy within those 30 days. Children for which tuition is overdue may not re-enroll during the current school year or register for the following school year until the overdue payments are received.

## **2.3 Removal from the Program**

Children may be withdrawn from the program for any of the following reasons:

- If a child is absent without explanation for two continuous weeks, the Director will attempt to contact the child's family. If no contact can be made and no notification about the absences is received, the child will be withdrawn from the Program. The registration fee and supply fee are not refundable.
- If tuition has not been paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the child will be withdrawn from the Program. The registration fee and supply fee are not refundable. Children for which tuition is overdue may not re-enroll during the current school year or register for the following school year until the overdue payments are received.
- The Preschool reserves the right to remove a child from its rolls for non-cooperation, the inability of a child or a child's parents to adjust to the program, or when a child poses a threat to the other children or teachers in the program. Removal from the Program by the Preschool is used only as a last resort option when attempts by the Preschool Administrative Council and the Director to counsel with the parents and child are not successful. The Preschool Administrative Council makes the final decision for removal.

## **2.4 Admissions Procedures**

By Texas law, the CUMC Preschool is required to have certain forms on file for every child in the program. Each child must have all of the immunizations required by the state of Texas unless a state-mandated waiver form was obtained. Hearing and vision testing is required for all 4 year-olds. If your child has a diagnosed food allergy, we must have a Food Allergy Emergency Form signed by the doctor. Forms are due at different times.

### Immunization Records

As part of the Health requirements documents, every child is required to give a record of immunizations. If immunizations were not given, a state-mandated waiver form must be

submitted to the preschool.

More information on ordering an official waiver form can be found on the Texas Department of State Health Services website at: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

#### Forms Due When Child Enrolls or Registers

Before a child is admitted to the program, the school must have the following completed forms:

- 1) Admission Information Form
- 2) Health Requirements Form (includes medical statement, Immunization records, and vision and hearing information)

#### Forms Due on the First Day of School

- 1) An up-to-date Emergency Contact Form (available at the Open House)
- 2) An updated Health Requirements Form, including:
  - a) A current shot record
  - b) A signature from your child's physician on file
  - c) Proof of vision and hearing tests (Four-year-olds only)
  - d) Food Allergy Emergency Form (if your child has a diagnosed food allergy)

### **2.5 Updating Your Child's File**

If you need to make changes to your child's file (permissions for pick-up, changes in phone number or address allergy conditions, etc.), please email the director. The school needs to have the most up-to-date information about your child on file.

## **Section 3: Tuition and Fees**

### **3.1 Tuition**

Tuition calculations are based on the costs of providing the Preschool for the complete school year. Monthly tuition payments are set by dividing the annual tuition fee equally over the course of the regular school year. Therefore, the monthly tuition payments are equal installments toward the annual tuition fee. So, regardless of the number of classroom days or holidays in the month, the payment for each month is the same.

Parents may pay the yearly tuition at the beginning of the year or follow the Preschool payment plan and divide the payments over 9 months. The tuition deposit will be applied to the May 2024 tuition. Tuition payments will begin in September.

Tuition varies by the class age and days per week that a child attends CUMC Preschool:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Days/Week</b>	<b>Monthly Tuition</b>	<b>Yearly Tuition</b>
1's (MW)	2	\$275	\$2475
1's (TTH)	2	\$290	\$2610
2's (MW)	2	\$275	\$2475
2's (TTH)	2	\$290	\$2610
3's (MWTH)	3	\$360	\$3240
3's (MTWTH)	4	\$415	\$3735
Pre-K (MTWTH)	4	\$415	\$3735

### **3.2 Tuition Deposit**

CUMC Preschool will collect a deposit of one month's tuition when you register your child. The tuition deposit will be used as your last tuition payment for the 2023 – 2024 school year.

\*\*If you need to withdraw your child early from the school, please give a 30-day notice. If the school is able to fill the vacancy, we will refund the tuition deposit. We will not issue a refund for last minute withdrawals or in cases where we cannot fill the spot.

### **3.3 Late Fee**

Tuition is due by the first of each month. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged after the tenth of the month. Returned checks must be paid in cash. After two returned checks, parents must pay on a cash basis or with a money order. If tuition has not been paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the child will be withdrawn from the Program.

### **3.4 Supply Fee**

A non-refundable fee for supplies is required and half the amount is billed in September and half in January. The amount of the supply fee varies by the number of days a child attends school. For your convenience, the tuition chart below lists the amounts of the supply fee.

<b>Days/Week</b>	<b>September Supply Fees</b>	<b>January Supply Fees</b>
2-days	\$50	\$50
3-days	\$55	\$55
4-day Threes	\$60	\$60
4-day Pre-k	\$70	\$70

### **3.5 Registration Fees**

Upon enrollment, parents must pay a non-refundable registration fee of \$125 for the first child and \$70 for each additional child.

### **3.6 Billing Statements**

Tuition is paid at the same time and rate every month. Billing statements normally aren't given unless there is a credit or additional money is owed on the account. Upon request the director will provide monthly and/or year-end billing statements. **The school's EIN is 74-2213549.**

### **3.7 Tuition Assistance Program**

CUMC Preschool offers a tuition assistance program to parents in need of tuition assistance for the long-term (lasting throughout the semester) or short-term (to help those in an immediate financial crisis). Tuition assistance helps those families in financial need by paying a percentage of the tuition. Present and potential enrollees in need of financial assistance can request help from the Council. The funds are limited and are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Interested parents should contact the Director for more information and the application form.

### **3.8 Fundraisers**

The Preschool may conduct no more than four fundraisers each year. The fundraisers will be determined by the Preschool Administrative Council and occur at reasonable time intervals throughout the school year. The CUMC Finance Committee must approve all fundraisers. Fundraisers will reflect the Preschool's philosophy "to support parents and their children in an educational way which is related to the program."

Director approval must be obtained prior to making any solicitations by staff, parent or church member for profit making ventures. Solicitors may submit in writing a description of services they would like to offer for advertising purposes for consideration by the Director.

## **Section 4: CUMC Preschool 2023 - 2024 Calendar**

August 21	Staff returns/Office opens
August 24	Open Houses – 12-1pm and 6-7pm
August 28	First Day of School
September 4	Closed for Labor Day Holiday
October 16	Student Holiday/Preschool Conference Day
November 20-23	Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
December 29	Last Day of Classes in 2023
January 8	Teacher In-service
January 9	Classes Resume
January 15	Closed for MLK Day
February 19	Closed for Presidents’ Day/AISD Holiday
March 11-14	Closed for Spring Break
April 1	Closed for Easter Monday
May 16	Last Day of School
May 17	Staff Work Day

### **4.1 Hours of Operation**

CUMC Preschool operates from 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Our calendar differs slightly from the AISD calendar. Classes begin after the start of the AISD school year and end before the end of the AISD school year. We are also closed the Monday after Easter.

Parents may visit the preschool at any time during our hours of operation to observe your child(ren), the preschool’s program activities, the building, the premises, and the equipment without having to secure prior approval.

## **Section 5: Classroom Operating Policies and Procedures**

### **5.1 Health Checks/Ready to Learn**

Children should arrive for class healthy and ready for a half-day of fun and interesting learning activities. A teacher or staff member will perform a health check to make sure that each child is healthy upon arrival. The teacher will check for obvious signs of illness or injury, such as fever, breathing difficulties, coughing, discharge from the nose or eyes, changes in skin color, bruising or swelling, cuts, sores, or rashes.

Parents should inform the teacher about an existing injury or condition. Please inform the staff about changes in a child's sleeping, eating or toileting habits. Also let the teacher know about changes in mood or behavior at home. This will help us ensure that the child will adapt more easily to the classroom.

The teacher will document any condition that needs to be monitored during the school day. If the child does not seem healthy enough to participate in school that day, we'll request that the parent take the child home. This health check is mandated by state law and staff will record its completion on the sign in sheet.

### **5.2 Arrivals and Departures**

Children should arrive no earlier than 9:30 am and be picked up no later than 1:30 pm. If a child is participating in after school activities, he or she should be picked up immediately following the activity. Every child must be signed in upon arrival and signed out when they are picked up every day. The adult in charge must fill out the daily attendance sheet with the time they arrive, the time they pick up and their initials. We ask that parents remain off cell phones at pickup and drop off.

An adult will escort children to their classes. Parents must stay with their child if the teacher is not in the classroom when they arrive. Do not leave children unattended or with another parent. Children who are not escorted by an adult will be sent to the Director's office and will sit with the Director until an authorized adult can be reached to pick up or escort the child to the classroom.

#### **Late Pick Up of Children**

Please pick up your child no later than 1:30 pm. Parents who are late picking up their child will be assessed a fine of \$1.00 per minute for each minute they are late after 1:35 pm. This policy applies for every minute after 2:20 pm when your child is attending an After-School Program.

If a child has not been picked up by 2:30 pm and no one from the emergency contact list can be contacted, the staff may need to call the police to watch over the child in the staff's absence.

Please be prompt in picking up your children.



### Another Adult Picking up Child

If another adult is picking up your child that day, please notify your child's teacher. A written notice is required if the adult is not on the emergency list for your child. Teachers and aides shall release students only to those who are authorized in writing. Until staff can identify by sight those listed on the release form, the staff will request proper identification. Proper identification is a driver's license. If a parent wishes to authorize a person by phone call, the phone call must be verified by a return call and record kept of the date, time, and authorization made. This will be kept in the office. In case of emergency, the parent may call the Preschool office at (512) 346-6366 to leave a message to be given to the teacher.

Emergency information is on file in the Director's office and parents must notify the Director of any changes.

### Late Arrivals, Early Departures and Absences

We highly discourage late drop offs and early pickups because they greatly disrupt the classroom. In addition, the child arriving late or leaving early usually has difficulty adjusting to the day's school routine and may miss part (or all) of the lesson for that day. Likewise, we encourage good attendance so that we can provide continuity of care for your child.

If you need to pick up a child before 1:30 pm, please notify the Director beforehand so that the Director or floating aide can inform the child and teacher, gather the child's belongings, and ensure that there is minimal disruption to the class.

## **5.3 Snack and Lunch Policy**

According to TX DPRS Minimum Standards, children attending programs for four hours or longer must be provided with a snack and lunch in order to meet one third of their daily caloric needs. Water will be provided to children at snack time, lunch time and after outdoor play. **Children need to bring a drinking cup to class each day. The cups should be marked with your child's first and last name and will be sent home daily. Covenant UMC Preschool is a nut-free school. Please list any allergies your child has on the Enrollment Information Form in the section asking for information about the special needs of your child.**

### Snack

Due to food allergies and gluten-free dietary needs, we ask that parents send a snack with their child each day. This snack should be packaged separately from their lunch.

### Lunch

At Covenant, we ask parents to provide lunch for their child each day. We ask that the lunch contain choices from each of the following food groups: the fruit or vegetable group, the milk group, the grain group and the meat or meat alternative group. We also request that children not bring soda, sugary treats or other junk food in their lunch. However, **CUMC Preschool is not responsible for the content of the lunches or their nutritional value.** We do not have any facilities for heating lunches or for refrigerating anything other than baby bottles. For your child's safety, we ask that you pack foods that need to be kept warm in a Thermos, and foods

that must be kept cold with an ice pack. See Appendix F for sample menus that provide good nutritional value and information about allergies.

Further, according to minimum standards for child care centers, 90% of fatal chokings occur in children under 4 years of age. Therefore, we reserve the right to remove any food brought to school that could be deemed a choking hazard. Examples of some choking hazards are whole grapes, dried fruit, popcorn, hotdogs cut into rounds, or any chunk of food larger than can be swallowed whole.

#### **5.4 Special Events**

Our school allows parents to bring in a snack to share for birthdays and other items when requested by the teacher for special events like Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day parties. Please be aware that these items may be store bought or prepared at home by the parents. Because the school does not provide these items, we are not responsible for their nutritional value or for them meeting your child's daily food requirements. If your child does not have your permission to eat "homemade" items, please let your teacher and the director know.

#### **5.5 Allergies**

It's CUMC Preschool's policy to accommodate the needs of children who have food allergies. If a child has an allergy it is the parents' responsibility to bring that to the attention of both the director and teacher. If the parents request that accommodations be made for a child at the preschool, we must receive written instructions from a physician as to the proper way to modify the school environment. State Licensing states that if a child has a diagnosed food allergy, a written Food Allergy Emergency Plan, signed by a doctor, must be given to the Director before the child can be admitted to the school. We reserve the right to declare certain classrooms to be allergen free.

#### **5.6 Breastfeeding Policy**

According to State law, mothers have the right to breastfeed and parents have the right to provide breast milk while their child is in care. The one-year-old classroom has a rocking chair and there are also comfortable gliders in the cry room next to the sanctuary that you are welcome to use for nursing.

#### **5.7 Clothing**

Children should be dressed appropriately in play clothes. Weather permitting; children will play outside every day. When necessary, hats, gloves, and coats should be sent with the children. All children, including children who are reliably toilet trained, should bring a complete change of clothing each day clearly labeled with the child's name. Please put clothes in a plastic bag within your child's bag to ensure it stays clean and dry. If a child is potty training, please send multiple changes of clothes, including socks.

Children participate in all sorts of creative, messy activities during the day. Parents should keep this in mind when picking out their child's clothing for the day. A child and his parents will have a more relaxed, productive day if there is little worry of ruining a special outfit.

Closed-toe shoes are recommended on the playground and during outdoor activities for safety reasons.

### **5.8 Personal Belongings**

State regulations require that each child have a separate carrier for the things they bring to and from class. For easy identification, the container should be clearly marked with the child's name. A child's extra clothing can be brought in the child's carrier.

Personal belongings, such as toys or games should be brought to school only upon teacher request. This policy is intended to prevent belongings from being lost or broken and to lessen the conflicts that sometimes arise when children are in the process of mastering the art of sharing.

The Preschool is not responsible for unsolicited personal belongings. If a child has something special that he or she would like to bring to school, arrangements should be made beforehand with the child's teacher. Under no condition may a child bring a toy weapon to class.

### **5.9 Water Activities**

At the end of the school year, one of the activities the staff may provide for the children is a splash day. On these days, the Preschool will meet the child/staff ratio for wading and the children will be constantly supervised. Wading/splashing pools will be kept out of reach of children when not in use, drained at least daily, and sanitized.

### **5.10 Parties**

Most classes hold parties in their classroom to celebrate major holidays, both Christian and secular, that occur during the school year. Both teachers and children always welcome parent participation at these parties.

Birthdays are exciting times in a child's life and we welcome their celebrations in the child's class. Parents may bring a snack for the day, such as cupcakes or cookies. In addition, a book can be donated to the program in celebration of a child's birthday. Your child's teacher will discuss birthday procedures with you. Birthday invitations may not be distributed in class unless all children are invited.

### **5.11 Teacher Absences**

If a teacher is ill or cannot come to class for some other reason, every effort is made to find a replacement. The Director maintains a Substitute List comprised of parents and individuals who are not regularly employed or otherwise affiliated with the program, but who the Director feels are qualified to substitute. A Criminal History Background Check must be on file for all substitutes. Substitutes must have a background in early childhood development or have received 24 hours of pre-service training from CUMC Preschool prior to being the only teacher in the classroom.

Teachers are responsible for finding a substitute if able. If attempts have been unsuccessful by the teacher, the Director will assume responsibility for finding a substitute. If the teacher and Director have not been able to find a substitute by 9:15 am, the class may be canceled. No tuition reimbursement shall be made for a canceled class. Substitute teachers are compensated at the approved hourly rate.

### **5.12 Student Absences**

Please call the Director's office if your child will be absent on any day. There is no refund of tuition for days that a child misses due to illness. In the case of an extended illness, the Preschool Administrative Council will decide if a tuition refund is granted. Students who are absent for two weeks without notification will be withdrawn from the program.

### **5.13 Additional Aides in the Classroom**

Some parents have requested for their child's therapist to shadow the child at school as part of the child's treatment for a special need or diagnosis. CUMC Preschool is able to accommodate one additional aide in a classroom. When a family decides to provide the additional aide, a contract will be drawn up between the family and the preschool. The family will agree to assume financial responsibility for the additional aide's salary and associated costs, such as orientation to the preschool, the background check and FBI fingerprinting. The job description of the aide will be to shadow the individual child, but the aide will be required to follow CUMC Preschool's Policies and Procedures for employees. He or she will follow the direction of the preschool director and the lead teacher of the classroom. CUMC Preschool has the right to re-evaluate the situation at any time, and reserves the right to discontinue the use of an aide if it interferes with classroom functions.

### **5.14 Discipline**

Our program abides by the Texas DFPS Discipline and Guidance policy shown on the next page. Positive guidance and discipline promote self-control and other acceptable behaviors. Our program uses various guidance techniques:

- Exercising patience and compassion
- Teaching a child to express their feelings appropriately
- Accepting the child's feelings
- Setting reasonable limits and enforcing those limits consistently
- Redirection
- Positive reinforcement
- Time Out

Children are never shaken, hit, spanked, or humiliated by staff or parents on church premises. Punishment is never associated with food, toilet training, or active playtime. A brief, supervised separation or time out from active play to allow a child to calm down before rejoining playtime may be used. If the usual guidance techniques are not effective, a teacher will arrange for a conference with the parents to discuss the situation. Punishment or other negative techniques will not be used unless discussed first with parents and the Director. If a child continues to

show difficulty accepting behavioral limits, the Preschool Administrative Council and Director may decide to place the child on probation or remove him/her from the rolls.

### **5.15 Discipline and Guidance Intervention Policy**

Our philosophy when faced with a difficult or challenging child is to do all we can to keep them in our care, providing that we can continue to furnish a safe environment for the child, the other children and the teacher. We cannot provide one-on-one care for children. Therefore, we must assess difficult children to make sure that we are meeting their needs and the needs of the other children within the context of how our program functions. We will make adjustments whenever they do not affect our overall goals and mission. We encourage and welcome community resources to help us in this process. If further intervention is needed, the following stages of discipline will be implemented.

Stage 1	The teacher informs the Director and begins documenting the behavior. Parents will be informed either verbally or in writing. Parents will be a resource to help the teacher and to collaborate on how best to help the child. The Director will observe the child, review the documentation, and offer different behavior modifications techniques.
Stage 2	The Director will call the parents for a conference. The goal is to develop a team atmosphere with the parent to help remedy the situation. Both parents must attend this conference if possible. Failure to comply will result in immediate de-enrollment. During the meeting, the Director will assess the child and the situation. Outside intervention or service will be considered. A plan of action will be established between the parents and the Director. The Director will determine if we will continue on to Stage 3 or return to a Stage 1 status.
Stage 3	A two-week probation period is implemented. Daily reports will be sent home. The plan of action must be carried out by all of the child's school and home caregivers. If such a plan is not supported or successful, the child will be de-enrolled. If behavior improves enough to ensure that the child, children in the class and teacher can be kept safe, we can continue to Stage 4.
Stage 4	This stage is tailored to the individual child's needs. It can include daily reports, documentation, daily verbal reports, professional therapy and/or intervention.

## 5.16 HHS Discipline and Guidance Policy

### Discipline and Guidance Policy for \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Operation

- ◆ Discipline must be:
  - (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
  - (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
  - (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
  
- ◆ A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
  - (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
  - (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
  - (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
  - (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
  
- ◆ There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance 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 a hand or instrument;
  - (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
  - (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
  - (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
  - (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;and
  - (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

COVENANT UMC PRESCHOOL

## **5.17 Biting and Other Developmental Behaviors**

During the preschool years children sometimes exhibit undesirable behaviors such as biting, pushing and hitting. This can be upsetting to parents, whether their child is the aggressor or the victim. Although we don't condone this type of behavior, rest assured that experts in early child development acknowledge that it is a normal part of a child's development.

*Biting is a behavior that is upsetting to most parents, and usually occurs among the ones and twos. Here are some common reasons why children may bite:*

*Teething: Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain momentarily.*

*Sensory Exploration: Toddlers are very good at using all of their senses to learn about the world. Using their mouths to explore their environment is an important style of learning for infants, and continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates.*

*Cause and Effect: Children are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic: there is a lot of noise/attention from adults.*

*Affection: Some parents nibble on their baby to show affection, and a child equates that with biting.*

*Self-Assertion: This is probably the most common reason children bite. It's a way to express frustration when they don't yet have the language skills to do so.*

*The preschool staff takes action to reduce the number of biting incidents, including providing access to teething toys, providing numerous sensory exploration activities, providing opportunity to explore cause and effect and offering toddlers options/alternatives to reduce frustrations.*

As children get older they still may exhibit other undesirable behaviors. Children just learning to interact with others may not have the communication skills to express their needs appropriately, resulting in a physical outburst. Some children have not yet learned that this type of behavior hurts others, since they are only beginning to interact with other children.

At the preschool we try to prevent as many altercations as we can. When staff see problem situations develop they will intervene in order to model appropriate problem-solving skills for the children and diffuse the situation. In class they frequently discuss ways to be a good friend, by using words, sharing, being kind and listening to others. We emphasize the importance of apologizing to a child who is hurt.

Unfortunately, we are unable to prevent every incidence of children getting hurt. If, despite our efforts, a child does get hurt at school parents are not told the name of the student who hurt their child. Parents of the child who hurt someone are informed and work together with the teachers in hopes of preventing further incidents. We understand how upset parents may be

when they learn their child has been hurt; however, we ask parents for understanding that this can occasionally happen when young children interact with their peers.

We believe our low student to teacher ratios, along with a professional staff trained in early childhood behaviors reduces the chance for biting and other aggressive behaviors at preschool. As the children spend more time at school they will acquire skills that will enable them to get along with others without physical outbursts. The development of social skills at this age is as important as the acquisition of academic skills in order for children to be successful at school in the future.

## **Section 6: Parent/School Communication**

Teachers communicate daily with parents about the day's activities and any special or unusual events concerning their children. All teachers post weekly or monthly calendars listing the events and lessons for that week/month, and email parents weekly with a weekly summary and announcements. When communicating information about general Preschool events, the Preschool Council will send emails to parents.

Parents of toddlers in our program are encouraged to visit with their child's caregivers daily when dropping off or picking up their children in order to exchange important information and/or concerns regarding their children.

The Director or Preschool Administrative Council must approve all communications before distribution to parents in the classroom or on school/church property.

We encourage parents to express their concerns, questions, comments and suggestions about our program's policies, procedures, staff and structure. The Director is available Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Questions, concerns, suggestions or specific problems can also be discussed with any Preschool Administrative Council member during the same hours. In cases where a parent's concern cannot be resolved by contacting the Director or a Council Member, we will schedule a meeting with the parents, Director, a Council Member and the CUMC Pastor or lay leader to try to resolve the issue.

Mass emails will be sent periodically with various announcements concerning the preschool. These mass emails will be sent by the current Communication Coordinator from the Preschool Council. All recipients of these emails will be added via the BCC option to allow for privacy.

If you would like to opt out of the mass emails, please respond via email to the Communication Coordinator when you receive the email.

### **6.1 Parental Code of Conduct for Communication**

It is essential for the well-being of the children and staff in this program that all communication and business with staff be conducted in a positive and productive manner. All communication should be directed in a respectful, positive and calm manner at an appropriate time.



Parents are welcome to express any concerns about their child in an email or written note directed to the lead teacher or director.

For a discussion of any concerns it is best to set up a conference with the lead teacher and director so that we can give our full attention to the matter without interruption.

Phone calls need to be made to the school's main number, and will be returned during office hours.

Ultimately the lead teacher and director decide how a class will be conducted. We are willing to accommodate individual needs within reason, but a classroom cannot run effectively with frequent parent interference. The teacher must feel she has the support and trust of the parents in her class.

If a parent is not able to follow the above code of conduct, the director will schedule a meeting with the parents and the teacher involved. Also, in attendance will be a member of the Preschool Administrative Council and either a pastor or representative from the church. At the meeting we'll determine whether the program is able to meet the family's needs.

## **6.2 Parent Surveys**

Every year our parents are asked to complete a survey about the program. The results of the survey are compiled into a report and distributed to teachers, parents, and the Director. The Preschool Administrative Council uses the report when planning for the rest of the school year and the following school year. For confidentiality reasons, only council members may see the actual surveys.

## **6.3 Parent Conferences**

Teachers evaluate students twice a year using a developmental checklist. This evaluation is only a snapshot of what the teacher sees at school, and not a complete evaluation of a child's development. When the evaluations are given parents will be given the opportunity to conference with their child's teacher. Parents will be given a choice of meeting the teacher before or after school hours, or discussing the child's progress over the phone. Audio or video recording of parent conferences is prohibited.

If parents have a concern about their child, a conference should be arranged with their child's teacher. The parents should also feel free to discuss the issue with the Director.

## **6.4 Parent Involvement**

One of the most important strengths of our Preschool is parent participation. When parents actively support the program, their children see this as a reflection of the parents' love and concern for them. In addition to the immediate benefit of experiencing fun and new activities with their children, parents help our program run smoothly and grow by contributing ideas and suggestions.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the program in whatever capacity they feel they can contribute most. Many opportunities exist and include such things as being a room parent, attending class programs and parties, participating in school fund-raisers, being available to substitute for a teacher who is sick, and being a Preschool Administrative Council member. If you would like to volunteer, talk with your child's teacher, room parent, or the volunteer coordinator. The state requires us to send in a Criminal History Background Check for all parents who volunteer on a regular basis.

A parent orientation meeting will be held at the beginning of the school year to review Preschool policies as well as state requirements for the program. This meeting is mandatory for all new parents.

The Director and Preschool Administrative Council inform parents about program events and news through a monthly newsletter and by posting items of interest on the Preschool's bulletin board. Informal, one-to-one discussions with the Director or any Preschool Administrative Council member are always welcome. The monthly council meetings are open and parents are encouraged to attend.

A family orientation session "Open House" is held before the beginning of each school year. Both parents and children are invited to attend the session. The orientation is a good opportunity for everyone to meet our staff and council members and to visit their classrooms.

## **6.5 Room Parent(s)**

During the first few weeks of school, the Preschool asks for room parent volunteers. Being a room parent is a great way to be involved in your child's class. Room parents usually help with organizing supplies for holiday parties, coordinating breakfast items for the teacher appreciation breakfast, and also helping the class recognize the teacher's birthdays.

Since teachers are professionally and legally responsible for the classroom during the school day, room parents have a responding or assisting role pertaining to school activities. Therefore, teachers are in charge of discipline and the various activities of a school party.

Work closely with your child's teacher. Be certain that you and the teacher have clear communications concerning needs and expectations. The teacher has ultimate authority over any activity in his/her class.

As soon as possible, meet with the teacher to determine what his/her expectations are for the year.

Coordinate assistance for the teacher as requested. Coordinate and organize parents for various needs as requested.

Assist with class parties and activities as directed by the teacher.

Do not take on all of the volunteer activities of the class yourself. Many other parents want to help and want you to call on them.

Get approval from the director if planning a surprise for the teacher when the whole class is involved or class time will need to be used.

Be dependable and on time if you have scheduled a time to volunteer. If you are unable to keep that time, contact the director and leave a message for the teacher as soon as possible. (Lining up a substitute is always appreciated.)

Keep confidential any and all information you hear or see about students, teachers, and staff.

## **Section 7: Emergency Procedures**

### **7.1 Illness or Injury**

State law prohibits us from caring for a child who is ill during school hours. We will not admit a child if we notice any of the following:

- (1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the childcare center activities including outdoor play;
- (2) The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care;
- (3) The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the child-care center's activities:
  - (A) Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
  - (B) Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of symptoms of illness;
  - (C) Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of symptoms or illness;
  - (D) An infrared temporal (forehead) temperature above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
  - (E) Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill; or
  - (F) A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

**If the child has already been signed in for the day, we will call a parent or guardian to come pick up the child, and we will isolate the child from other children until he or she is picked up.**

Children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine in order to return to school. In the case of diarrhea, 24 hours must have elapsed since the last incidence of diarrhea in order to return to school.

If a child sustains an injury of a minor nature that does not require a doctor's attention, the teacher or Director will administer the appropriate first aid. If a serious injury occurs, every effort will be made to contact the parents and/or emergency contact. If needed, a 911 call will be placed.

An incident report is filled out for injuries and any illness that results in the child being sent home. All parents of children involved in an incident are asked to sign the report. The signed report is filed in the Director's incident folder, and parents are welcome to request a copy.

In order to prevent accidents, staff and parents are requested to notify the Director of any hazards so that the Trustees of the church or other appropriate persons can correct these as quickly as possible. Proper supervision will also help minimize the possibilities of accidents. First aid kits are located in the bathroom cabinets between each classroom.

## **7.2 Employee Immunization Policy**

Effective September 1, 2014, Covenant UMC Preschool has implemented the following immunization policy for all of its employees to be in compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standard Rule #746.3611, which requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employees.

Vaccines that we currently **recommend** our employees receive:

- \*Influenza (annually)
- \*Pertussis (TDAP)
- \*COVID 19

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, Covenant UMC Preschool recommends that employees consider these immunizations. The employee must inform the preschool if there are any exemptions that would prevent them from receiving an immunization for a vaccine-preventable disease. If the employee decides that these immunizations are appropriate and beneficial for their health and well-being, and receives the immunization, they are asked to provide the Director with documentation that the immunizations have been received.

Covenant UMC Preschool will encourage the use of protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease. In addition to hand washing, the protective medical equipment would include gloves, masks and hand sanitizer. The use of protective medical equipment will be based on the level of risk the employee presents to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure to children. Employees should not be in direct contact when they are ill or exhibiting signs of illness. Covenant UMC Preschool will

monitor information provided to the public through the Center of Disease Control and/or other sources to determine the level of risk the employee presents.

There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illness. The use of protective medical equipment will not be considered retaliatory when used by employees of Covenant UMC Preschool.

### **7.3 Medications**

CUMC Preschool staff will only administer medications if a child would be endangered without the medication and when all of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The school must have written instructions from a physician outlining the dosage and when the medication should be given.
- 2) The medication must be in the original container clearly marked with the child's name. Prescription medications must have the prescription on the container.
- 3) CUMC Preschool must have a permission slip signed by the parent before any medicine can be administered.

A record of medications given will be maintained by the staff. At the end of the school year parents must pick up the medication from the office

Preschool staff will not administer medicines for non-life threatening conditions.

### **7.4 Lice Policy**

CUMC Preschool is a no nit school. This means that children with live lice, live nits, or dead nits must be picked up from school, treated, and have nits manually removed. Because lice in Central Texas are becoming resistant to traditional treatments and because of the increase of cases at school, the policy will be strictly enforced.

### **7.5 Inclement Weather and School Closings**

Following Minimum Standards the staff practices weather drills with the students quarterly, in order to prepare for the case of a weather emergency. We will bring children indoors at the first sound of thunder and keep them inside during rain storms. In the case of a severe storm we will keep children in an inner room or hallway that provides the most protection.

In the event of an unexpected closing during school hours, the Director will attempt to contact all parents. The Director will remain with any children whose parents are unable to pick up their children.

When determining whether to close for bad weather or other emergency, the Preschool will follow the AISD bad weather or emergency schedule. If AISD is closed, the Preschool will also be closed. If AISD has a delayed opening, then the Preschool will open at **11:30am**. If the day of the delayed start is also a pizza day, pizza will still be provided.

We will keep everyone posted through e-mail, so **please make sure we have your current e-mail address.** In the case of multiple bad weather days in one school year, a refund of \$25 will be made available after 12 hours of missed time at preschool per child. Forms will be made available with which families can apply for this refund. If school is canceled more than 12 hours for one student in a school year, the preschool council will vote on further refunds. If school is canceled on a Fun Friday, the Fun Friday day will not be made up. **There will also be no make-up days or refunds for classes cancelled for other emergencies.**

## **7.6 Evacuation**

If an emergency occurs, the first responsibility of staff is to move the children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter. The staff will bring with them that day's sign in attendance sheets to ensure that all children in our care are evacuated. The director and staff will also bring the emergency contact forms to ensure that we have parents' contact information and authorizations for emergency care for each child. The director or another staff member will contact 911 and follow the directions of the emergency responders.

In the case of a weather disaster we will move the children into the inside hall of the preschool wing. In the case of a fire emergency we will move the children to the side of the playground fence. In the case of an emergency such as an intruder or chemical spill we will move the children to an area deemed safest in that particular instance. If we are required to move the children from the CUMC premises, the staff will transport them in their personal vehicles to Milwood Baptist Church (12217 Cassady - See appendix C for map). After all the children are moved, our staff will contact parents by telephone so that the children can be picked up as quickly as possible. In all emergency situations, the Pastor of Covenant United Methodist Church will be notified, as well as Child Care Licensing at 512-834-3195. Child Care Licensing has the church's phone number and the director's cell phone number on file.

Our evacuation plan is a cooperative arrangement. In the event of an emergency at the Milwood Baptist Church, children from there will be transported to CUMC.

Fire drills will be conducted monthly. Fire evacuation plans are posted in each room. Severe weather drills and lockdown drills will be conducted quarterly. Children will be led to the appropriate area designated in the weather alert or lockdown plan.

## **7.7 Adults Under the Influence**

No one is allowed on the Preschool grounds that appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If a parent arrives to pick up his/her child and appears to be intoxicated or otherwise unfit to drive, the teacher will ask the Director for assistance and attempt to reach an authorized pick-up person for the child by phone.

## **7.8 Child Care Centers are Gang-Free Zones**

State Law requires that parents be notified that gang activity is prohibited within 1000 feet of schools and child-care centers. Gang-related criminal activities or engaging in organized

criminal activity within 1000 feet of our preschool is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

The building and premises, including the parking lot of Covenant UMC, is a smoke-free, vape-free environment.

## Appendix A: Skills Development Reference

CUMC Preschool teachers use theme based units to teach students skills that will expand their horizons in the following areas. These are some of the main skills that teachers will focus on during the year, but this list does not include every skill that children develop while in our program.

### Skills Developed in 1 Year-old Classes

<p><b>Physical Development</b> Pushes, pulls toys Sits in chair Moves to music Throws, kicks a ball Stacks blocks Uses a spoon Turns book pages Jumps up and down Holds glass Opens doors and cabinets Scribbles, paints with whole arm</p> <p><b>Social Development</b> Recognizes self in mirror Understands own name and responds Initiates play Imitates adults Helps pick up toys Identifies body parts Shows interest in playing with peers, enjoys others</p> <p><b>Emotional Development</b> Shows range of emotions and moods Develops humor Laughs, shows joy</p>	<p><b>Cognitive Skills</b> Talks, words accompany gestures Responds to simple directions Begins to put words together Enjoys rhythm and rhyme Likes to hear the same story again Takes apart and puts back together Looks for hidden objects Shows signs of memory development Solves problems through trial and error</p> <p><b>Spiritual Development</b> Awareness of God and Family Says grace before meals Enjoys Bible stories</p>
---	---



## Skills Developed in 2 Year-old Classes

<p><b>Physical Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a spoon without spilling</li> <li>Opens doors</li> <li>Puts on coat</li> <li>Washes and dries hands</li> <li>Begins to use scissors</li> <li>Runs forward, jumps in place, climbs</li> <li>Stands on one foot</li> <li>Walks on tiptoes</li> <li>Kicks ball forward</li> <li>Marches to music</li> <li>Shows interest in toilet training</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses words for wants</li> <li>Begins to play with others</li> <li>Watches other children</li> <li>Participates in group activities</li> <li>Helpful</li> <li>Shows independence</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows pride</li> <li>Uses words for emotions</li> <li>Shows sympathy and affection</li> <li>Associates facial expressions with emotions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cognitive Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begins counting</li> <li>Responds and follows directions</li> <li>Matches similar objects</li> <li>Enjoys books</li> <li>Recognizes differences in you and me</li> <li>Gains an attention span</li> <li>Explores world, asks questions</li> <li>Can tell what he/she is doing</li> <li>Attempts puzzles</li> <li>Gives first and last name</li> <li>Asks “what” and “where” questions</li> </ul> <p><b>Spiritual Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of God and Family</li> <li>Says grace before meals</li> <li>Enjoys Bible stories</li> </ul>
---	---

## Skills Developed in 3 Year-old Classes

<p><b>Physical Development</b>          Manipulates clay, puzzles, scissors          Builds          Copies circles          Runs around obstacles          Walks on a line          Hops/balances on one foot          Steers and pedals tricycle          Throws ball overhand          Jumps with two feet</p> <p><b>Social Development</b>          Tells name          Joins in play with others          Begins to share, take turns          Identifies others          Sings          Accepts responsibility/demonstrates self-control          Begins dramatic play/pretends</p> <p><b>Emotional Development</b>          Is developing self-confidence          Expresses feelings appropriately          Accepts constructive criticism          Developing humor</p>	<p><b>Cognitive Skills</b>          Solves problems          Listens attentively          Follows simple directions          Completes tasks          Can express self verbally          Compares sizes of objects          Counts          Matches and recognizes colors          Draws and can explain pictures          Asks “why” questions          Knows name and age          Can group objects          Talks in sentences          Speech is understandable, using sentences          Begins to understand time</p> <p><b>Spiritual Development</b>          Awareness of God and Family          Shows kindness to others          Recites and leads prayers          Listens to Bible stories</p>
--	--

## Skills Developed in Pre-K Classes

<p><b>Physical Development</b>          Fits small items together          Holds pencil/marker correctly          Uses scissors effectively          Can print first name          Draws/Paints          Movements appear smooth          Walks backwards          Skips          Right/Left Handedness established          Uses glue correctly and easily</p> <p><b>Social Development</b>          Chooses own friends          Engages in group play          Interacts well with others          Participates in group activities          Respects property and others          Respects the school rules          Uses table manners          Takes care of one's own needs          Engages in social problem solving</p> <p><b>Emotional Development</b>          Feels secure away from familiar surroundings          Accepts mistakes          Expresses individual thoughts and feelings          Separates easily from parents          Develops self-confidence          Greater ability to control anger/fear</p>	<p><b>Cognitive Skills</b>          Shows interest in books and stories          Answers questions about stories          Retells stories          Shows interest in writing          Dictates sentences to be written          Writes using pictures/symbols/letters          Identifies same and different          Recognizes name in print          Identifies letters and numerals          1-1 Correspondence in math          Counting          Compares quantities of sets          Sorts objects by color, shape, and size          Identifies shapes and colors          Makes simple patterns</p> <p><b>Spiritual Development</b>          Awareness of God and Family          Kindness to others          Reciting and leading prayers          Listening to Bible stories</p>
---	---

## Appendix B: Emergency and Evacuation Plans

### CUMC Preschool Emergency Plan

#### Evacuations

The first responsibility of staff is to move the children to a safe area in case of an emergency. Evacuation plans and locations are posted in all of the classrooms.

**On-Site:** If it is safe to remain on the premises we will move all of the children to the back fence along the playground. If we need to move from the classrooms but can stay within the building we will move the children to the Cry Room next to the Sanctuary.

**Off-Site:** If it is not safe to remain in the vicinity we will evacuate to Milwood Baptist Church at 12217 Cassady, Austin 78727, phone 512-834-9244, or to Davis Elementary, 5214 Duval. Rd., Austin, 78727, phone 512-414-2580. Children will be transported by preschool staff in their personal vehicles. CUMC Preschool would only evacuate this way if the risk of remaining on-site were to be greater than moving the children in our vehicles. See Evacuation Plan.

\*In both on-site and off-site evacuations, the floating aide will assist with the teacher of the children in the 1's class and with children with special needs, if applicable.

#### Procedures in Time of Emergency

##### ***What to Bring from the classrooms:***

When children are evacuated the staff will bring along their **cell phones, emergency backpacks and daily attendance forms**. The backpacks contain:

- Water and snacks

- Diaper supplies

- Hand sanitizer

- Emergency Contact Forms (containing contact information and authorization for medical care for each child and Food Allergy Emergency Plan, if applicable)

The teachers will account for the children with the attendance sheets, and will contact parents with the information provided on the Emergency Contact Forms. We will use our cell phones to contact the local authorities at 911, and Childcare Licensing, 512-834-3195.

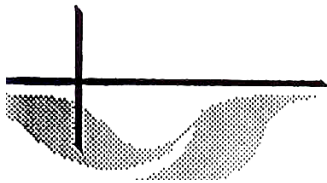
##### **What to Bring from the Office:**

In addition to the classroom backpacks with emergency supplies, the director or the floating aide will bring an additional **emergency clipboard, student medications and the Emergency Kit** from the office. The emergency clipboard holds all of the Emergency Contact Forms.

The office Emergency Kit contains a First Aid kit (includes gloves, gauze, soap, sanitizing solution, antibiotic ointment, bandages, thermometer, tweezers, sunscreen and moistened towelettes), masks, a flashlight, whistle, radio, trash bags and Ziploc bags, duct tape and utility knife.

### **Communication During an Emergency**

After children are evacuated safely, our priority will be to contact parents as quickly as possible. Half of the staff will remain with the children, and the other half will be in a separate area calling parents from their cell phones, notifying parents of the operation's status, approximate duration of the emergency and when children will be available for safe pickup. For lock-downs, children will not be released until the area is deemed safe by local law enforcement. The director or person in charge will contact emergency services and Childcare Licensing at 512-834-3195. The director or person in charge will handle communications with the public and/or media. Childcare Licensing has Jan Glosser's cell phone number on file. ***See Emergency Calling Plan***, which is kept with the Emergency Contact Forms in the teachers' backpacks and on the office clipboard.



# Covenant United Methodist Church

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN - DO NOT REMOVE!!!

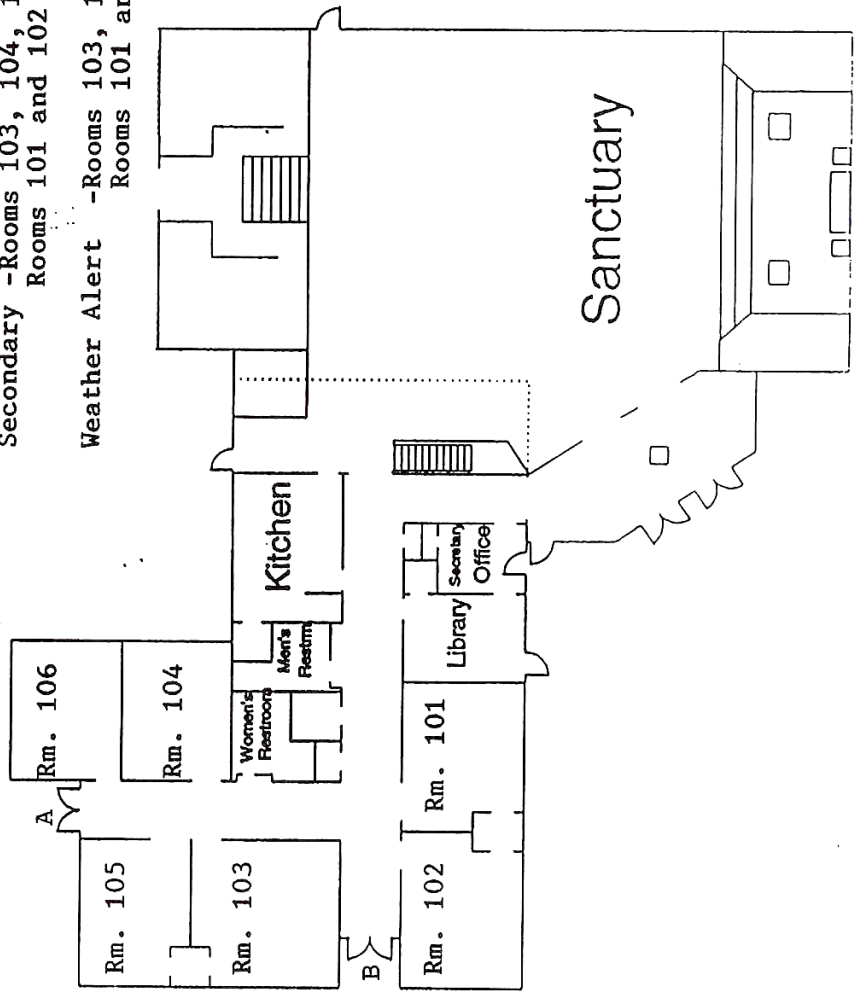
Preschool - Meet at Playground fence

Primary - Rooms 103, 104, 105 and 106 - Exit A  
Rooms 101 and 102 - Exit B

Secondary - Rooms 103, 104, 105 and 106 - Exit Kitchen  
Rooms 101 and 102 - Exit Sanctuary

Weather Alert - Rooms 103, 104, 105, and 106 - Ladies Restroom  
Rooms 101 and 102 - Men's Restroom

Hallway between  
Restrooms



Appendix L

## Evacuation from Premises

### **Milwood Baptist Church**

12217 Cassady Dr.

Church Phone: (512) 834-1100

Preschool Phone: (512) 834-9244

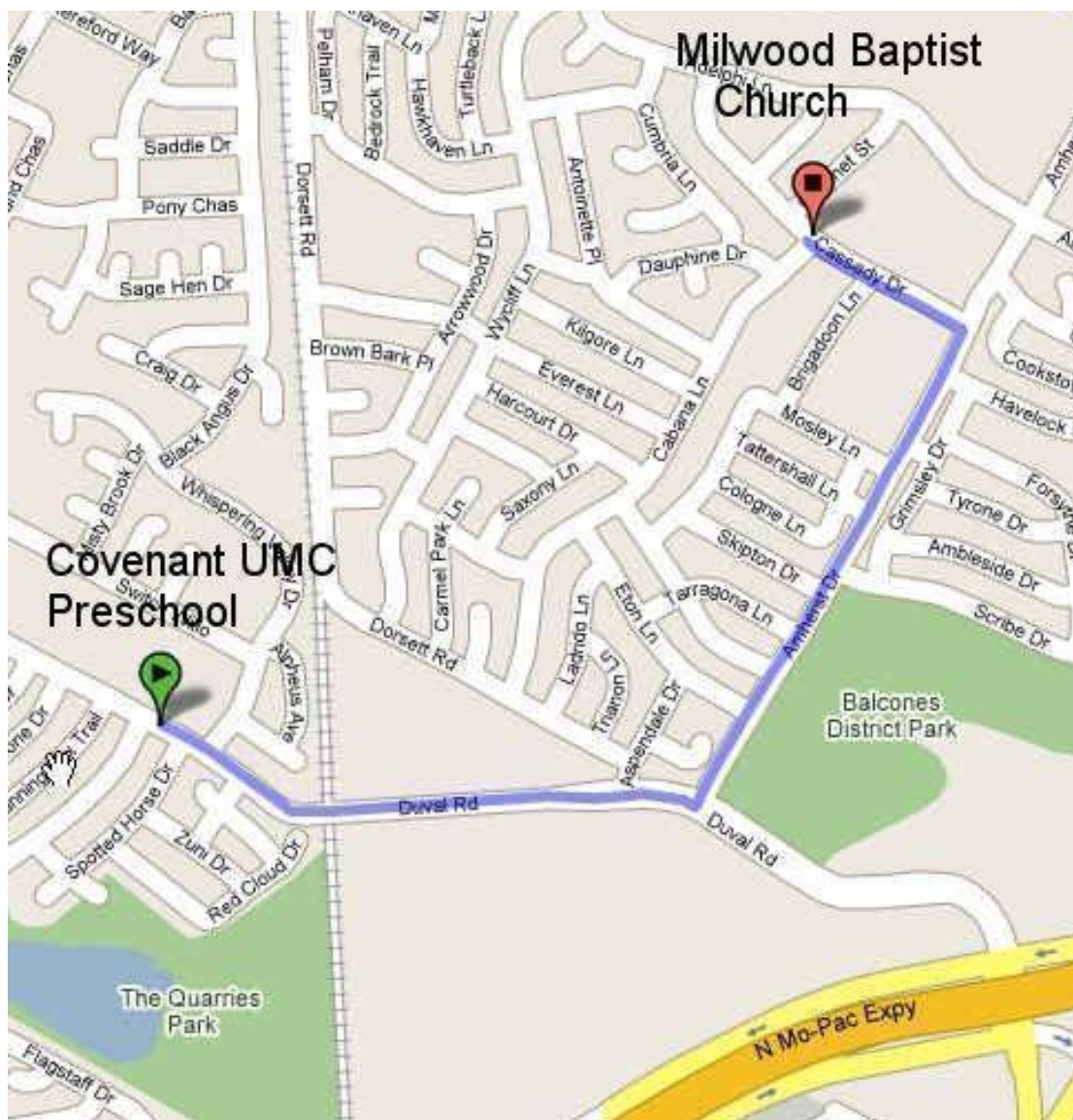
### **Directions:**

Take Duval East to Amherst

Turn Left

Take Amherst North to Cassady

Turn Left



## **Appendix C: Prevention and Responding to Child Abuse**

All staff who have direct access to children must complete one hour of annual training in prevention techniques for the recognition of symptoms of abuse and neglect as well as the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect. The Preschool receives up-to-date information from community organizations and the Department of Family and Protective Services. Parents will review the issue of preventing and responding to child abuse during Parent Orientation meetings held at the beginning of the school year.

Staff will communicate with administration about any concerns as to the well-being of children and/or families in the program and appropriate actions to take to obtain assistance and intervention.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services states that there are three general reasons people don't report suspected cases:

1. Fear of lawsuit or reprisal if abuse is reported.
2. Ignorance of where and how to make reports.
3. Belief that the abusive treatment is within normal range.

The law **requires** any person who believes that a child is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report the circumstances to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Abuse Hotline. A person making a report is immune from civil or criminal liability, and the name of the person making the report is kept confidential. Teachers and other professionals must report suspected abuse or neglect of a child within 48 hours of suspecting the child has been or may be abused or neglected. Unfortunately, many cases go unreported. While it is sometimes a matter of no one recognizing the signs, often the suspicion is there and still no complaint is made. Reporting suspected child abuse makes it possible to protect the child and for a family to get help. DFPS would rather get a report and later learn it is unfounded than for people to hesitate until they are certain abuse or neglect is going on.

There are several agencies that will act on reports of abuse: The Austin Police Department, the Travis County's Sheriff's Department, Texas DFPS, and the Texas State Child Abuse Hotline:

**CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT HOTLINE 1-800-252-5400 or [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)**

### **Preventing Child Abuse**

Child abuse prevention is stopping child abuse and neglect before it happens. The best way to prevent child abuse and neglect is to support families and provide parents with the skills and resources they need. Although all causes cannot be summed up, certain issues make people more at risk. Stress, relationship problems, substance abuse, financial problems, depression and other mental health problems can all lead to abusive or neglectful behavior.

Prevention builds on family strengths. Through prevention activities such as educating parents, frequent communication with families, and parent support groups, many families are able to find the support they need to care for their children. Prevention efforts help parents develop



their parenting skills, understand the benefits of positive discipline techniques, and understand and meet their child's emotional, physical, and developmental needs. Prevention programs can help parents identify other needs they may have and offer assistance in getting additional support.

Here are some community resources offering parenting classes and other support to families:

Bridges to Growth, 512-864-3008, [www.georgetownproject.com](http://www.georgetownproject.com)

For Kids' Sake, 512-476-9490, [www.for-kids-sake.com](http://www.for-kids-sake.com)

For help with a family crisis contact Safe Place, 512-267-SAFE, [www.safeplace.org](http://www.safeplace.org)

Online training is available at [www.infanttoddler.tamu.edu](http://www.infanttoddler.tamu.edu)

More information can be found under parenting at [childcare.hhs.texas.gov](http://childcare.hhs.texas.gov)

TX Childcare Licensing at

[www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation](http://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation)

## **Recognizing Child Abuse**

The following signs are indications that neglect or abuse is occurring:

**Physical abuse** is physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child or genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child.

Physical Indicators:

1. Unexplained bruises or welts:

On the face, lips or mouth, on the posterior side of a child's body, in an unusual pattern that might reflect the pattern of the instrument used or human bite marks, or clustered marks, indicating repeated contact with hand or instrument. In various stages of healing and/or regularly appearing after absences, weekends, or vacations.

2. Unexplained burns:

Cigar or cigarette burns on the soles, palms, backs, or buttocks.

Common burns: metallic burn, like an electric burner or iron, rope burns on legs, neck, or torso, burns indicating the child has been forced to sit upon a hot surface

3. Unexplained cuts and scrapes:

To the lips, eye, or any portion of an infant's face. Tears in the gum tissue that may have been caused by forced feeding. To genitalia.

**Sexual Abuse** includes fondling a child's genitals, penetration, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure and exploitation through prostitution or producing pornographic material.

Physical Indicators:

Physical signs of sexually transmitted diseases, evidence of injury to genital area, inability to sit down comfortably

Behavioral Indicators:

Extreme fear of being alone with adults of a certain sex; sexual comments,

behavior or play; knowledge of sexual relations beyond what is expected for a child's age; sexual victimization of other children.

**Emotional Abuse** is mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in a child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

Behavioral Indicators:

Behavior extremes: compliant and passive or aggressive and demanding  
Unusually shy, avoids others, anxious to please, too submissive, accepts unpleasant treatment without protest.

Unusually adult in actions or underdeveloped for age

Neurotic traits: sucks thumb, bites, rocks, sleep disorders

Psychoneurotic reactions: phobias, compulsive, obsessive behavior

Developmental delays, mentally or emotionally

Suicidal

**Neglect** is failure to provide for a child's basic needs necessary to sustain the child's life or health

Physical Indicators:

Appears tired, listless, almost always dirty; hungry, comes to school without breakfast; wears dirty, inappropriate clothing; unattended for long periods of time; lack of shelter; needs glasses, dental care or other medical attention

Behavioral Indicators:

Frequently absent or late to school, or has extended stays at school, early arrivals and late departures; begs or steals food; states that there is no caretaker.

**If you have concerns or questions about this issue, please contact one of the resources listed here, your child's teacher, or Director Jan Glosser.**

## **Appendix D: Pest Control Notification**

As part of our commitment to provide your child with a safe, pest-free learning environment, Covenant UMC may periodically apply pesticides to help manage insects, weeds or pathogens. Pesticide applications are part of our integrated pest management (IPM) program, which relies largely on non-chemical forms of pest control. Pesticide applications on church property are made only by trained and licensed technicians. Should you have questions about our pest management program or which to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact the Preschool Director at (512) 346-6366.

## **Appendix E: Healthy Lunch Ideas**

- String cheese stick
- Whole grain crackers
- Rolled-up turkey lunch meat
- Strawberries
  
- Nut butter alternative, such as SunButter, and jelly sandwich on whole wheat bread
- Baby carrots and hummus dip
- Banana
  
- Ham and cheese sandwich on whole wheat bread
- Clementine orange
- Sweet potato chips
  
- Turkey roll-up on a whole wheat tortilla
- Yogurt
- Blueberries
  
- Pasta with vegetables (cooked carrots, peas, etc.)
- String cheese stick
- Apple slices

Many more ideas and recipes can be found from many sources online. See <http://choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html> for information about Preschool nutrition.

\*\*\*Please be sure to check with your child's teacher to find out whether there are any food restrictions due to allergies in your child's classroom.

## **Appendix F: Early Childhood Education Resources**

### **Born Learning**

[www.bornlearning.org](http://www.bornlearning.org)

An online resource for parents, providing information about how young children learn, brought to you by United Way

### **Bright Futures**

<http://brightfutures.app.org>

Bright Futures is a set of principles, strategies, and tools used to promote and improve the health, education, and well-being of all children.

### **Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI)**

[www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis](http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis)

ECI is a statewide program for families with children birth to three, with disabilities and developmental delays. ECI contracts with local agencies to provide early intervention services for families with children from birth to 36 months with delays and disabilities.

### **Healthy Children**

[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

A child health and development online resource brought to you by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

### **Parenting Counts Developmental Timeline**

[www.parentingcounts.org/information/timeline](http://www.parentingcounts.org/information/timeline)

The Parenting Counts Timeline offers access to research-based information about your child's development from birth to five across four domains: physical, social and emotional, learning and cognitive, and language and communication development.

### **PBS Parents**

[www.pbs.org/parents](http://www.pbs.org/parents)

An online resource for parents, brought to you by the Public Broadcasting Service.

### **Raising Texas**

[www.raisingtexas.com](http://www.raisingtexas.com)

Raising Texas' mission to promote an effective, comprehensive, and seamless system that serves and supports families in the areas of early care and learning, social-emotional development, parent education and family support, and access to a medical home.

### **Safe Kids**

[www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)

Nationwide network of organizations working to prevent unintentional childhood injury, educate families, provide safety devices to families in need and do advocacy work.

### **ZERO TO THREE**

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

ZERO TO THREE is a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in their

efforts to improve the lives of infants and toddlers.