



# **Policies and Procedures Handbook 2023-2024**

**Revised: May 23, 2023**



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to Sagamore Mother's Day Out Ministry! Sagamore MDO is an extension of the Family Ministry of Sagamore Baptist Church.

At Sagamore, our mission is to "Love God, love people, and DO something about it." We strive to serve not only our own church members but the families of our surrounding communities. We firmly uphold our **privilege** and responsibility to love people JOYFULLY. Our **purpose** is to minister to parents by not only offering them a break twice a week, but by loving, nurturing, and teaching their children while they are in our care. Our **passion** is helping you! At Sagamore MDO, you are not merely receiving childcare; we care for you!

We are humbled and grateful that you and your family have chosen to partner with us. We look forward to personally working with you and your child to build a positive, loving, and educational atmosphere.

We are committed to open communication, so please feel free to contact us with any concerns or suggestions. We thank you again for trusting us with your children and look forward to a wonderful year!

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**SAGAMORE MDO  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**

**Contents:**

- Our Ministry/Hours of Operation - - - - - 3
- Teachers & Staff - - - - - 3
- Enrollment & Deposit - - - - - 4
- Tuition - - - - - 4
- Security Procedures - - - - - 5
- Drop-off Procedures - - - - - 5
- Pick-up Procedures - - - - - 6
- Health & Safety - - - - - 6
- Nutrition - - - - - 9
- Communication - - - - - 10
- Discipline Procedures - - - - - 10
- Final Notes - - - - - 12
- Acknowledgment & Agreement Form (keep) - - - - - 13
- Acknowledgment & Agreement Form (return) - - - - - 14

## **OUR MINISTRY**

Sagamore MDO offers classes for children aged 18 months (as of 09/01/2023) through PreK4. Children will be placed into classes based on their age as of September 1st. Children on age cusps will be assigned to the class most appropriate for their current developmental stage. Classes may be combined or divided according to enrollment numbers.

We follow MinistrySafe guidelines and staff at least two non-related adults per class (1 Lead Teacher and 1 Co-Teacher/Classroom Aide), which supports excellent class size ratios for a productive, safe, and attentive learning environment. All classes will have a maximum ratio of 10 children, which is well below state guideline maximum ratios for all age groups.

We utilize a comprehensive curriculum focusing on developmentally appropriate Biblical teaching, academics, and personal development. Children will learn through sit-down activities and Bible stories, circle time, crafts, play, music, and more. Each year's curriculum contains appropriate goals and objectives to gauge each child's learning and growth.

*\*We are not classified as a childcare facility or daycare center and are not licensed by the State of Texas with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. However, we follow most requirements listed under Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers.*

## **Hours of Operation**

Our hours of operation are Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00am-2:00pm. Please refer to our MDO calendar for any holidays or special observances. We will notify parents of any changes to the calendar via text and/or email. For last-minute delays or closures due to inclement weather or natural disasters, we will notify parents via email, text, and/or social media. In general, we will follow the recommendations of Fort Worth ISD.

## **TEACHERS & STAFF**

Our teachers and staff at Sagamore MDO:

- Profess as believers in Jesus Christ and are called to serve Christ, families, and preschoolers in the local church ministry.
- Are encouraged to attend ongoing training in the early childhood development field.
- Are carefully selected to ensure that children receive the loving, attentive care they deserve.
- Understand the importance of open communication between parents and teachers.
- Are CPR & First Aid certified.
- Have been thoroughly vetted through criminal background and reference checks.
- Have been trained in abuse prevention and safety protocols.
- Will strive to develop a good relationship with parents, which will naturally promote a positive learning experience for all concerned.

**ENROLLMENT & DEPOSIT**

Our enrollment process requires parents to complete an online enrollment form annually. Please submit updated information whenever there is a change during the MDO year, especially regarding your contact information or your child’s health information. To secure placement, an enrollment form must be filled out, and payment arrangements must be made prior to the first day of classes via the online enrollment form found at [www.sagamorechurch.com/mdo](http://www.sagamorechurch.com/mdo).

*(Currently, we do not require a deposit or supply fee with enrollment, but we may necessitate one in the future).*

You must submit a medical insurance card, if applicable, and immunization records to enroll. Attach these copies to the online enrollment form **or** email these copies to [sagamoremdo@gmail.com](mailto:sagamoremdo@gmail.com) prior to your child’s first day of attendance. For immunization exemption, please obtain a **Request for Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience** from the Texas Department of Health.

**TUITION**

Sagamore MDO is designed to be an extension of Sagamore Baptist Church’s Family Ministry, and we strive to be good stewards of the Lord’s church and mission. Tuition must be paid either in full or in monthly, bi-weekly, or weekly recurring installments.

Payments are due according to your individual installment arrangements. In the event you are unable to keep your payment arrangement, and a new arrangement has not been made & agreed upon with the MDO Coordinator or the Associate Pastor of Family Ministries, Sagamore MDO reserves the right to withdraw a student. Tuition payments are the same each cycle and do not include discounts for scheduled holidays, inclement weather, illnesses, absences, or family vacations. In general, we will follow the recommendations of Fort Worth ISD for any school closures due to inclement weather. We cannot prorate tuition if your child enrolls mid-payment cycle, nor can we reimburse any tuition paid, including withdrawing mid-cycle.

Tuition must be paid online by signing into your FellowshipOne Giving Account and using a credit card, debit card, bank account, or PayPal. We **do not** accept cash or check at Sagamore MDO.

**The 2023-2024 tuition breakdown is as follows:**

- \$200 per month
- Approximately \$100 per two weeks
- Approximately \$50 per week

## **SECURITY PROCEDURES**

We strongly believe in providing clear procedures for the safety of your children and our staff.

- It is your responsibility to notify the MDO Coordinator as soon as possible of any changes to emergency contacts, parent contact information, or child's medical needs to ensure the continued safety and well-being of your child.
- A custodial parent seeking to limit a former spouse's pick-up rights must provide a copy of a custody agreement, which will be kept in your child's file. We cannot legally restrict parental access without this documentation.
- Our doors remain locked for safety during the instructional day. If arriving after 9:15am or picking up before 1:45pm, you must call the church office at 817-861-5511 **or** contact the MDO coordinator, so a staff member can let you in.

## **MinistrySafe Guidelines**

Our facility adheres to MinistrySafe guidelines. Our staff and any volunteers are screened via interviews, reference checks, and criminal background checks, which must be repeated regularly. Staff members also take part in abuse awareness and safety courses and will maintain current certification in CPR/First Aid. Our classrooms will be monitored by two non-related adults. These guidelines are maintained to protect the children in our care, deter those who are looking for easy access to children, and also protect our staff members.

## **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP**

### **Drop-off Procedures (Drop-off begins no earlier than 8:45 am)**

- Please park in a parking space, walk with your child, and enter the front doors of the building. Please do NOT park or leave your vehicle unattended for any length of time under the front awning, except in the case of inclement weather.
- A MDO staff member will greet you and will open the children's hallway door for you and then you will walk with your child to their classroom door. (*If you have a registered biometric fingerprint with us, you may use the biometric scanner to enter the door*). Please stay outside your child's classroom door, and the teacher will greet you and open the door for your child to enter the classroom. This is a great time for you to communicate with your child's teacher regarding any information they may need to know about the day.
- Outside doors will lock at 9:15am. If you need to drop off your child after 9:15am, please park in a parking space on the Northside of our building where our church offices are located and ring the doorbell. A church staff member will let you in. Late drop-offs can be disruptive to our schedule, so please endeavor to arrive on time. If you know your child will be absent or late, a courtesy call or text to our MDO Coordinator is appreciated.

### **Pick-up Procedures (Pick-up at 2:00)**

- Please park in a parking space and enter the front doors of the building. Please do NOT park or leave your vehicle unattended for any length of time under the front awning, except in the case of weather.
- A MDO staff member will open the children's hallway door for you. (*If you have a registered biometric fingerprint with us, you may use the biometric scanner to enter the door*).
- A parent or an approved pick-up person will sign out your child at your child's door. Please do not enter the classroom, but remain outside the door. Your child's teacher may ask for a driver's license/ID until we are familiar with the pick-up person. We will only release children to their parents or to persons who have been designated by the parent. Please notify us in advance when someone other than the parents (or an approved pick-up person on the enrollment form) will be picking up your child.
- Doors remain locked until 1:45pm. If you need to pick up your child prior to 1:45pm, please park on the Northside of our building where our church offices are located and ring the doorbell. A church staff member will let you in.
- In the event that you have not picked up your child or alerted us to your lateness by 2:15pm, we will contact you. If we are unable to reach you, we will then proceed to call your child's emergency contacts. In the *extreme* event that no emergency contacts are able to be reached within a reasonable amount of time, we will then contact the authorities. Excessive lateness could result in your child being withdrawn.

*\*\*Parents & Guardians who would like to use the biometric scanner to gain access to our children's hall may do so by agreeing/completing a background check. Your fingerprints must be entered into our system prior to using the scanner. Our system is programmed to only admit select persons between the hours of 8:45am-2:15pm on Mondays & Wednesdays. Contact the MDO Coordinator to learn more.*

## **HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **Illness Policy**

Our sick policy is strictly enforced for the well-being of your child, other children, our staff, and parents. Please **do not** bring your child to MDO if he/she is displaying any of the following symptoms:

- Rash on face or body
- Fever of 100 degrees or higher — *Your child must be free of fever **without** the help of medication for at least 24 hours before returning to MDO*
- *Diarrhea or vomiting*
- *Copious nasal discharge that is any color other than clear*
- *Discharge from the eyes or ears*
- *Lice or other vermin*
- *Any other symptoms suggesting a communicable disease*

### **General Illness Procedures**

If a child becomes ill during the instructional day, staff will contact the MDO Coordinator immediately. The child will be isolated for a temp check/evaluation. A temp of 100 degrees or higher, visible rash, diarrhea, or vomiting will necessitate parental contact for immediate pick-up. The child may not return to MDO until they are symptom-free without medication for at least 24 hours or submit a doctor's note indicating the child is not contagious. We cannot refund tuition for instructional days missed due to illness or quarantine.

### **Procedure for Dispensing Medication**

Sagamore MDO will not administer medication, unless deemed medically necessary due to a medical condition as listed on the enrollment form or in the event of an emergency. If your child requires a prescription medication between 9am-2pm, please contact the MDO Coordinator to make arrangements.

### **Special Needs**

If your child has any special needs, whether physical, sensory, or emotional, please make your child's teacher and the MDO Coordinator aware so we can discuss appropriate plans and procedures. We will make every effort to accommodate your child, but some needs may be beyond our current capabilities. We highly recommend you discuss potential needs with our MDO Coordinator before enrolling. If we are not the best fit for your child, we can help point you in the right direction.

### **Minor Injuries & Major Medical Emergencies**

For minor injuries, an "Ouch Report" will be completed by your child's teacher and you will be notified at pick-up of any minor injuries that occurred while your child was at MDO. In the event of a critical illness or major injury, we will take the following actions:

- Call 911 and administer CPR and/or First Aid if warranted.
- Contact the child's parent or the designated emergency contact if the parent can't be reached.
- We will complete a written report on serious injuries and incidents. You will receive a copy of the report and will be asked to sign the report.

The health and safety of your children is our top priority, and we will do everything within our power to keep them from injury. In the unlikely event that your child does require immediate medical attention, Sagamore MDO reserves the right to have your child transported by ambulance to an appropriate medical facility. If the nature of the emergency allows, we will contact you first; otherwise, we will call the ambulance and then notify you. All costs involved/incurred will be your responsibility.

### **Toileting and Potty Training**

Sagamore MDO requires parents to supply diapers or pull-ups and wet wipes for your child unless they are fully potty-trained. If your child will require diaper cream, please send it labeled with your child's name.

Our teachers will work closely with you to accommodate your child's toilet training needs. Please keep in mind that toilet training needs to be consistent not only at MDO, but at home as well. Your child's teacher will work with you and talk with you about your child's progress.

### **Diapering Procedures**

- A. Staff will wear gloves during diapering.
- B. Staff will wrap soiled diaper in gloves and discard appropriately
- C. Staff will sanitize changing station and wash hands after diapering.
- D. Cloth/reusable diapers are prohibited.

### **Rest Time Procedures**

All children are required to bring a nap mat, which will be kept at MDO and sent home for laundering every Wednesday. Please send these items each Monday.

Lights will be dimmed, and soft music or white noise will be played. Non-napping children will be expected to remain quietly on their mats so as not to disturb others. They will be allowed to look at a book or another quiet play item during this time. Children may additionally bring a pillow, blanket, and/or a soft comfort item, provided it does not light up or make noise.

### **Appropriate Clothing**

Please make sure you provide a seasonally appropriate change of clothing, including socks (and underwear, if applicable) in your child's backpack each day.

If the temperature is forecasted to be below 60 degrees while your child is at MDO, we ask that you send your child with a light jacket, hoodie, or sweater. We understand how important outdoor play can be for children to develop their creativity, teamwork and social skills, and gross motor skills. However, children will not go outside if the temperature is below 40 degrees or higher than 95 degrees.

Finally, all children should be sent in close-toed, rubber-soled shoes appropriate for running and climbing and nonrestrictive clothing that is appropriate for active play. Although our teachers will do their best, we cannot guarantee any rips/stains will not occur during normal activities, so please exercise your best judgment when choosing your child's clothes for the day.

## **NUTRITION**

### **Breakfast & Lunch**

Please ensure your child has eaten a balanced breakfast before attending MDO. This aids in brain development and positively influences behavior. Classroom activities begin promptly at 9:00, so we are unable to feed children any unfinished breakfast.

Children should bring a lunch from home consisting of food that is pre-cut into safe, bite-sized pieces, if applicable. Send lunches in a thermal lunch box or bag with an ice pack, as we are unable to refrigerate or heat lunches. Please be sure your child's name is clearly marked on his/her lunchbox, cup, and all containers. Each child should bring a refillable water bottle each day.

*Sagamore MDO has a nut-free facility. Please refrain from sending anything in your child's lunch that may contain peanuts, peanut products, or tree nuts of any kind. Please also do not send candy, gum, or sugary drinks with your child.*

### **Snacks & Special Occasions**

We will provide a simple morning and afternoon snack on MDO days, such as Goldfish, fruit, animal crackers, etc. We do have classroom parties on certain holidays (see MDO calendar) and may offer a special snack sign-up sheet for parents for those days. If you would like to send a special snack for your child's birthday, please contact the MDO Coordinator a week in advance. For the safety of all children, food items must be store-bought and must have the ingredients listed on the container.

*\*\*If your child has any dietary restrictions, please speak to your child's teacher and the MDO Coordinator about making a different snack arrangement, such as bringing a separate snack for your child from home.*

### **Snack and Lunch Procedures**

- Staff will wear gloves during snack handling, and children will wash their hands before eating.
- Staff will disinfect tables before and after eating.
- Children will bring their own labeled, reusable cups, which will be sent home each day.
- Snacks will be served individually in cups or baggies; no communal plates or bowls will be utilized.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Teacher Conferences:**

Parent/teacher conferences will be held only on an as-needed basis. If, at any time, you wish to discuss a matter with the MDO Coordinator, please feel free to contact her to make an appointment. Your input is very important to us, and we want to accommodate families as best as we can.

### **Parent/Family Member Visits:**

All visitors/early pick-ups must either notify the MDO Coordinator ahead of time or park in a parking space at the Northside of the building, where our church offices are located, and ring the doorbell so a staff member can let them in.

**\*\*All visitors must be on your child's approved pick-up list, or you must let the MDO Coordinator know who is coming ahead of time. They may be asked to show a driver's license or ID.**

### **Social Media:**

Sagamore MDO has a Facebook page ([facebook.com/sagamoremndo](https://facebook.com/sagamoremndo)) and an Instagram account (@sagamoremndo). We ask everyone to follow us if at all possible. This page lets our parents know what activities are coming up, features content about fun things we're doing at MDO, and offers information on school closings, alerts, etc.

### **Texting:**

Sagamore MDO uses FellowshipOne Go for text announcements. Once you've enrolled your child in MDO, you will be added to our texting list. However, if you prefer not to receive texts, please let us know. We will use texts to announce closures due to inclement weather or natural disasters, special events, picture days, etc.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline at Sagamore MDO is enforced with love and respect in mind. We seek to first understand the reason for a child's behavior. We will acknowledge and attempt to address the validity of a child's emotions, while helping them learn to process them in an appropriate way.

Discipline at MDO is:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding and development
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

Our staff members use only positive methods of discipline that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include the following:

- Using praise of good/acceptable behavior, rather than focusing solely on unacceptable behavior
- Reminding all children of classroom behavior expectations daily
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using a brief "cool down" which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age
- Offering strategies for healthy temper management (counting, deep breathing, etc.)

There is no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline are prohibited and will result in the immediate dismissal of any staff member:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with hand or another instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth to punish
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Isolating a child in a dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent/inactive for inappropriately long periods of time

Please notify your child's teacher or the MDO Coordinator if your child is experiencing any changes at home that might affect his/her normal behavior. This will allow the teacher and the MDO Coordinator to understand the situation and will assist us in helping your child adjust.

If 2 or more of the following incidents occur on the same day, we will notify parents:

- Biting or spitting
- Hitting or kicking another child
- Hitting or kicking a staff member
- Throwing items/being deliberately destructive

### **Termination from MDO**

Sagamore MDO reserves the right to terminate any child from MDO for any of the following reasons (*however, in most cases, we will discuss a plan with you before resorting to termination*):

- Failure of parents to abide by policies outlined in our Parent Handbook
- Any differences that cannot be worked out between the parent, teacher, and/or MDO Coordinator
- Destructive or harmful behavior of a child that persists even after the teacher and MDO Coordinator have made every attempt in working with the family to stop the behavior
- Verbal or physical abuse of staff by child or parents
- Recurring late payment or non-payment of tuition
- Excessive recurring tardiness in picking up your child after MDO

### **FINAL NOTES**

Sagamore MDO has designed this Parent Handbook to enhance the working relationship between parents, teachers, and children. Our policies and procedures are enforced to facilitate fairness and respect for all staff members and families. We look forward to providing an atmosphere that is inviting, professional, and loving. If you, at any time, need clarification of any policy, please contact the MDO Coordinator. We are committed to providing excellent care for all children and will strive daily to foster a positive environment for you and your family. We are confident in knowing that we can work together to make Mother's Day Out a rewarding experience for you and your children.

**Policies and Procedures**  
**Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

Please check all that apply:

- I have received and read a copy of Sagamore Mother's Day Out Ministry Policies and Procedures Handbook and understand the importance of matters set forth within it.
- I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my/our family's time at Sagamore MDO. Further, I understand that this handbook may be modified at any time, and that I will be notified of any guideline that is amended, revised, or eliminated.
- Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which are created and distributed, as well as guidelines that are changed or deleted.
- I hereby acknowledge receipt of this policies and procedures handbook.

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Parent/Guardian's name (Please Print)

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Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[This copy may remain attached to your Policies and Procedures Handbook]

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- Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which are created and distributed, as well as guidelines that are changed or deleted.
- I hereby acknowledge receipt of this policies and procedures handbook.

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Parent/Guardian's name (Please Print)

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Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[Please fill out & sign this copy and turn it in at MDO to be kept in your child's file.]