

SPRING VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
PRESCHOOL

# Parent Handbook

## 2017-2018



United Methodist  
Preschool

7700 Spring Valley Road  
Dallas, Texas 75254  
972-233-2317

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

Paul Gould, Senior Pastor  
Samantha Benjamin, Preschool Director  
Suzan Meyer, Director of Children and Family Ministry

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool.

We are so excited that you have chosen SVUMC Preschool as your partner in education. We know you have options and are pleased that you have chosen to entrust us with your child. I look forward to the partnerships that will be formed as your children grow and develop.

It is our goal that your child will thrive in this environment and blossom into the person God created them to be. The teachers and I truly care for and want the best for each child that passes through these doors. This is going to be a great new school year with lots of new activities and events to look forward to. I am very excited about meeting and getting to know each and every one of our preschool children as well as all our parents. Having positive, strong, genuine relationships between parents and educators is a key factor in setting your child up for academic success. SVUMC Preschool is a wonderful place to begin those relationships.

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to come to me or your child's teacher. It is my honest belief that when "what is best for the child", is at the core of every conversation, there is always a solution. I am here to have those conversations with you, to help education and inform you on different topics, so you can make the best decision for your child, and offer a different viewpoint on subjects you may want to talk about. I have an open door policy; you do not need an appointment to see or speak with me. If you need me it's simple; knock on my door, pick up the phone or send me an email. Parents and staff are a team - and together we can ensure this will be an amazing school year and a solid foundation in your child's educational path.

Joyfully His,



Samantha Benjamin

Director, SVUMC Preschool

[samantha.benjamin@svumc.org](mailto:samantha.benjamin@svumc.org)

972 233 2317

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Preschool Advisory Board welcome to Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool.

Our Board is a volunteer advisory body that provides oversight through the Director. We strive to be a liaison between Spring Valley United Methodist Church and the Preschool. We examine policies and procedure, review financial statements and are a sounding board for the Preschool Director. Want to let us know what is on your mind? Feel free to contact us via email or ask to address the Board at it's next meeting.

When you have questions, concerns, or praise to share, we encourage you to start with your child's teacher or a staff member. If your concern is more broad, or if it's sensitivity dictates the involvement of someone other than the teacher, please bring it to the attention of the Director. If the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if it is too sensitive to bring to the Director, request a conference with either the Preschool Advisory Board or the SVUMC Senior Pastor. At any level of the process, you can expect confidentiality and sensitivity to the needs of your child and your family.

Again, welcome and we hope you and your family have a terrific experience at Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool.

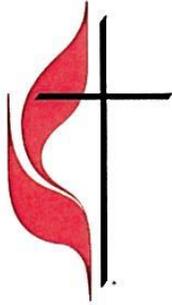
Grace and peace,

Hillary Jackson

Chairman, SVUMC Preschool Board

Contact Information:

Hillary Jackson	hillarywoolweaver@hotmail.com
Alex Rose	ahuffaker@gmail.com
Doris Simonsen	d.simonsen@att.net
Emily Serold	emily.serold@gmail.com
Mac Rossmurphy	mackelvaney@yahoo.com
Susan Denzer	shdenzer@prodigy.net



# Spring Valley

United Methodist Church  
Dallas, Texas 75254

*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World*

August 4, 2016

Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to the new school year at Spring Valley! We are excited about all the learning, growth and fun ahead for your child/ren.

Please know we consider your child's participation in our program to be a sacred trust. Their growth and development is our top priority. Our teachers and director offer excellent teaching and care, providing your child the nurture he or she needs to thrive in these most formative years.

As we go through the school year I look forward to meeting you and your family personally. I also want to invite you to experience the rest of our children and family ministries at Spring Valley. We have lots of wonderful opportunities. I am confident they would also be a blessing for you.

Again, welcome!

Cordially,

Paul Gould  
Senior Pastor, Spring Valley United Methodist Church

**August and September**

- Meet the Teacher Night — Wednesday, August 30, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Wesley Hall  
\*\*One parent per family must attend this meeting. NO children please\*\*
- Meet the Students — Thursday, August 31. By Appointment  
(Sign up will be available at Meet the Teacher Night)
- First Day of School — on Tuesday, September 5, 9a.m. T/Th and 5 day students
- MWF classes begin Wednesday, September 6 at 9 a.m.  
(Lunch Bunch begins on Tuesday, September 5)

**October**

- No School — Friday, October 6 -- RISD holiday
- No School — Monday, October 9 -- Columbus Day
- No School — Monday, October 23 -- Parent Teacher Conference
- Red Ribbon Week Begins Monday, October 24-27
- SVUMC Halloween Concert and Trunk or Treat — Sunday, October 29
- Halloween Parade and Trick or Treating — Monday, October 30 for M/W/F classes
- Halloween Parade and Trick or Treating — Tuesday, October 31

**November**

- School Pictures — Tuesday, November 7, 8, 9
- Veterans Day Ceremony — Thursday, November 9 at 10 a.m.
- Thanksgiving Feast — Thursday, November 16 at 11 a.m.  
\*\*Last day of school; No Lunch Bunch\*\*
- Thanksgiving Break — Friday, November 17 through Friday, November 24.
- Classes and Lunch Bunch resume — Monday, Nov. 27

**December**

- Christmas Program in Sanctuary — Tuesday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m.
- Last day of school for 2017 — Thursday, December 14; No Lunch Bunch
- Winter Break — Friday, December 15 through Tuesday January 2

**January**

- Classes and Lunch Bunch resume — Tuesday, January 3
- No School — Monday, January 15 -- Martin Luther King Day
- No School — Tuesday, January 16 -- RISD holiday
- Registration for 2018-2019 school year opens — Monday, January 22
- International Program — Thursday, January 30, at 6:30 p.m. Wesley Hall

## **February**

- Applications for 2018-2019 school year due by noon — Friday, February 9
- Valentine's Day Party — Tuesday, February 13 for T/Th classes
- Valentine's Day Party — Wednesday, February 14
- No School — Monday, February 19 -- Presidents' Day
- Notification of acceptance for 2018-2019 begins — Week of February 19
- Dr. Seuss Week Begins Monday February 26 through March 2
- Fun with Father — Tuesday, February 27, 6:30 p.m. in Wesley Hall

## **March**

- Confirm Enroll and Open June Camp Registration — Friday, March 9
- Last Day of School before Spring Break — Friday, March 9
- Spring Break — Monday, March 12 through Friday, March 16
- Classes and Lunch Bunch resume — Monday, March 19
- School Pictures — Tuesday, March 20, 21, and 22
- Class Easter Egg Hunts — March 28 for M/W/F classes
- Class Easter Egg Hunts — March 29
- No school — Friday, March 30 -- Good Friday

## **April**

- No school — Monday, April 2 -- Easter Monday
- No school — Monday, April 23 -- Parent Teacher Conferences

## **May**

- Teacher Appreciation Week — Begins Monday, May 7-May 11
- Music with your Parents — Wednesday, May 9 and Thursday, May 10  
\*\* Turtles at 10:30, Crayons at 11 and Dolphins at 11:30 in Music Room
- Class Picnics — Wednesday, May 16 and Thursday, May 17
- Spring Program/Pre-K 4 & 5 Graduation—Wednesday, May 16 at 6:30 p.m. in Wesley Hall  
(All 3, 4 & 5 year old children and families are requested to attend)
- Last day of school — Thursday, May 17; No Lunch Bunch
- No School — Monday, May 28 -- Memorial Day

## **June**

- June Camp
- Week 1: 4th - 8th
- Week 2: 11th - 15th
- Week 3: 18th - 22nd
- Week 4: 25th - 29th

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool is to provide each child with the essential building blocks for academic success and spiritual growth in a safe, nurturing environment. We believe that play is the work of childhood, and skills and knowledge are gained through experience. Learning concepts through play and exploration put children on a path to become lifelong learners.

## **OUR CURRICULUM**

Teachers set their classrooms up in Learning Centers. They teach using unit-based themes, with some projects taking several days to complete. Sample units include: nursery rhymes, fairy tales, seasons, holidays, animals, health and safety, Texas and the U.S.A., transportation, and occupations. Our preschool curriculum, LifeWay's WEE Learn, provides the teachers with foundational resources for stimulating activities that are biblically sound and age-appropriate.

Each age group has a different curriculum that has been designed to meet the children's level of learning. Bible stories and Bible verses are integrated throughout all areas of our program, providing an opportunity for children to develop an awareness of God's love as experienced through relationships with teachers, clergy, other children and the preschool community.

Lesson plans are created around units and include the following developmental areas: language and literacy development, beginning number awareness and math; gross and fine motor development, social and emotional growth. Learning takes place in both group settings such as morning circle and centers as well as individualized instruction

The Pre-K 4 classes also utilize Frog Street Press "Sing and Read" Alphabet Series which teaches lessons in early literacy, language development, and phonological and print awareness. The Transitional Kindergarten class uses Calendar Math curriculum and McRuffy Phonics program.

## **SVUMC Preschool Office Hours**

Monday - Thursday  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

## **WEBSITE**

<http://www.svumc.org/preschool>

## **CONTACTS**

**Samantha Benjamin** - Preschool Director  
972-233-2317  
[samantha.benjamin@svumc.org](mailto:samantha.benjamin@svumc.org)

**Jill Chris** - Administrative Assistant  
972-233-2317  
[schoolsec@svumc.org](mailto:schoolsec@svumc.org)

**Paul Gould** - Senior Pastor  
973-233-7671  
[pgould@svumc.org](mailto:pgould@svumc.org)

**Adam Young** - Associate Pastor  
972-233-7671  
[ayoung@svumc.org](mailto:ayoung@svumc.org)

## **MAILING ADDRESS**

**Spring Valley United Methodist Church**  
**Attention: Preschool**  
**7700 Spring Valley Road**  
**Dallas TX 75254**

**FAX: 972-233-1758**  
**Attention Preschool**

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

If you ever have a concern or question regarding your child or the operation of the preschool, please contact your child's teacher or the Director and request a conference. For serious grievances, to better enable us to respond in a timely fashion, please initiate your complaint within 24 hours of the occurrence or event. If, after discussing your concern with the school Director, it is not resolved to your satisfaction, please request a conference with either the Preschool Advisory Board or the Senior Pastor. Confidentiality and sensitivity to your needs and concerns are very important to us.

**Spring Valley United Methodist Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.**

A copy of the "Minimum Standards Guidelines", the current SVUMC Preschool license, a copy of the most recent Licensing Inspection Report and additional required postings are located in Director's Office for review. SVUMC Preschool is regulated by the local licensing Office:

**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services**

8700 N Stemmons FWY, STE 104

Dallas, TX 75247

(214) 583-4046

24 Hour Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

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

**GANG-FREE ZONE**

The Texas Penal Code indicates that any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

**NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY STATEMENT:**

We welcome children regardless of language, class, culture, race or family structure.

**IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES**

Spring Valley United Methodist Preschool: 972-233-2317

Spring Valley United Methodist Church: 972-233-7671

Spring Valley United Methodist Church FAX: 972-233-1758

Spring Valley United Methodist Church: [www.svumc.org](http://www.svumc.org)

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: 1-800-582-6036

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 and [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)

## **SECURITY**

**Here at SVUMC Preschool we take your child's safety very seriously.**

The security of your child is of the utmost importance. We take every precaution to provide a safe environment for your child. Each family will be given an access code for entrance into the preschool. We ask that you *never* give this information out to anyone. Also, please *do not teach* your children the code or let them practice unlocking the doors.

Ways to keep our school safe:

Accompany your child to class and make sure that they are signed in and signed out. If you will be absent please email the Director/Teacher so that we can keep an accurate count of who is in the building.

If someone new will be picking-up your child you must let us know in writing. Also, let that person know that we will be checking identification.

When visiting the SVUMC Preschool during the school day (from 9:20 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.), it is necessary for you to check in and check out with either the Director or Admin Assistant.

Inform the Director immediately if you ever notice anything that just doesn't seem right. Better safe than sorry.

## **PROGRAM TOURS**

SVUMC Preschool conducts program tours Monday-Friday at 9:30 or 11 a.m. This gives you an opportunity to meet us and see the program while it is operating. Please call/email the Director to schedule a tour.

## **PROGRAM DAYS**

September-May (See calendar for specific start and end dates)

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Lunch Bunch Monday - Thursday 12p.m. -3 p.m. (additional cost)

June Camps (See calendar for specific start and end dates)

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

July & August- Closed

## **REGISTRATION OVERVIEW**

Registration begins in February, using priority tier groups to determine student placement. Registration applications are submitted by priority tier and are then drawn at random.

The random drawings will work by adhering to the following priority tiers:

1. Children of Spring Valley staff
2. Church members whose children are currently enrolled and their siblings
3. Non-church members whose children are currently enrolled and their siblings
4. Church members not currently enrolled
5. General Public

Upon notification of acceptance, an enrollment form and registration and supply fee must be turned in to ensure a spot. An advance tuition payment is then due in June, which will confirm your intent to attend. This payment is applied to the May 2016 tuition payment.

When a class is filled a waiting list is started. Students will be accepted as spots become available, and will be based on the date of registration. Actual/final assignments are not made until late summer, allowing time for all registrants to be considered. Children are placed in classes according to date of birth and gender, teacher recommendations and special circumstances. Children are not moved into another room when they have a birthday. The group "ages" together through the school year. Children are assigned to new classes each school year.

Parents of a child with special needs should discuss these needs with the Director at the time of enrollment in order to ensure the success of the placement of the child.

## **REGISTRATION FORMS**

The state requires the following to be completed before a child can enter SVUMC Preschool:

1. Enrollment Form
2. Emergency Contact
3. Permission to obtain emergency care
4. Permission to transport child for emergency medical treatment
5. Permission to photograph children for church/preschool web site
6. Current record of immunization \*
7. Dr. Statement
8. Name, address, and phone number of child's physician
9. All four year olds must provide the results of a hearing and vision check\*\*
10. An Allergy Action Plan for any child with food allergies, completed and signed by your child's health care provider

## **\*IMMUNIZATIONS**

All children are required to remain up to date on their immunization and provide a copy of those immunizations to SVUMC Preschool. If immunizations are deferred for reasons of conscience or medical contraindications, a notarized affidavit is required before the child can start school. SVUMC Preschool can only accept an original, notarized affidavit which can be found at [immunizetexas.com](http://immunizetexas.com). Unvaccinated children will be required to stay at home in the event of an epidemic or other health emergency as determined by the Texas Commissioner of Health.

## **\*\*VISION AND HEARING SCREENING**

The State of Texas requires all children four-years and older on Sept.1 of the current school year to have vision and hearing screenings. This screening must be completed by a licensed professional within 120 days of admission and the screening results provided to SVUMC Preschool.

Please request this service at your child's 4 year well child check up.

\*\*\*Please note it is a policy of SVUMC Preschool to not become involved in custody disputes. In cases of divorce and/or shared custody, we will request a copy of the legal documents outlining the custody arrangement. We also require that both custodial parents complete the necessary paperwork when enrolling their child.

## **TUITION/FEES**

### **REGISTRATION & SUPPLY FEE**

A registration fee of \$145 is collected at the time of registration.

Supply fees, also due at registration, are charged as follows:

\$55 - 2 Day Class    \$65- 3 Day Class    \$75- 4 Day Class    \$85 - 5 Day Class

**Registration and supply fees are *nonrefundable*.**

## **TUITION RATES**

**Days A Week Annual Tuition Installment (9 MONTHS)**

**One Day \$110 per month**

**Two Days \$210 per month**

**1 & 2 year old Three Days \$230 per month**

**3 year old Three Days \$235 per month**

**Four Days \$255 per month or \$2295 annually**

**Five Days \$280 per month or \$2520 annually**

Lunch Bunch is held on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 to 3:00. One day = \$60 monthly, two days = \$120 monthly, three days = \$180 monthly and four days = \$240. Drop in lunch bunch is available if space allows for the fee of \$20 per day.

SVUMC Preschool offers Lunch Bunch to families enrolled in regularly scheduled classes.

*\*Pre-kindergarten children are required to attend a minimum of four days a week.*

The full payment amount is expected for all children enrolled whether present or not. Please keep in mind that you are paying for the **space** reserved for your child in a classroom, not for your child's attendance. Thus, to hold that space, payment must be made regardless of attendance.

### **TUITION PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Tuition is due at the 1st of the month, September through May, even if your child is absent from school. There is no discount if you choose to pay your tuition in full in advance.

#### **Installment Due Dates:**

Sept. 8	Feb. 5
Oct. 5	Mar 5
Nov. 5	Mid Mar Reg. /Sup Fee for upcoming year
Dec. 5	Apr 5
Jan. 5	May 5

#### **TUITION PAYMENTS:**

You may pay tuition by check or cash.

Please make your check payable to "SVUMC Preschool."

Place your check in the tuition box located outside Office 198.

Cash payments need to be placed in an envelope with the child's name on the envelope.

If you need a monthly receipt please write that on the envelope and one will be placed in your child's bag.

#### **INVOICES/RECEIPTS/TAX DOCUMENTS:**

Invoices are sent out the week before tuition is due

Receipts and End of Year Tax Statements are available upon request; please contact the Admin Assistant or Director for more information.

#### **DISCOUNTS:**

SVUMC members receive a \$25 discount on registration fees and tuition.

Siblings receive a \$15 per month discount on registration fees and tuition.

**Only one discount may be applied.**

## **LATE PAYMENT FEES/ PENALTIES**

A late fee of \$25 will be assessed after the 5th of the month on any account with an outstanding balance, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director/Admin Assistant.

A continual problem of late tuition payments and/or NSF returned checks could result in your child being dismissed from SVUMC Preschool.

## **RETURN CHECK FEES**

A \$35 fee will be assessed for any insufficient fund checks. If an account has two returned checks, that account will be asked to pay by cash or money order.

## **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

An account that is more than 30 days delinquent will require automatic withdrawal of the child/children, unless appropriate arrangements have been made with the Director.

## **LATE PICK UP**

There will be a \$1.00 per minute, late fee for picking up your child after 12:05 on regular days and after 3:05 on Lunch Bunch days. For example, if your pick up your child at 12:10, the fee is \$5 per child. All children being picked up late will be in the Director's office. Please contact the Director/Teacher as soon as you know you will be late.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SVUMC PRESCHOOL**

SVUMC Preschool requires a written 30-day paid drop notification.

If it is necessary to withdraw a child from a class at any time during the school year, the parent must notify the Director in *writing via letter or email* (we cannot accept a verbal notification) at *least one month* before the withdrawal date. Upon notification of withdrawal you child's spot will be filled and, if applicable, your child will go on a waiting list, until space is available, if you choose to return to SVUMC Preschool.

If less than 30-day notification is given we require the tuition be paid for the month following withdrawal.

## **REPORTING AN ABSENCE**

To report an absence, please email the Director and Teacher, before 9:00 a.m. Please include the following information in the email:

Parent's name

Child's name and classroom

Reason for absence

(If you are reporting for a child that is ill, please leave a detailed message regarding symptoms and the date the symptoms began.)

We request parents notify the Director as soon as possible if they believe their child has contracted a communicable disease. The Director, if appropriate, will then communicate this information to those who need it.

## **ILLNESS**

SVUMC Preschool requires parents to not send a child to school if he/she shows any signs of illness. This is not only for the protection of your child, but also for the protection of the other children and teachers.

Parents need to inform your child's Teacher if your child was given any type of medication prior to coming to school (including allergy, cold or cough medicine).

Families are encouraged to be considerate of other students and staff by not bringing ill siblings into the hallways and classrooms during drop-off and pickup times.

Please do not bring your child to school when any of the following symptoms exist:

- Fever (must be free of fever (100° or more) for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medicine)
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea (must be free of vomiting and /or diarrhea for 24 hours)
- Any symptoms of childhood diseases
- Chicken pox - all sores must be completely scabbed over and dry underneath
- Common cold - from onset through one week
- Sore throat
- Cloudy, green or excessive runny nose
- Persistent cough or croup
- Skin rash of any kind
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Any skin infection - boils, ringworm, impetigo, thrush, hand-foot-and-mouth disease
- Conjunctivitis or other eye discharge (All eye infections are contagious. The child must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.)
- Any communicable disease
- Head lice\*

We also ask that any open wounds, large scrapes or cuts be properly covered with a bandage.

We require all open wounds to remain covered while the child is at school.

SVUMC Preschool may find it necessary to modify the illness policies during flu or other similar related outbreaks

Children cannot be kept in their classroom while their class is outside on the playground. If a child is too sick to go outside, he/she should be kept at home.

Upon arrival, teachers will visually check for any sign of illness as they greet the children. If there are any questionable symptoms of a contagious illness observed, the parent will be asked to take the child home.

\*Parents will be called to pick up the child once lice is discovered and given information about treatment. Your child will be re-examined for head lice 6-9 days later (the amount of time it takes for nits to hatch.) If live lice are present at that time, it may be necessary for an alternative treatment (some lice are resistant to over the counter treatments). It is also recommended that all members of your family be checked at home for head lice. Remember, the most important components of head lice treatment are a single treatment followed by reapplication if live lice are found 7-10 days later. Nit combing should also be performed.

## **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

If your child begins to show symptoms of illness at school, the Director/Admin Assistant will attempt to contact the parents. If we are unable to contact the parents, we will start contacting people on your authorized pick up list. Please make all of your authorized pick up people aware they may be called and expected to pick up your child in case of an illness or accident.

The child will be removed from their classroom and will remain with the Director/Admin Assistant until pick up.

## **ACCIDENTS**

The Director or Admin Assistant will render first aid to an injured child and then determine if the parent should be contacted.

All accidents at SVUMC Preschool are required to be reported on an Accident/Illness Report form. This form is completed by the staff member who witnessed the incident. If a form has been completed on your child, the classroom teacher will review the form and ask for your signature. A copy of this form will be filed in your child's record.

Your child's teacher will inform you at pickup time if any minor accidents, bumps or scrapes have occurred while your child was at school. She will make you aware of how the incident occurred, what first aid was rendered, and any notable visible signs.

If your child becomes ill or gets injured at school, we will adhere to the following procedures: If your child has a slight injury, such as a scrape or minor cut, we will wash the injury with soap and water or Band-Aid brand antiseptic wash and apply a bandage. We do not use any other medication.

If a child receives a bump on the head, we will contact a parent and let the parent decide if you want to come pick up your child or leave them at school.

If your child has an allergic reaction or more serious injury that does not require a hospital visit, we will contact a parent.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY PLAN**

In a serious or life-threatening emergency, the Director will contact 911. The Director or Admin Assistant will contact the parent to instruct them to either come to SVUMC Preschool or the hospital. If a child is taken to the hospital via ambulance, the Director will accompany the child to the hospital until parents arrive.

## **MEDICATION POLICIES**

It is the policy of Spring Valley that NO medication will be administered at the school by the staff. Medication may not be placed in a child's tote bag or lunch for the child to take himself. If your child must take medication during the day, arrangements will have to be made for a parent to come and administer it.

The only exception to this policy is if failure to medicate might result in the onset of a life threatening reaction and that time could be a critical factor. This includes use of an epi-pen. Parents must have an allergy action form signed by a doctor for medication to be administered. This must be renewed every year. Medication must be in original container labeled with child's full name and date, and given to the classroom teacher for storage.

Teachers are not allowed to apply sunscreen or bug spray as they are considered to be a type of medication. If needed, the parent will apply these prior to school. Do not put these products in your child's backpack.

## **SVUMC STAFF**

Our SVUMC Preschool staff considers it a privilege to teach your children.

Each of our teachers has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and considers teaching a ministry.

All staff members are required to complete a minimum of 24 hours of staff development training every year.

Staff is also trained every year on identifying suspected Child Abuse/neglect and mandated reporting responsibilities.

Staff is required to comply with the guidelines outlined in the "Minimum Standards Guidelines."

All staff undergoes a criminal background check and fingerprint check as required by state licensing.

SVUMC Preschool does not require staff members to obtain vaccines or TB testing.

Prior to hiring, potential staff members must submit to and pass a criminal history check and are fingerprinted.

- All personnel have the following qualifications:
- Education and experience in teaching young children
- Continuing education, either through classes or workshops, in child development and guidance—a minimum of 24 hours each year
- Ability to relate to young children and their parents
- Find pleasure in teaching young children
- Agree with and support the school's philosophy and goals
- Are certified in CPR training (infant, child and adult)
- Are certified in First Aid

Each year during in-service training, staff members review:

Program philosophy and goals

Expectations of ethical conduct

Health, safety and emergency procedures

Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques

Daily activities and routines of the school and curriculum

Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures

Program policies and procedures

Regulatory requirements

## RATIOS

Age	Teacher to Student Ratio
One Year Old (12 months as of September 1 and walking)	2 teachers to 11 children
Two Year Old (2years as of September 1)	2 teachers to 13 children
Three Year Old (3 years as of September 1)	1 teacher to 10 children
Pre-K & Transitional K (4 years as of September 1)	1 teacher to 11 children

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of children

Provides time and support for transitions

Includes both indoor and outdoor experiences

Responsive to a child's need to rest and to be active

Incorporates time and materials for play, self-initiated learning, and creative expression

Includes time for large group, small group and individual activity

Includes both child initiated and teacher directed activity

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

### PARKING LOT

Please be cautious in the parking areas. Do not exceed 5 mph. **The use of cell phones is highly discouraged while entering and exiting the parking lots.**

Please be aware it is considered neglect to leave a child unattended in a car. If a family needs assistance with drop-off or pickup, please contact the Director for assistance. Due to the ages of the children in our program, we do not offer curbside drop-off or pickup. Therefore, a parent or guardian must walk a child to his or her classroom. Cross the parking lot with your

child cautiously. Please keep carpools small enough to control the children to and from the building. Please notify the school of any pre-arranged carpools. The parking lot can be very dangerous if special care while walking and driving is not observed. Please remember to **DRIVE SAFELY** in and out of the parking lot.

The Director will normally be at the front door for morning greeting, from 8:55 a.m. -9:05 a.m. if you need help with your children please ask.

### **DROP-OFF**

Be prompt in bringing your child and picking your child up from school. **Children will not be accepted any earlier than 8:55 a.m.** The teachers need the time before 8:55 a.m. to prepare.

We open the main doors to the Church at 8:55 a.m. These doors are closed until then to allow our teachers time to set up their rooms, and gather supplies.

Parents are to walk children to their classroom door and check them in.

Teachers will be at the classroom door to greet the children until **9:05 a.m.** At **9:05 a.m.** **they** will go into the classroom, close the door, and begin the class day. After 9:05 a.m., it is very important for all classroom teachers to be in the class, devoting their time and full attention to the children.

Classroom activities begin promptly at 9:05 a.m. Children who arrive late may miss activities and can be a disruption to their class. We will ask you to sign in before proceeding to your child's class.

Please understand that if you arrive **after 9:05 a.m.**, the teacher will already be in session with the class. Please have your child enter the room quietly. Please do not enter the room at this time; it can be very disruptive to the children in the classroom. If you have an issue or concern that you need to discuss with the teacher and you have arrived after **9:05 a.m.**, either leave a note for her to call you at her earliest convenience, or come by the Director's office and we will relay the message or send an email.

For privacy purposes, SVUMC Preschool teachers have been instructed not to discuss any personal issues about a child at the door with parents. If a teacher needs to discuss any issues with a child's parents, the teacher will either set up a conference time or phone the parents at home. Teachers are never able to share any information about a child with anyone other than the parents of that child.

### **SIGINING IN/OUT CHILDREN**

We need your help to ensure their safety. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

It is state mandated that each parent:

**Complete the sign-in/sign-out sheet fully.** If someone other than the child's parents will be picking the child up on that day that information must be provided.

**All parents are required to sign in their children on a sign-in/sign-out sheet and sign them out at the end of the day. You must sign and mark the time.**

**Thank you for partnering with us to keep each child safe here at SVUMC Preschool.**

## **PICKUP**

Pick up time can be a very confusing time at the classroom door. At this time, the teacher's main responsibility is to ensure each child leaves with the appropriate parent or guardian. For this reason, we ask parents to refrain from entering into the classroom. The teacher will be at the door ready to greet you and call your child to the door.

For the security of the children, we ask when you arrive at your child's classroom in the afternoon, please:

Wait outside if the door is closed. The teacher will open the door once class is finished.

Pick up your child's backpack and other belongings from their bin.

Once a parent or other authorized person has signed out their child, he or she is then solely responsible for the supervision of the child.

## **SPECIAL RELEASE**

Children should be picked up no later than 12:05 p.m. or 3:05 p.m. for Lunch Bunch. Children will be released only to their parents, unless prior notification is given.

Parents must inform the teacher if anyone other than the child's parents will be picking up their child that day. You will also write this information on the sign-in/sign-out sheet.

For anyone other than a parent to pick up a child, we will ask to see that person's driver license to verify the name, and we will write the driver license number on our sign-in/sign-out sheet.

We will not release children unless we have received prior consent from a parent.

## **LEAVING YOUR CHILD**

This can be an anxious time for some children *and some parents, too*. We have found it is best if you say your goodbyes and leave your child at the classroom door, not inside the room. It is less stressful on the child if you make your goodbyes brief and cheerful.

At 9:05 a.m., the class day is beginning. The teachers are engaging the children in activities as others arrive. For this reason, we ask parents not to enter the classroom.

Please, refrain from peeking in the door after you have dropped off your child and said your goodbyes. Not only can this be a distraction to the class as a whole, but it can also upset your child all over again if he/she sees you. If you are concerned about how your child is doing after drop-off or during the day, please call or email the Director, and we will gladly check on your child. (Please see "Separation Anxiety" page 27.)

Parents, while we appreciate the fact that you enjoy visiting with one another in the hallways, please remember that the staff of SVUMC Preschool cannot be responsible for your child's safety while he or she is in your care. Please do not let your children run off to their classrooms unattended. Unless they are signed into the classroom - you are the responsible party.

## **ITEMS NEEDED FOR SCHOOL**

**BACKPACKS:** Your child will need backpack/bag to carry items to and from school. The backpack must be taken to and from school each day. Make sure your child's backpack is clearly marked with their name.

**Important:** Please check your child's backpack **daily** for information from the teacher and remove papers and projects out of their backpack daily.

**WATER CUP:** Each student is to bring a LABELED water bottle or sippy cup with water in it every day. These bottles or cups should only contain water and will be used throughout the day.

**CHANGE OF CLOTHES:** Every child should have a change of clothes in their backpack/bag, appropriate for each season. Please make sure all items are clearly labeled. In case of an accident, your child will be changed and the soiled items will be bagged and sent home. Accidents are not always bathroom related. We do a lot of crafts at school and if we get too messy we may need to change all or a portion of our outfit.

**DIAPERS/PULL UPS as applicable.**

## **SNACKS**

We serve snacks in our school that are provided by the parents. We do not prepare or serve meals. Each teacher will provide parents with a sign-up sheet of foods we would like for snack time that are approved and appropriate for your child's class. The class then shares the same snack for that day; we do not serve individual snacks. We serve water to drink. State licensing requires that we do not serve food that might present a risk of choking to infants or toddlers (up to age 35 months). Examples of these foods include hot dogs sliced into rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, string cheese, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonfuls of peanut butter and chunks of meat that can be swallowed whole.

If a child has a special health care need or food allergy or special nutrition need, the child's health provider must give the school an Allergy Plan. The school protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. We ask families of a child with food allergies to give us permission to post the information in classrooms, so that all staff, including substitute teachers, will have access to the information.

## **LUNCH BUNCH**

### **LUNCH**

If your child stays for Lunch Bunch, you will need to send a lunch to school with your child. It is important for each child to bring a well-balanced, nutritious lunch to SVUMC Preschool since parents are responsible for meeting their child's daily nutritional requirements. All lunches must

be ready to eat. We can't refrigerate lunch boxes, so please send food that can safely remain at room temperature until around 12:00 p.m. Also, send plenty of food—children are very busy in the morning and are hungry for lunch. You do not need to provide a drink as water will be served with lunch. We do not have the ability to heat up food served for lunch. Please be sure to send any required utensils.

Cut up all foods that could be a choking hazard (examples: uncut grapes, uncut hot dogs, hard candy, large fruit chunks, large cheese chunks, etc.)

### **NAP MAT**

All classes will have a rest time. After a busy day, preschoolers need this time. For the older classes, the duration of the rest time is left to the discretion of the teacher. Do not ask your child's teacher to keep your child awake.

Nap mats must be taken home each school day since we do not have storage space.

Again, please be sure to label all items.

### **PARENT CLASSROOM VISITATIONS**

The staff at SVUMC Preschool highly respects the role and influence of parents. We value parental input and encourage parents to participate in school and classroom activities. We have an "open door" policy and parents are welcome to observe classroom activities at anytime. While parents are not required to secure prior approval, it might help you to check the classroom schedule before you arrive.

You *must* check in with the Director or Admin Assistant prior to entering your class room.

The first few weeks of school are a very sensitive time while children are adjusting and adapting to their classroom environment. With this in mind, we ask that parents refrain from visiting the classroom during the first month of school.

Parents who visit the classroom may only observe. Parents may not disrupt or distract the children or interrupt the teacher during the observation. Please keep in mind that for some younger children, it can be quite confusing when parents visit once the day has begun. At these young ages, when children see a parent arrive, they assume it's time to go home. It can disrupt their entire day.

Parents will have the opportunity to participate in special events throughout the year (Fun with Fathers, Holiday parties, etc.)

### **HOLIDAYS**

Holidays and any other days off during the school year are listed on the calendar in the front of this handbook. Your child's teacher will also send out this information in their monthly newsletter.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

**August Meet the Teacher Night** (for all parents) - Parents meet with the Director and teachers to find out more about the school and their child's class. This is an excellent opportunity for parents to become acquainted with each other and the school staff. Every child is required to have one parent in attendance. No children please.

**Chapel** - Chapel is held weekly for the children and led by the ministers of SVUMC on a rotating basis. It is approximately 15 minutes long. All parents are welcome to attend. Chapel meets Tuesdays at 9:15.

**Thanksgiving Feast** - The children prepare a variety of foods, which they share with family and friends. In the past, they've prepared turkey, pumpkin bread, pickles, cheese and Jell-O Jigglers.

**Christmas and Spring Music Programs** - The children love to perform songs they've learned—they especially love an appreciative audience. You're invited to come and bring all your friends and family.

**Parent Conferences** - Twice per year, during the fall and spring semesters, we have designated conference days. Several weeks before these days, you will be able to sign up for a specific date and time. However, you don't have to wait for an official parent conference day to talk with your child's teacher—feel free to schedule a conference at any time.

**Seasonal Parties** - All classes will be involved in classroom parties at various times of the year i.e. Halloween, Valentine's Day, and St. Patrick's Day. Parents sign up to provide treats, party favors and paper products. You are always welcome to attend parties.

We will have special school-wide events during the year in which all groups will participate (e.g., Pajama Day, Donuts with Dads, Dr. Seuss Day). The dates for these special days will be published in upcoming newsletters.

We will schedule classroom parties and special event days on alternating class days to accommodate all of our classes. If your child attends only one day a week and the above-mentioned parties are on the day that he or she does not attend, you may bring your child to attend just during the designated party time. However, we ask that you remain in the building and pick your child up as soon as the party is over.

Parents may be asked to sign up and bring certain items to the above class parties.

**Birthday Parties** - Birthday snacks are always a special treat. Parents are encouraged to provide simple snacks to celebrate children's birthdays. Also limit celebration to snacks only. Class birthdays are not a time for balloons and favors. Your teacher will coordinate a day and time for your special birthday snack.

See the section on meals and food service for further guidelines.

## COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We use several different forms of communication to relay important information to our preschool families. Take time to do the following so you can stay informed:

Read all information that is sent home with your child.

Check the sign-in table at your child's classroom. We will post some notices at the table.

Check your email for information and updates.

Please try to avoid hallway conferences with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up. When she is with her class, her attention needs to be focused on her students. If you need to talk to her or set up a conference, please call the school office and ask that she return your call when she has a break. For your privacy, the teachers have been instructed *not* to discuss any issues or concerns at the classroom door. This is for your privacy so that others, including your child, will not overhear.

Parents are encouraged and welcome to discuss any issues or concerns with the Director. You are highly encouraged to contact the Director as soon as a concern arises regarding your child. You are welcome to stop by, email, call or set up an appointment.

Our teachers are not allowed to receive personal calls or texts from parents during the day. This allows them to have their complete focus on the classroom. If you have a concern, please contact the Director or Admin Assistant.

Teachers work in partnership with families to establish and maintain regular, ongoing communication. We use some of the following tools to help achieve that goal:

**Classroom Packets** - Packets containing a variety of information will be placed in your child's basket. These packets include your child's school work, along with a newsletter and other notes from your child's teacher.

**Class Newsletter** - Your classroom teacher will distribute this newsletter to students on a monthly basis. The class newsletter will keep you informed about what your child is learning at school during that month. This will give you an opportunity to share in your child's week by asking questions about things that he/she is learning at school.

**"Specials" Class Newsletter** - Your child's "Specials" classes will send out a newsletter four times during the school year to keep you informed about class activities.

You will also receive weekly emails and information from the Director.

Please read these materials carefully as they are our primary method of communication.

Website - The preschool website also has information posted about the school. Our website address is [www.svumc.org/preschool](http://www.svumc.org/preschool)

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER/ WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS**

If for any reason the Richardson Independent School District (RISD) cancels school, we will cancel school. If RISD has a delayed start at or after 10:00 a.m., we will cancel school on that day.

On inclement weather days, we ask our parents to closely monitor the weather throughout the day. If you hear local public school districts are closing early, then you need to pick up your child early. If you are uncertain if we are closing early, please call the preschool.

You can check WFAA closing for an updated list of closings; SVUMC Preschool has an account with this station. <http://www.wfaa.com/closings>

**No credits or makeup days will be given for any weather or emergency-related closings.**

## **POWER OUTAGES**

In the event of an extended power outage during school, the Director may determine to contact parents for immediate pick up.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

SVUMC Preschool conducts monthly fire drills and quarterly tornado drills. Lockdown drills are conducted with teachers only twice a year. If a parent is present during a drill, we ask that you follow instructions given by the teacher and participate fully. Our staff is trained for each of these emergency situations.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

If the Director finds it necessary for staff and students to evacuate the building and surrounding area due to a dangerous situation, all children will be transported to the emergency evacuation site within walking distance. All children will be transported to the emergency evacuation site in the safest mode possible. SVUMC will follow the Dallas Police and/or Fire Department instructions.

**Spring Valley Church Annex Building  
13959 Peyton Avenue, Dallas  
(directly behind the preschool)**

Teachers will have all contact numbers with them.

Any student who may need assistance or have a special need will be personally carried or escorted by a teacher during an emergency evacuation.

**A copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the Director's Office for review.**

## **CURRENT INFORMATION**

It is extremely important that SVUMC Preschool be able to contact the parents in case of an emergency. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify SVUMC Preschool of any changes in current information provided on the child's application. Please contact us immediately should any of this information need to be updated (e.g. address, phone numbers, pediatrician, allergies, etc.). You may email the Director or Admin Assistant with the updated information or submit a letter with the new information. You will be required to review your family information in January to ensure we still have your most current information.

## **CLOTHING**

Please label all your child's belongings. It is especially important that you label coats, hats, gloves, scarves, nap pads and lunchboxes.

Toys should only be brought to school on designated "show-and-tell" or "share bag" days.

Dress your child in comfortable clothes. Remember, your child will experience messy activities at school. Closed-toe shoes are required on the playgrounds.

Here are some items to consider when preparing for school:

If your child can use the bathroom on his/her own, we request that you dress your child in clothing that will allow him/her to go to the restroom with little assistance from the teacher.

Select clothing free of complicated fastenings.

Washable play clothes are recommended for school days. We have a lot of fun at school, so please keep the dress clothes at home.

Remember your child may be painting at school. We do use washable paint, but stains can happen.

Pack a complete change of clothing (labeled with child's name), and include underwear and socks in his/her bag every day. Please remember that accidents are not always potty training related. For all students' safety, shoes must be worn at all times at school. Children are required to wear tennis shoes or other similar closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes. **Cowboy boots are not allowed.**

Sandals, clogs, crocs, flip-flops and jellies make it very difficult for a child to play safely; therefore, they are strongly discouraged. We want all children to be able to run and play in shoes that are comfortable. Velcro-fastened shoes are great for little ones.

Again, please **LABEL** all items.

## **PLAYGROUND/OUTDOOR TIME**

Our playground areas are enclosed and gated. Children love to go outside. Our classes generally go outside every day (several times a day)—even in the cool weather. Remember to pack a jacket or coat during cooler weather. All ages will go outside during the school day, weather permitting (40 degrees including wind chill).

## TOILET TRAINING

We want to support your child in his/her potty training. Communication is the key to success during this time. Please discuss home potty training schedules and successes with your child's teacher to determine the appropriate time to begin training at school. There will be daily communication between parents and teachers during potty training.

- One and two year old children are not required to be toilet trained. Once potty training begins, these children will be taken to the bathroom by a staff member frequently (every 1 to 1 ½ hours).
- Three year old children must be actively potty training; this includes wearing pull-ups, not diapers and children must be willing to go to the bathroom and try to potty when asked by their teacher. Children must have the ability to communicate to the teacher the need to go to the toilet.
- All children entering Pre-K and Transitional K classes must be completely toilet trained (to the above standard levels) with both urination and bowel movements.

A child is considered completely toilet trained (urination and bowel movements) when he/she no longer wears diapers or pull-ups and is able to:

- Anticipate the urge to use the toilet.
- Communicate that need to their teachers.
- Control the urge and get to the toilet on time.
- Pull down his/her pants.
- Use the toilet
- Clean themselves
- Pull up his/her pants.
- Wash up after him/herself.

\*\*Children must wear pull-ups or protective pants until they have been consistent at school for two weeks (no accidents) due to health/sanitation issues in the classroom.

\*\*For 4-5 year olds, after two accidents in a two-week period, parents will be contacted by the Director or teacher to address this concern.

## DIAPERING

Turtles and Crayons must bring disposable diapers. Families may be asked a few times throughout the year to bring containers of wet wipes or money for wet wipes that are shared in the classroom

Pack all disposable diapers, wipes, diaper ointments (over-the-counter) and other items that your child will need during the school day. Be sure to label all items with your child's name.

NOTE: It will be assumed that any diaper ointment or creams (non-prescription) in your diaper bag may be used on your child. Therefore, please remove any items you do not want used on your child from your diaper bag. We *cannot* apply prescription ointment unless prior approval has been given by doctor (see "Medication Policies" for instructions.)

## **PERSONAL TOYS**

We recommend you leave your child's toys at home or in the car with the exception of a naptime security item except in infant cribs. Other children find it difficult to understand why the child who brought a toy to class does not have to share his/her toy.

We cannot be responsible for any personal toys, special blankets or irreplaceable items that could get lost or torn so please refrain from bringing these to school.

**Play guns and weapons of any kind are not allowed at SVUMC Preschool.**

## **STROLLERS**

We cannot allow any strollers to be left in the hallways or stairwells as they are considered a fire hazard.

## **NURSING ROOMS**

SVUMC Preschool is supportive of and encourages breastfeeding for as long as the mother deems appropriate. SVUMC Preschool has a room available to nursing mothers. This is for your convenience and comfort during school hours. Parents also have the right to provide breast milk for your child while in our care. Please meet with the Director for more information.

## **PETS**

Pets are not permitted on the premises at any time. This allows us to maintain a safe, healthy environment for all of our children and staff.

## **FIELD TRIPS/Transportation**

SVUMC Preschool does not take field trips and children are not transported from the center unless there is an emergency.

## **WATER PLAY AND SPRINKLER ACTIVITY**

Water activities are limited to water play in the classroom or playground by using the water table or small tubs. During our June Summer Camp we offer splash day where the children have supervised play in wading pools and sprinklers.

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION AND POLICY CHANGES**

When a policy changes, parents will be notified in writing.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Children's records are open only to the child's teachers, the Director and her assistant, an authorized employee of the licensing agency and accreditation agencies, and the child's parent or legal guardian.

No information about any child will ever be shared with anyone other than those listed above, for any reason.

## **ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

The school uses an in-house assessment tool, which was developed primarily as a result of the Texas Education Agency Pre-kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines (1999) and LifeWay's WEE Learn curriculum. Assessments cover the following areas:

Language development and early literacy skills

Mathematics

Science

Cognitive development

Socio-emotional development

Health and safety practices

Personal and social development

Gross and Fine motor skills

While assessment of a child's skills, abilities and progress occur on a daily basis, teachers formally assess students a minimum of twice per school year. If you have questions about the assessment tool or your child's progress, please call the teacher or director and set up a conference. You will receive a copy of any assessment completed on your child.

## **SPECIAL CONCERNS**

Children enrolled in the program must be able to participate in the normally planned activities for their age group. This includes participation in indoor and outdoor activities, learning activities and social interaction appropriate for their age group. The safety and the welfare of the class will have priority over an individual situation. SVUMC Preschool reserves the right to determine if the program is not able to provide adequate care for a child.

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

Early intervention can be a vital tool in assisting children with possible learning differences. It is during the early years that a trained specialist can assess and assist a child with certain special learning needs. SVUMC Preschool reserves the right to make the request to a parent to arrange for his or her child to be evaluated by either a public or private specialized service. We reserve the right to terminate enrollment if it is determined that our program is not able to meet the needs of the child while providing a quality experience for both the child and other children in the program.

## **SEPARATION ANXIETY**

It is common for some children to experience sadness and crying due to separation from their parents, but most will calm down after a few weeks. Most children may cry for just a few minutes and then settle into their classroom routine. For heavy crying that continues for an extended period of time (15 minutes or more), the Director will contact a parent to discuss the situation. We might ask you to come and pick up your child. In extreme cases, the parents and Director will come up with an alternate plan for dealing with separation anxiety. If your child is

crying when you leave him or her at the door, we ask that you not stay at the classroom doorway. A glimpse of you will only make the crying last longer.

**Anytime you are ever concerned about your child, contact the Director and we will be happy to check on them.**

## **BITING AND HITTING**

Many preschoolers will go through a stage of biting or hitting. They might bite or hit because they are frustrated, because their gums hurt or sometimes even by accident. Please understand that this can be a common occurrence among younger children. These types of problems are handled on an individual basis. We will attempt to work with the child and the parent, but safety is always our first concern. We must consider what is best for the classroom as a whole. In more serious cases, a parent may be called and asked to pick up a child early. If this behavior continues, the child could be suspended from attending until the biting is under control. An Accident/Incident Report is written for all involved children. Parents will sign this report and be given a copy. The Director retains a copy in the children's file. We will never release the name of either child. This is kept confidential.

## **GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

Guidance is a necessary part of an early childhood program. With age-appropriate techniques, children learn to trust adults, to work and interact successfully in the learning environment, to learn self-control and how to resolve conflict or difficult situations in an acceptable way.

Staff members help promote pro-social behavior by:

Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;

Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;

Redirecting behavior using positive statements;

Interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children

Modeling turn taking, sharing and caring behaviors

Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials

Engaging children in the care of their classroom

Ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group

Encouraging children to listen to one another

Encouraging and helping children to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Using narration and description of ongoing interactions to identify pro-social behavior

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.

In all classrooms, positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction will be used. The methods will be appropriate to the child's level of understanding, individualized and consistent for each child. Classroom rules will be made clear to the children. Children thrive when they know that they have boundaries and limits. When a

child does not follow these guidelines, he/she will be reminded and redirected. Multiple reminders may result in time away from an activity.

In situations where repeated means of redirection have been tried and the child is still uncooperative or uncontrollable, the Director will remove the child from the classroom and have a one on one discussion. In the event the problem still occurs the parents will become involved in an effort to work together to correct the inappropriate behavior. We always attempt to work with the child and his/her parents when a problem arises, but we must also consider what is best for the classroom as a whole. The safety and welfare of the class will be a priority over any individual situation. Please remember that we do not have a 1:1 student-to-teacher ratio in any classroom. Each child deserves the same amount of attention from a teacher.

Please note: Dismissal of a child from the program at any time for disruptive behavior is at the discretion of the Director.

**\*\*There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are PROHIBITED:**

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 a hand or instrument;

Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;

Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;

Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;

Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and

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

## **EXPULSION POLICY**

The State of Texas has instructed us to provide you with the following information:

Occasionally, there are situations that result in the expulsion of a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. These situations are always unfortunate. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with you, the parents/guardian, in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

The following are reasons why we may have to expel or suspend a child from our center:

### **IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION**

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- A parent threatens physical or intimidating action toward staff members.
- A parent engages in verbal abuse toward staff.

- Unsuccessful resolution of an issue, where more than one child from the family is enrolled in the program and the parent decides to remove one child but leave the others in care... all children from a family must un-enroll at the same time
- Unsuccessful resolution of an issue where a parent develops an expressed or apparent lack of confidence in the staff

#### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION**

- Failure to pay and/or habitual lateness in tuition payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's updated immunization records
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child
- Verbal abuse to staff

#### **CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION**

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children

#### **CHILD ABUSE**

Child abuse is defined as doing or failing to do something that results in harm or risk of harm to a child. There are four types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. While child physical abuse may be the most visible, other types of abuse leave deep and lasting emotional scars. Early intervention is key to helping abused children heal.

#### **REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Any person having cause to believe a child's mental or physical health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect is mandated by law to report such concerns to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. As child care professionals, the staff of SVUMC Preschool is required to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child is a crime punishable by fine and/or imprisonment. There is a 48 hour reporting requirement for professionals. Immunity from civil or criminal liability is guaranteed if the report is made in good faith and without malice. Reports of child abuse or neglect are confidential.

Staff is trained annually in the detection and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. They also take an online child abuse prevention course sponsored by the Methodist church called 'Ministry Safe'. This is renewed every two years. These trainings serve to increase awareness of issues regarding abuse and neglect, including warning signs and prevention techniques. The preschool has access to resources, including counseling, for children who may be victims of abuse. Parents of children who have been victims of abuse are encouraged to speak to the Director or a member of the church staff for help, support and access to resources.

**For more information or to make a confidential report:**

**Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400**

**Additional resources may be found in the Director's office.**

## **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse is physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child. The physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) can result from punching, beating, shaking, kicking, biting, throwing, stabbing, hitting, burning, choking, or otherwise harming a child. Such injury is considered abuse regardless of whether the caretaker intended to hurt the child.

### **Suspect Physical Abuse When You See:**

Frequent injuries such as bruises, cuts, black eyes, or burns without adequate explanations

Frequent complaints of pain without obvious injury

Burns or bruises in unusual patterns that may indicate the use of an instrument or human bite;  
cigarette burns on any part of the body

Lack of reaction to pain

Aggressive, disruptive, and destructive behavior

Passive, withdrawn, and emotionless behavior

Fear of going home or seeing parents

Injuries that appear after a child has not been seen for several days

Unreasonable clothing that may hide injuries to arms or legs

## **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse includes fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or producing pornographic materials.

### **Suspect Sexual Abuse When You See:**

Physical signs of sexually transmitted diseases

Evidence of injury to the genital area

Pregnancy in a young girl

Difficulty in sitting or walking

Extreme fear of being alone with adults of a certain sex

Sexual comments, behaviors or play

Knowledge of sexual relations beyond what is expected for a child's age

Sexual victimization of other children

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in a child's growth, development or psychological functioning. It includes extreme forms of punishment such as confining a child in a dark closet, habitual scapegoating, belittling, and rejecting treatment for a child.

### **Suspect Emotional Abuse When You See:**

Over compliance

Low self-esteem

Severe depression, anxiety, or aggression

Difficulty making friends or doing things with other children

Lagging in physical, emotional, and intellectual development

A caregiver who belittles the child, withholds love, and seems unconcerned about the child's problems

## **NEGLECT**

Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs necessary to sustain the life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services have been offered and refused.

### **Suspect Neglect When You See:**

Obvious malnourishment

Lack of personal cleanliness

Torn or dirty clothing

Stealing or begging for food

Child unattended for long periods of time

Need for glasses, dental care, or other medical attention

Frequent tardiness or absence from school

## **WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP**

PLEASE check your child's tote bag after each school day.

Label everything -- coats, hats, sweaters, etc. with full name.

Do not allow children to bring personal items (except for naptime).

Dress children appropriately for messy play.

Dress children appropriately for the weather.

Keep sick children at home.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest so they are ready for their busy day.

Be on time at drop-off and pick-up.

Notify teachers in writing (either note or email) when someone other than yourself or regular carpool will be picking up your child. Include driver's license number and a brief description.

Pay tuition on time and pay the correct amount.

Notify the preschool office immediately of any contagious disease or other illness. Also, let us know if your child will be absent for any other reason.

After saying good-bye to your child, leave.

Focus on your child when you pick them up. They are excited to see you and tell you about their day.

Respect our teachers - They are professionals.

Address concerns when they happen but not in front of the child.

Communicate what's going on at home, including social, emotional or developmental changes.

Become active in preschool functions and POP (Parents of Preschoolers)

**Make sure we received updated vaccination records after any checkups.**

**Notify the office immediately of change of address and/or phone number changes. This notification must be made in writing.**

**PLEASE CONTACT THE DIRECTOR, VIA EMAIL OR PHONE, SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF SVUMC PRESCHOOL.**