

Weekday Early Education

A Ministry of Mt. Zion Baptist Church



Parent Handbook

Revised 2026

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Mt. Zion Baptist Church Weekday Early Education

Dear Families:

We welcome you and your child to the Weekday Early Education program at Mt. Zion Baptist Church. As a ministry of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, the Weekday Early Education program (WEE) exists to lead people into a life changing relationship with Jesus Christ in Huntsville and beyond. We do that primarily by providing excellent early childhood education that helps preschoolers grow spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. We want to partner with you as you guide your preschooler to grow up loving God. Our goal is to be a WEE that loves God, loves each other and shows his love to the world.

By knowledge of and adherence to the guidelines and principles in this handbook, we will work together to maintain the service and standards that you as a parent expect from our WEE. It is through parent and WEE cooperation that your child experiences the best learning environment surrounded by teachers and families who love and care for him or her.

Written statements and policies cannot address every situation, and the church and the WEE relies on all our leadership's integrity and knowledge as guidance in situations not identified within this handbook. Through open communication and mutual support, we will all work together to create an excellent preschool experience for your child.

Thank you for partnering with us in ministry to your little one at the Mt. Zion Weekday Early Education program. We look forward to working with you!

Blessings!
Mt. Zion WEE

Committee

Revised 2025

Our Vision

Mt. Zion Weekday Early Education program exists to glorify God by partnering with families for the spiritual success for future generations.

Our Mission

In partnering with families to educate children we assist in their emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual growth. We also desire to help families live out a biblical worldview at home and in the community. To accomplish this, we desire the following:

- ☐ Provide ministry to families.
- ☐ Provide a witness of Christ and His church to the children and their families.
- ☐ To instill in each child a love of God, all that He has created, to praise Him, and live by His word daily.
- ☐ To help each child develop a positive self-image and positive attitude toward school.
- ☐ To assist the child in developing good expressive and receptive language skills, sensory-perceptual skills, gross and fine motor skills, and skills necessary for effective interpersonal relationships.
- ☐ To aid the child in achieving life skill independence.
- ☐ To work in harmony with parents to provide supportive services if needed.

Our Goal

We want to be a Weekday Early Education program that is known for

- ☐ Loving God
- ☐ Loving Others
- ☐ Showing His Love to the World

Eight Major Concepts in Christian Education of Preschoolers

Our goal at the WEE is to equip your child with the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical skills that will guide them for the remainder of their lives. We want them to grow in the eight major concepts in the Christian education of preschoolers as well as foundational academic skills.

I. God

A child needs to know that God

1. Made him.
2. Provides for her needs.
3. Loves him.
4. Made the things of the natural world for her to enjoy.
5. Is present everywhere.

We can meet these needs when we

1. Teach a child skills that give her a feeling of self-worth.
2. Praise God verbally in the moment of the child's delight.
3. Provide for a child's needs in loving ways while talking about or singing about God.
4. Interact with a child with nature items and openly share joy and wonder of God.
5. Pray to God in a child's language in different settings.
6. Sing about God.
7. Tell Bible stories about God.
8. Show pictures of God's world.

II. Jesus

A child needs

1. To grow in his awareness of the name Jesus.
2. To think of Jesus as a tangible person about whom to talk.
3. To associate Jesus with happy feelings.

We can meet these needs by

1. Being aware of Jesus' presence at all times ourselves.
2. Telling Bible stories about Jesus.
3. Singing songs about Jesus.

4. Showing pictures of Jesus.
5. Speaking the name of Jesus at a time the child has his needs satisfied.

III. Bible

A child needs to

1. Grasp the idea of the inspiration of the Bible.
2. Get the concept that the Bible tells us how to treat others.
3. Learn to use the Bible to help open up herself to the abundant life.

We can meet these needs by

1. Providing opportunities for a child to use the Bible in “real-life” experiences.
2. Using Bible thoughts at appropriate times.
3. Making the Bible the most important reading material of our lives.
4. Telling Bible stories.
5. Singing songs about the Bible.
6. Showing pictures of people using the Bible.

IV. Self

A child needs to

1. Have a good image of himself.
2. Feel accepted and loved.
3. Feel that he is important to himself.
4. Express herself in a variety of ways.
5. Experience a sense of accomplishment.
6. Grow in her ability to cope with a widening range of feelings.

We can meet these needs by

1. Providing a learning environment in which the child can successfully achieve.
2. Accepting and loving a child just as he is.
3. Helping a child meet her own needs.
4. Encouraging creative use of materials.
5. Expressing delight in a child’s accomplishments.
6. Letting our feelings and how we handle them show to a child.
7. Telling Bible stories, singing songs, and showing pictures about children doing things.

V. Family

A child needs to

1. Learn that she is part of a family.
2. Grow in his familiarity.
Have the opportunity to reveal that he has participated in a variety of experiences with his family.
3. Have opportunity to reveal that she is loved by members of her family.

We can meet these needs by

1. Talking freely about members of our family.
2. Getting to know members of the children's families.
3. Telling Bible stories, singing songs, and showing pictures about Bible families.
4. Providing similar activities at church to what a child has at home and listening to his comments.
5. Providing a home living center where a child can act out home experiences.

VI. Others

A child needs to

1. Be happy in his relationship with others.
2. Become more aware of other persons.
3. Learn to respect the rights of others.

We can meet these needs by

1. Providing an example in our own relationships.
2. Removing hazards to happy relationships.
3. Letting natural consequences follow the disregard of the rights of others.

VII. Church

A child needs to

1. Recognize the church building as a special meeting place where she can have satisfying experiences.
2. Become aware of people who help at church.
3. Know that there are many people at church who love him.
4. Develop interest, satisfaction, and joy as she learns that she can do many things at church.

We can meet these needs by

1. Providing an environment suited to a child's maturity.
2. Bringing church helpers into personal contact with a child.
3. Loving a child and helping him to achieve.
4. Telling Bible stories, singing songs, and showing pictures of church activities.

VIII. The Natural World

A child needs to

1. Develop awareness of the beauties and wonders in the world around him.
2. Feel comfortable and secure within his physical environment.
3. Realize that God made the beautiful things to enjoy.
4. Feel thankful for the things God has made.
5. Accept some responsibility for taking care of things which God has created and which she enjoys.

We can meet these needs by:

1. Surrounding the child with evidence of God's beauties and wonders.
2. Keeping the learning environment safe.
3. Praising God spontaneously.
4. Reading Bible stories, singing songs, and showing pictures about God's creations.

Statement of Exemption

Mt. Zion Weekday Early Education program is not regulated or licensed by the State of Alabama Department of Human Resources. We choose to exercise our church exemption, but we follow DHR guidelines. All our teachers are trained and certified in Adult and Infant CPR. They complete 6 continuing education hours each year.

Staff Qualifications

Lead teachers must be 19 years or older and possess a high school diploma or GED.

Staff must have at least 6 hours of continuing education each year.

Staff must have a clear background check.

Curriculum

Mt. Zion Weekday uses Abeka curriculum for our 3 year and PreK4 classes. The kindergarten course of study follows the State of Alabama requirements for public schools which includes an introduction to the Common Core format. Our 2's-Kindergarten experience Music Time each day with a trained teacher. The Pre K4 and Kindergarten classes visit the Library for Story Time and to check out books to enjoy at home

Schedule and Tuition

Class Schedule:

Children 6 weeks to PreK4:

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (3 days)

Tuesday and Thursday (2 days)

Monday-Friday (5 days)

Kindergarten:

Monday-Friday (5 days)

Hours of Operation

9:00am – 1:00pm

Tuition and Fees

2 days – Tuesday and Thursday	\$175.00
3 days – Monday, Wednesday, Friday	\$250.00
5 days – Monday – Friday	\$360.00

REGISTRATION AND CURRICULIUM FEE: An annual, non-refundable fee is charged for all applicants at the time of enrollment.

- BABIES, TODDLER'S AND 2 YEAR OLDS - \$75
- 3 YEAR OLDS - \$100
- 4'S, Pre-K AND KINDERGARTEN - \$200

*Drop-Ins (if available)

\$25.00/day (registered families)

Waiting List

Occasionally, we will have inquiries concerning a class and the ratio will be at the limit. In this case, a child can be put on our waiting list. We will need the parent/guardian's name, email, contact number, child's name, birthdate, and days you are interested in.

Infants-18 Months

In our youngest classrooms, we work hard to make sure your baby feels safe and loved. Infants will be held, cuddled, talked to, sung to and introduced to many new experiences. Communication between the parents and the center is extremely important at this age. Classroom teachers will send home communication sheets so that parents will be aware of mealtimes, nap times, and diapering.

Large Motor Skills

Babies learn and strengthen their large muscles by playing with age-appropriate toys. They enjoy tummy time and jumping in the ExerSaucers. They also enjoy riding toys and pushing walk behind toys.

Fine Motor Skills

Babies are given smaller age-appropriate toys to develop their fine motor skills in grasping and holding.

Infant Nutrition

Baby food and formula bottles must be furnished by the parents. No opened jars of baby food will be accepted at the center. All bottles must be labeled with the child's name.

Rest

As children grow, their need for rest changes over time. In our youngest classroom, infants nap throughout the day as they require sleep.

Diapering

Disposable diapers and wipes are to be furnished by the parents. Cloth diapers will not be accepted. If your child has specific diapering needs, please communicate that with your child's teacher. Extra clothing must be in the child's bag. Remember to label all items with the child's name.

A Note about Safety

For the safety of our children, no one (including parents, guardians, or siblings) are allowed to enter the classrooms. At drop off, please wait at the classroom door until the teacher can receive your child. At pick up, please wait at the classroom door until the teacher can bring your child to you.

We do not allow the use of teething jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, or anklets) of any kind. We are following the recommendation from the FDA which says that the risk of using jewelry for relieving teething pain include choking, strangulation, injury to the mouth and infection.

Toddler-Twos

The preschool child is always learning. Therefore, each day is an opportunity to guide preschoolers as they explore the world around them.

Large Group Experience

The typical day includes a large group experience where toddler-twos celebrate the new day. Children begin working on developmental standards such as language skills, number skills, and social skills. Singing, listening to music, responding to rhythms, listening to stories and poems, talking together, dramatic play, and many other activities are used to enhance the learning objectives for the day.

Activity Time

This time is used for learning and working together through play. Each child has a variety of teacher directed activities used to reinforce the lesson for the day. For example, listening to music, building with blocks, acting out home experiences at the home living center, experimenting with art materials, or working with learning games.

Cleaning Up

There is a specific place for all materials and equipment in the center. Each child is learning to work with her friends to put away materials which she has used and for cleaning up the area in which she has been working.

Recreation

Either outside on our playground or inside the gymnasium in the Christian Ministry Center, preschoolers are encouraged to run, jump, and play in both organized and free play experiences to enhance their large motor skills, physical development and social interaction.

Lunch

Children who can feed themselves are to bring food in a lunchbox. (No soft drinks) The lunch needs to be ready to eat and should not require heating. Eating together helps each child to begin to learn good table manners, good food habits and provides an opportunity for language development.

Bible

Each week, the children learn a Bible story. The story is taught in many ways including reading, singing, drama, and crafts. Academic skills such as counting, colors, and letters are also reinforced in the Bible curriculum.

Special Events

Your child will experience special activities throughout the year on our campus. Special events may include visits from community helpers and church leaders as well as Easter egg hunts, Read Across America week, 911 Remembrance, Christmas programs, and Theme days. We celebrate each holiday with classroom parties, crafts and stories. Parents and grandparents are welcomed and encouraged to join us for these experiences.

A Note about Safety

For the safety of our children, no one (including parents, guardians, or siblings) is allowed to enter the classrooms. At drop off, please wait at the Weekday desk until the teacher can receive your child. At pick up, please wait at the Weekday desk until the teacher can bring your child to you.

Threes-Pre K4

The preschool child is always learning. Therefore, each day is an opportunity to guide preschoolers as they explore the world around them.

Morning Circle (Large Group Experience)

The typical day includes a Morning Circle where the 3s and PreK4s gather to celebrate the new day with activities such as saying the pledge, singing, counting, hearing a story, learning a new skill, and praying.

Large Group Time

Children begin working on Abeka curriculum standards such as language skills, number skills, reading skills, and social skills. Singing, listening to music, responding to rhythms, listening to stories and poems, talking together, dramatic play, and many other activities are used to enhance the learning objectives for the day.

Activity Time

This time is used for learning and working together through play. Each child has a variety of teacher directed activities used to reinforce the lesson for the day. For example, she might choose to look at books, listen to music, build with blocks, act out home experiences at the home living center, experiment with art materials, or work with learning games.

Small Group Time

Children work with the teacher in small groups to allow for more individual attention during these learning experiences with preschool phonics, math readiness concepts, and writing.

Cleaning Up

There is a specific place for all materials and equipment in the center. Each child is expected to work with his friends to put away materials which he has used and for cleaning up the area in which he has been working.

Recreation

Either outside on our playground or inside the gymnasium in the Christian Ministry Center, preschoolers are encouraged to run, jump and play in both organized and free play experiences to enhance their large motor skills, physical development and social interaction.

Lunch

Children are to bring food in a lunch box. (No soft drinks) The lunch needs to be ready to eat and should not require heating. Eating together helps each child to begin to learn good table manners, good food habits and provides an opportunity for language development.

Bible

Each week, the children learn a Bible story. The story is taught in many ways including reading, singing, drama, and crafts. Academic skills such as counting, colors, and letters are also reinforced in the Bible curriculum.

Chapel

Every Wednesday morning, the children gather for chapel. A chapel service includes a Bible story, songs, and prayer.

Special Events

Your child will experience special activities throughout the year on our campus. Special events may include visits from community helpers and church leaders as well as Easter egg hunts, Read Across America week, 911 Remembrance, Christmas programs, and Theme days. We celebrate each holiday with classroom parties, crafts and stories. Parents and grandparents are welcomed and encouraged to join us for these experiences. PreK4's will participate in field trips to points of interest in the community throughout the year.

Programs

Each year the children present a 911 Remembrance and Christmas program. The children sing both sacred and secular seasonal songs and share plays they have learned throughout the year.

A Note about Safety

For the safety of our children, no one (including parents, guardians, or siblings) is allowed to enter the classrooms. At drop off, please take your child to the assigned spot in the Commons area to meet their teacher. At pick up, please meet your child in the Commons area location assigned to their class.

Kindergarten

The preschool child is always learning. Therefore, each day is an opportunity to guide preschoolers as they explore the world around them.

Morning Circle (Large Group Experience)

The typical day includes a Morning Circle where Kindergarten students gather to celebrate the new day by activities such as saying the pledge, singing, counting, hearing a story, learning a new skill, and praying.

Large Group Time

Children begin working on curriculum standards such as language skills, number skills, reading skills, and social skills. Singing, listening to music, responding to rhythms, listening to stories and poems, talking together, dramatic play, and many other activities are used to enhance the learning objectives for the day. The course of study is based on the State of Alabama Kindergarten requirements which includes an introduction to Common Core format.

Activity Time

This time is used for learning and working together through play. Each child has a variety of teacher directed activities used to reinforce the lesson for the day. For example, she might choose to look at books, listen to music, build with blocks, act out home experiences at the home living center, experiment with art materials, or work with learning games.

Small Group Time

Children work with the teacher in small groups to allow for more individual attention during these learning experiences with phonics, reading skills, math skills, and writing.

Cleaning Up

There is a specific place for all materials and equipment in the center. Each child is expected to work with his friends to put away materials which he has used and for cleaning up the area in which he has been working.

Recreation

Either outside on our playground or inside the gymnasium in the Christian Ministry Center, preschoolers are encouraged to run, jump and play in both organized and free play experiences to enhance their large motor skills, physical development and social interaction.

Lunch

Children are to bring food in a lunchbox. (No soft drinks) The lunch needs to be ready to eat and should not require heating. Eating together helps each child to begin to learn good table manners, good food habits and provides an opportunity for language development.

Bible

Each week, the children learn a Bible story. The story is taught in many ways including reading, singing, drama, and crafts. Academic skills such as counting, colors, and letters are also reinforced in the Bible curriculum.

Chapel

Every Wednesday morning, the children gather for chapel. A chapel service includes a Bible story, songs, and prayer.

Special Events

Your child will experience special activities throughout the year on our campus. Special events may include visits from community helpers and church leaders as well as Easter egg hunts, Read Across America week, 911 Remembrance, Christmas programs, and Theme days. We celebrate each holiday with classroom parties, crafts and stories. Parents and grandparents are welcomed and encouraged to join us for these experiences. Kindergarteners will participate in field trips to points of interest in the community throughout the year.

Programs

Each year the Kindergarteners present a 911 Remembrance and Christmas program. The children sing both sacred and secular seasonal songs and share plays they have learned throughout the year. A Graduation program will be held at the end of the year.

A Note about Safety

For the safety of our children, no one (including parents, guardians, or siblings) is allowed to enter the classrooms. At drop off, please take your child to the assigned spot in the Commons area to meet their teacher. At pick up, please meet your child in the Commons area location assigned to their class.

Security System

Your child's safety is our most important priority. Our campus doors remain locked during the day. The doors will be unlocked for drop off and pick up only.

Hours of Operation

The WEE program begins at 9:00am and ends at 1:00pm Monday- Friday.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Upon arrival, the child must be dropped off in their classrooms. Children may not enter the building unsupervised.

Children will be released only to properly identified persons who are on their pickup list. **All information must be kept current by the parent.** We must have written verification if a person other than the parent or guardian is picking up the child. Please send a note or email to weekday@mzbc.net if someone other than the parent or guardian is picking up the child. When a person on the pickup list comes for the child, he or she may be asked to show a driver's license in order to receive the child.

Please adhere to the arrival and departure times. If you are late picking up your child and have not informed us, there will be a late charge (after 1:10PM) of \$1.00 per minute

Clothing and Personal Belongings

All items (coats, hats, sweaters, books, cups) should be plainly labeled with the child's first and last name. **Please bring a backpack to school each day with your child's personal belongings. Please use print to label each item and the book bag so that teachers can clearly identify your child's things.**

Children should wear play clothes to school. Please provide tennis shoes or play shoes for your child – no bare feet. Clothing should be rugged and easy to fasten with buttons and zippers in working order. The WEE is not responsible for lost clothing.

3-year-olds are required to be completely potty trained. i.e., go to the restroom with no assistance.

Each child should always have a complete change of clothes in their backpack. Please remember to change the clothes in diaper bags and backpack as the seasons change.

All toys should be left at home. The WEE is not responsible for lost or broken toys.

We do not allow the use of teething jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, or anklets) of any kind. We are following the recommendation from the FDA which says that the risk of using jewelry for relieving teething pain include choking, strangulation, injury to the mouth and infection.

Emergencies and Hazardous Weather

There are fire evacuation plans and tornado shelter plans located in each of the classrooms. Periodic drills will be used to prepare the children for a potential emergency.

The center may need to close because of hazardous weather conditions. If the decision is made to close the center, it will be broadcast either on local radio/television stations, social media, email, telephone, or Remind app. If the Madison County Public Schools close because of hazardous weather conditions, the center will also close. If Madison County schools are delayed, we will be delayed as well with the schedule listed below:

- 1 hour delay – Open at 10:00
- 2-hour delay – Open at 11:00
- 3-hour delay – No school

The center may also need to execute lock-down procedures in the event of a threat in our immediate area. If a lock-down is initiated, parents will be informed via social media, Remind app or email.

Health and Medical Information

Medical Emergency

If there is a medical emergency, the center will first call 911. We will then attempt to get in touch with the child's parents. If the child's parent is unavailable, we will use the information provided on the Parent Agreement Form to reach the child's doctor and then follow his instructions.

Medical Non-Emergency

If a child is injured at school, the child's parent is called, and an accident report is given to the parent at the end of the day. We administer only antibacterial ointment, band-aids, and loving care to minor injuries.

Medications

We DO NOT administer medication or breathing treatments to any child. Parents/guardians may come to the school and administer breathing treatment medications.

Other Health and Medical Information

The parent must provide a current certificate of immunizations/shot record (Blue card) at the time of registration. The certificate of immunization must be updated in the office each time your child receives a vaccination. Parents must keep current the name of the child's doctor and the name of other adults to contact if a parent cannot be reached. Parents shall report any illnesses or exposures to communicable diseases outside the center to the staff, in order to alert other parents. The staff in turn shall inform the parents when the child has been exposed to a communicable disease at the center.

There must be cooperation between the center and the home to fight the spread of communicable disease. Because doctors differ in both the treatment and the return to class times associated with illness, WEE policies take precedent over doctor's orders. To limit the spread of infection, the following guidelines have been established:

WEE Health and Wellness Guidelines

The following information outlines the guidelines for The Mt. Zion Weekday Early Education program, using illnesses that we commonly see in our center. It is in no way intended to be a complete listing of illnesses, to be a diagnostic tool, or to substitute for your local pediatrician. If your child becomes ill, please consult their physician and let us know what they have so that we may inform other parents. Some of the following information has been compiled from *Infection Control in the Child Care Center and Preschool* by Leigh G. Donowitz, MD and *kidshealth.org*. Thank you.

FEVER FREE is defined as no fever for 24 hours AFTER the last dose of fever reducing medicine has expired. Example: If the medicine lasts for 8 hours, your time will start after the 8 hours are complete.

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)

If you have COVID-19, you can spread the virus to others. We must know if you child, someone in your immediate family, or someone living in your home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (coronavirus). All current policies regarding upper respiratory infections and fever apply.

When to isolate: Regardless of vaccination status, **you should isolate from others when you have COVID-19.**

You should also isolate yourself **if you are sick and suspect that you have COVID-19 but do not yet have the tests results.** If your results are positive, follow the full isolation recommendations below. If your results are negative, you can end your isolation.

When you have COVID-19, isolation is counted in days, as follows:

IF YOU HAD NO SYMPTOMS

Day 0 is the day you were tested

(not the day you received your positive test result)
positive

Day 1 is the first full day following the day you were tested

If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, **the clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset**

IF YOU HAD SYMPTOMS

Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom
regardless of when you tested

Day 1 is the first full day after the day your started

If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home for at least 5 days and isolate yourself from others in your home.

You are **likely most infectious during these first 5 days.**

Ending Isolation

End isolation based on how serious your COVID-19 symptoms were.

If you have no symptoms: you may end isolation after day 5.

If you had symptoms and your symptoms are improving, you may end isolation after day 5 if you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and then you must wear a mask for 5 additional days. If you had symptoms and are not improving, continue to isolate until you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) or until your symptoms are improving.

BRONCHITIS

BACKGROUND Bronchitis is an inflammation of the lining of the bronchial tubes, the airways that connect the trachea (windpipe) to the lungs.

SYMPTOMS May include cough (that may bring up thick white, yellow, or greenish mucus), headache, generally feeling ill, chills, fever (usually mild), shortness of breath, soreness or a feeling of tightness in the chest, and wheezing (a whistling or hissing sound with breathing).

INCUBATION PERIOD There is no distinct incubation period as it varies depending on the virus that caused it.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD There is no distinct contagious period as it varies depending on the virus that caused it.

EXCLUSION Until fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication and can participate in usual activities.

CANDIDA (THRUSH/DIAPER DERMATITIS/YEAST)

BACKGROUND Oral candidiasis (thrush), the most common infection caused by *Candida* species, is an acute inflammation of the tongue and oral mucous membranes that is manifested as white or grayish-white focal or diffuse plaques on the mucous membranes.

The diaper area is the most common site for candida invasion of the skin. The affected skin is fiery red and, depending on the duration of infection, contains lesions that range from slightly raised red papules to discrete eroded lesions with a red raised border. This is more common among children in diapers who have recently been on oral antibiotics.

INCUBATION The incubation period for *Candida* infections is not known.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD The mode of spread is dependent on the age of the patient. Infants and older children acquire the organism from their mother's skin or hands, from unsterilized nipples or bottles, and often after taking oral antibiotics. Children may acquire the organism from other infected individuals. Oral or superficial *Candida* infections may be treated with Nystatin suspension administered three to four times daily.

EXCLUSION Once the child has begun treatment there is no reason for exclusion from day care.

NOTE If your child is prone to yeast infections during or after treatment with antibiotics, try feeding them yogurt once or twice daily while on antibiotics.

CROUP

BACKGROUND Croup is a condition that causes an inflammation of the upper airways – the voice box (larynx) and windpipe (trachea). It often leads to a barking cough or hoarseness.

SYMPTOMS At first, a child may have cold symptoms, like a stuffy or runny nose and a fever. As the upper airway becomes progressively inflamed and swollen, the child may become hoarse, with a harsh, barking cough. This loud cough, which is characteristic of croup, often sounds like the barking of a seal.

INCUBATION PERIOD Varies depending on the specific virus causing the croup.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD During the acute stage.

EXCLUSION Until fever-free for at least 48 hours without medication and doctor says it is safe to return.

DIARRHEA – NO SPECIFIC PATHOGEN

BACKGROUND Diarrhea is characterized by increased stools that are usually watery. It can be caused by various agents.

SYMPTOMS Frequent, loose or watery stools, vomiting, and fever.

INCUBATION PERIOD 24 to 72 hours.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD While pathogen is being shed, acute period.

EXCLUSION Until diarrhea is no longer present for at least 48 hours without medication.

DIARRHEA – ROTAVIRUS

BACKGROUND Rotavirus is the cause of a seasonal and sporadic gastroenteritis. It occurs in temperate climates in the cooler months; in tropical climates, it is present year-round. Essentially all children are infected by age 3, but they are most likely to be infected between 4 and 24 months of age.

SYMPTOMS Fever, vomiting, followed by diarrhea.

INCUBATION PERIOD 24 to 72 hours.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD During the acute stage of disease and while the virus is being shed; symptoms typically last 3 to 8 days.

EXCLUSION Until diarrhea is no longer present for at least 48 hours without medication.

FEVER

BACKGROUND At this age, there are many reasons a child may run fever. There are times when no cause will be found. Any temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher is considered fever.

EXCLUSION Anyone sent home with fever is not able to return to the Center for at least 48 hours. Children with fever need to stay home until they have been fever-free for no less than 48 hours without any medication.

FIFTH DISEASE

BACKGROUND Fifth disease is a viral infection which often affects red blood cells. For many years, fifth disease was viewed as an unimportant rash illness of children. Recently, studies have shown that the virus may be responsible for serious complications in certain individuals.

SYMPTOMS Low grade fever, fatigue, a red rash generally appears on the cheeks giving a “slapped” face appearance. The rash may then extend to the body with tendencies to fade and reappear. Sometimes, the rash is lacy in appearance and may be itchy. Some children may have vague signs of illness or no symptoms at all.

INCUBATION PERIOD Varies; typically, 4 to 20 days for rash development

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD During the week prior to the appearance of the rash to one week after onset.

EXCLUSION Until child can participate in daily activities and is fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS While most women infected during pregnancy will not be affected, some studies have shown that parvovirus B19 may infect the fetus and increase the risk of miscarriage. In people with chronic red blood cell disorders, such as sickle cell disease, infection may result in severe anemia. Infection has also been associated with arthritis in adults.

HAND, FOOT, AND MOUTH DISEASE

BACKGROUND The greatest occurrence of hand, foot and mouth disease is in summer and fall. It is most common in children under the age of ten.

SYMPTOMS Sudden fever, sore throat, and small grayish oral lesions on the cheeks and gums as well as on the sides of the tongue. Lesions also may appear on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and on the fingers.

INCUBATION PERIOD. Typically, 3 to 5 days

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD During the acute stage and several weeks after.

EXCLUSION Can return to school after the fever is gone. Most often, this takes 2 to 3 days. Children with widespread blisters may need to stay home until the blisters dry up. That takes about 7 days.

HEAD LICE (*Pediculis capitis*)

BACKGROUND Head lice are small insects about the size of a sesame seed and are usually light brown but can vary in color. They move quickly and shy away from light, making them difficult to see. Diagnosis is most often made on the basis of finding nits (eggs). Nits are tiny, grayish-white or yellowish-white oval specks attached to hair shafts. As the female louse deposits her eggs (3-4 per day), she cements them to the hairs, and unlike dandruff, nits will not wash off or brush off. Nits may be found throughout the hair but are most often located at the nape of the neck, behind the ears, and frequently on the crown of the head.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION Head lice are incapable of hopping, jumping, or flying and are primarily acquired by coming in direct contact with an infected person. However, wearing clothing (such as a hat, coat, or scarf) recently worn by an infected person; using a contaminated comb or brush; or lying on contaminated furniture, carpeting, or bedding; can also result in infestation.

SYMPTOMS Itching that occurs when lice bite and suck blood from the scalp is the primary symptom of infestation, although not everyone will experience itching. Often red bite marks or scratch marks can be seen on the scalp and neck.

INCUBATION PERIOD It may take as long as two to three weeks or longer for a person to notice the intense itching associated with this infestation.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Head lice can be spread as long as lice or eggs remain alive on the infested person.

EXCLUSION For no less than 48 hours after treatment and no more live lice or nits are found. Children must be checked by the Director, Assistant Director, or Wellness Coordinator before they will be admitted to their classrooms.

PREVENTION / CONTROL MEASURES

- Machine wash all washable clothing and bed linens which have been in contact with the infested person during the last 3 days.
- Articles should be washed in **HOT** water and dried in a **HOT** dryer.
- Non-washables can be vacuumed, dry cleaned, or kept in an airtight container for 2 weeks.
- Rugs, upholstered furniture and mattresses should be carefully vacuumed to pick up any living lice or nits attached to fallen hairs.

IMPETIGO

BACKGROUND Impetigo is a skin disorder commonly seen in newborns. Impetigo is the most found staphylococcal disease acquired in a nursery setting. It can also be the result of infected mosquito or ant bites in older preschoolers/children.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION Usual mode of transmission is by touching sores. Spread to peripheral areas occurs by cracking open lesions.

SYMPTOMS Itchy lesions that are sticky and oozing and occur mainly in the diaper area but may spread to other places on the body.

INCUBATION PERIOD 4 to 10 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD As long as lesions are producing discharge.

EXCLUSION Until treatment has been in effect for no less than 24 hours.

PREVENTION / CONTROL MEASURES

- Lesions must be covered

INFLUENZA (Flu)

BACKGROUND Influenza causes a spectrum of clinical symptoms that make up the “flu syndrome”. Influenza infections occur in epidemics during the winter months. The spread is rapid through a community.

SYMPTOMS Fever, headache, chills, body aches, cough, nausea, vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, and fatigue.

INCUBATION PERIOD 1 to 3 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD The virus may be found in respiratory secretions for 24 hours prior to the onset of symptoms until 5 to 10 days after the symptoms began.

EXCLUSION After a child is diagnosed with flu, they will be sent home for the remainder of the week. Before the child can return the next week, they must be symptom free for 48 hours without medication.

MOLLUSCUM

BACKGROUND Molluscum contagiosum (mo-LUS-kum kun-tay-jee-OH-sum) is a relatively common viral infection of the skin that results in round, firm, painless bumps ranging in size from a pinhead to a pencil eraser.

SYMPTOMS Molluscum results in raised, round, flesh-colored bumps on the skin with a dimple or pit in the middle of the bump.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Molluscum spreads through direct person-to-person contact and through contact with contaminated objects. The bumps associated with

molluscum contagiosum usually disappear within a year without treatment but doctor- assisted removal is also an option.

EXCLUSION Isn't necessary as long as bumps are covered with band-aids while at school.

MONONUCLEOSIS

BACKGROUND Infectious mononucleosis is a viral disease that affects certain blood cells. Most cases occur sporadically with outbreaks rare. While most people are exposed to the Epstein-Barr virus, the virus that causes mononucleosis, at some time in their lives, very few go on to develop the symptoms of infectious mononucleosis. The disease is rarely fatal.

SYMPTOMS Fever, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes in neck and armpits, extreme fatigue, head, and body aches. Duration is from one to several weeks. Sometimes the liver and spleen are affected.

INCUBATION PERIOD 4 to 6 weeks.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Prolonged; one year or more.

EXCLUSION Until child can participate in daily activities and is fever-free for at least 48 hours without medication.

OTITIS MEDIA (Ear Infection)

BACKGROUND Otitis Media frequently accompanies a viral respiratory infection.

SYMPTOMS Often children become irritable, have difficulty sleeping, and may run a fever.

INCUBATION PERIOD There is no distinct incubation period for otitis media.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Otitis Media itself is not contagious; however, the respiratory virus that caused it may be.

EXCLUSION Children should be kept out of childcare for 48 hours without documentation from a doctor or 24 hours with documentation from a doctor. If your

child has a fever, they will need a note from the doctor stating that ear infection is the cause of the fever before they can return.

PINK EYE (Conjunctivitis)

BACKGROUND Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the eye that can either be allergic, viral, or bacterial.

SYMPTOMS Redness of the eye, tearing, itching, swelling, tenderness, with discharge.

INCUBATION PERIOD 12 to 72 hours for viral and 24 to 72 hours for bacterial

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD When symptoms are present until 24 hours after treatment has begun

EXCLUSION For bacterial conjunctivitis until 24 hours after treatment has begun and for viral conjunctivitis until symptoms disappear but no less than 24 hours.

PNEUMONIA

BACKGROUND Pneumonia is a general term that refers to an infection of the lungs, which can be caused by a variety of organisms, including viruses, bacteria, fungi, and parasites.

SYMPTOMS May include fever, chills, cough, nasal congestion, unusually rapid breathing (in some cases, this is the only symptom), breathing with grunting or wheezing sounds, labored breathing that makes the rib muscles retract (when muscles under the ribcage or between ribs draw inward with each breath) and causes nasal flaring, vomiting, chest pain, abdominal pain, decreased activity, and loss of appetite (in older kids) or poor feeding (in infants).

INCUBATION PERIOD There is no distinct incubation period as it varies depending on the virus that caused it.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Varies depending on the virus causing the pneumonia.

EXCLUSION Until the child is fever-free for at least 48 hours without any medication, has no other symptoms, and can participate in usual activities.

RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS (viral)

BACKGROUND Different etiologic agents are responsible for respiratory viral infections. These infections are more commonly known as colds. Most infections occur during fall and winter.

SYMPTOMS Sneezing, chills, runny nose, fever, muscle and joint aching, sore throat, and coughing.

INCUBATION PERIOD Up to 10 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Shortly before symptoms begin to end of acute period.

EXCLUSION Until fever is no longer present for at least 48 hours without medication and child can participate in daily activities.

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

BACKGROUND Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a viral disease affecting the respiratory tract. RSV is the most common cause of respiratory tract diseases such as bronchitis and pneumonia in early infancy, with most cases occurring within the first 2 years of life. RSV can seriously affect those that are born prematurely or those with heart, lung, or immune problems. RSV occurs seasonally in temperate zones, usually during winter and early spring, but can also occur in sharp outbreaks.

SYMPTOMS Fever, chills, headache, general aching, and anorexia.

INCUBATION PERIOD 1 to 10 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Several days before and after active disease is seen; this can be several weeks.

EXCLUSION After a child is diagnosed with RSV, they will be sent home for the remainder of the week. Before the child can return the next week, they must be symptom

free for 48 hours without medication, eating and drinking well and cough may be present, but is no longer very frequent or distressing.

SPECIAL WARNINGS Children and infants with certain medical problems should not be exposed to the disease.

RINGWORM

BACKGROUND Tinea (pronounced: TIH-nee-uh) is the medical name for a group of related skin infections, including athlete's foot, jock itch, and ringworm. They're caused by several types of mold-like fungi called **dermatophytes** (pronounced: der-MAH-tuh-fites) that live on the dead tissues of the skin, hair, and nails.

SYMPTOMS Ringworm of the skin starts as a red, scaly patch or bump. Ringworm tends to be very itchy and uncomfortable. Over time, it may begin to look like a ring or a series of rings with raised, bumpy, scaly borders (the center is often clear).

INCUBATION PERIOD It takes 3 to 5 days for microscopic infection and 2 to 3 weeks for clinical manifestations to develop.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD The condition can spread for 3 to 4 months, and then spontaneous regression may occur.

EXCLUSION Until effective treatment is started but no less than 24 hours. Area must be covered to return to school

ROSEOLA

BACKGROUND Children ages six months to three years are most affected by this disease. Roseola is a rash disease that is not highly communicable. Those that are exposed to roseola acquire immunity to the disease. Roseola appears mostly in spring or summer.

SYMPTOMS Sudden fever that can get as high as 104 F, convulsions, and a rash that appears around the 3rd to 5th day as the fever is disappearing. The rash resembles small, bumpy, rose-pink spots that start on the chest and abdomen. The rash usually lasts one to two days. Some people are asymptomatic.

INCUBATION PERIOD 5 to 15 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Unknown; the period during fever and before rash appears is suspected.

EXCLUSION Until fever is no longer present for at least 24 hours without medication.

STAPH INFECTION (of the skin)

BACKGROUND Staphylococcal infections are commonly associated with diseases of the skin.

SYMPTOMS Red, swollen, painful sores on the skin with discharge.

INCUBATION PERIOD 1 to 10 days

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD As long as there is drainage from the sore.

EXCLUSION For at least 24 hours after the initiation of appropriate antibiotics and until drainage of infected material has stopped or diminished to the point that barrier protection is effective. The infected area must be always covered.

STREP THROAT / SCARLET FEVER

BACKGROUND Both strep throat and scarlet fever are common illnesses among children. Much of the time these illnesses are not serious; however, complications may develop if proper treatment is not administered.

SYMPTOMS Sudden fever, sore throat, headache, swollen glands, and abdominal cramps. Occasionally vomiting and nausea occur. Scarlet fever occurs with a rash appearing on the neck, chest, in the folds of the armpit, elbow, groin and inner thigh.

INCUBATION PERIOD 1 to 3 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD Until 24 hours of treatment has been administered.

EXCLUSION Until fever is no longer present for at least 24 hours without medication and treatment has been in effect for at least 24 hours.

VOMITING

SYMPTOMS If a child vomits during school hours, they will be sent home and required to stay home at least 24 hours. Vomiting 2 times or more or vomiting with other symptoms such as fever or diarrhea.

EXCLUSION Until there has been no vomiting, fever, or diarrhea for at least 48 hours without any medication.

Discipline

Procedures: Discipline for Children

Disciplinary procedures shall be according to the following requirements:

1. Limits or rules shall be few, and they shall be understandable to the children to whom they apply.
2. Expected behavior shall be on the child's level.
3. Discipline shall be consistent and fair.
4. No corporal/physical punishment shall be used at any time. If inappropriate behavior continues, a time-out procedure is implemented.
5. Discipline shall not be associated with food, naps, or bathroom procedures.
6. Techniques of discipline shall not be humiliating, shaming, or frightening to the child.
7. Techniques of discipline shall be related to misbehavior, and it shall be administered immediately by the worker primarily responsible for the child.
8. No verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family shall be used.
9. A kind, firm voice shall be used.
10. Children are not allowed to mistreat themselves, others, or property. This includes hitting other children or teachers.
11. Timeout and redirection are appropriate discipline practices.

It may become necessary to ask your assistance in correcting a persistent problem. We will work together with parents to provide opportunities for improved behavior, self-control, and stronger social skills. **The center, however, reserves the right to immediately dismiss any child that does not respond to discipline procedures, is unable to function cooperatively in a group, or whose actions pose a risk to himself or others. Any family causing harm or disruption to WEE programs or failing to cooperate with the teachers and administration qualifies for immediate dismissal of the child.**

Biting Policy

A child biting another child is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved.

For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers try it out, to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. They discover that biting is a surefire way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the biter can pick it up. However, they experience

the disapproval of the adults nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings.

For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or feeling a sense of power. No matter what the cause, biting in a group situation causes strong feelings with all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur. The staff of the Mt. Zion Weekday, after consulting childcare experts and manuals, and submitting them to the Weekday Committee has developed the following plan of action to be used if, and when biting occurs in any of our rooms.

Before biting occurs:

1. Information on biting is given to parents as their child enters the 1's room.
2. Distribute written policy to all families and include the written policy in the enrollment packet.

When the child is bitten:

For the biter:

1. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay—it hurts" Avoid immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the matter. Caring attention is focused on the victim.
2. The biter is not allowed to return to a play area and is talked to on a level that the child can understand. "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him. We don't put our teeth on people" OR "That hurts Johnny when you bite him. He is sad."
3. Redirect the child to the other play areas.
4. Write an accident report and notify the parents of the biter. If the biting continues to be a problem (breaking of the skin or numerous bites), it will be at the discretion of the director as to whether the biter will be sent home.
5. Children 3 years and older will be sent home after the first biting incident.

For the victim.

1. Separate the victim from the biter.
2. Comfort the child.
3. Administer first aid.
4. Write an accident report and notify parents of the victim (in writing).

If biting continues:

1. Have a conference with the Director on a routine basis for advice, support, and strategy planning. At this point, should the biting continue, parents will receive a call from the director and the child will be given a “day of rest” at home from his classroom environment. This should be explained at the very first conference.
2. Chart every occurrence, including attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, behaviors, staff present, and circumstances.
3. Let all parents know that there is a problem and the procedure that will be followed to deal with it.
4. “Shadow” children who indicate a tendency to bite.
 - a. Head off biting situation before they occur.
 - b. Teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.
5. Work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop joint strategy for change.
6. Hold a conference with the parents of the biting child to develop a written plan of action. Schedule follow-up meetings or telephone conversations as needed. At this point, early intervention may need to be called for a more expert opinion and suggestions of how to handle the biting issue on a personal level.
7. Consider early transition of a child “stuck” to a biting behavior pattern for a change of environment, if developmentally appropriate.
8. Prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be removed from the center and help them make contingency plans.
9. If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, center, and other children, termination of the child from center enrollment for the duration of the biting stage may occur. Written warning will be given to the parents of the biter.

Cooperation between Home and WEE

Parents are welcome to visit the center during the day. We do, however, discourage visits that may be disruptive to teaching times.

Please help us maintain a distraction-free environment by discouraging your child from bringing toys from home. Besides being a distraction for the child, items brought from home could be lost or broken, and the center cannot be responsible for them.

Occasionally, teachers will request toys from home that help support a particular teaching aim. If toys are brought, these must be safe for the group’s use. Toys brought from home into the class will be played with and enjoyed by the whole class. Toys associated with war and violence are never permissible.

Each child’s birthday is recognized at the center. If parents wish to bring special store-bought birthday goodies, arrangements should be made with the child’s teacher.

In order to protect our food safety and children with allergies, we cannot accept homemade treats.

Parents are required to give two weeks' notice if the child will no longer attend the center. Full fees are required during that time.

Operational Policies

Admission Procedure

All required forms must be completed and returned to the director, along with the annual, non-refundable registration fee and curriculum fee. Forms that must be completed include enrollment application, parent agreement form, certificate of immunization, and white medical record for all children.

Financial Arrangements

REGISTRATION AND CURRICULLIUM FEE: An annual, non-refundable fee is charged for all applicants at the time of enrollment.

- BABIES, TODDLER'S AND 2 YEAR OLDS - \$75
- 3 YEAR OLDS - \$100
- 4'S, Pre-K AND KINDERGARTEN - \$200

TUITION: The WEE program is completely dependent on tuition in order to operate. Tuition is due on the 10th of the month. Tuition may be paid by cash, check, or online payments. Tuition must be **paid by the 10th of the month**

LATE TUITION: After the 10th of the month, a late fee of \$25 is charged to the account. The full tuition plus the \$25 late fee must be paid before the child can return to the center.

RETURNED CHECK/TRANSACTION CHARGE: There is a \$30 charge for each returned check or failed online transaction. If more than one check is returned or online transaction is failed, the parent will be required to pay in cash, cashier's check, or money order for the duration of your child's time at our center.

Holidays

The center will observe the following holidays:

1. Labor Day
2. Fall Break
3. Veteran's Day
4. Thanksgiving Week
5. Christmas/Winter Break
6. Martin Luther King Day
6. President's Day
7. Spring Break
8. Good Friday

Full fees will be charged for the weeks in which these holidays occur

**Read Receipt for
Mt. Zion Weekday Early Education
Parent Handbook
Revised 2026**

I, _____, have received a copy of the Mt. Zion Early Education Parent Handbook. I understand it is my sole responsibility to thoroughly read and understand this document. Should I have any questions it is my sole responsibility to seek out the appropriate personnel to properly answer my concerns and questions.

Parent's Signature

Date

