

First United Methodist Church Preschool

Parent Handbook

Welcome!! FUMC Preschool began in the fall of 1969 with one kindergarten class and one class of combined 3 & 4 year olds. We are proud to have expanded to over 100 children ages 3 months to 4 years old. Under the leadership of outstanding staff and board members we will continue the tradition of excellence to provide a loving and Christian atmosphere for your child to grow, learn, and achieve the skills they will need to succeed in their future school career. We are honored that you have chosen our preschool for your child's first school experience.

Philosophy

First United Methodist Preschool is committed to providing a quality program for our young children by:

~providing an opportunity for preschool children to live, work and play together in a friendly, happy, Christian atmosphere; where there is cooperative, democratic living; where there are opportunities for the children to gain new skills and appreciation, form good habits, and learn to be responsible members of a group.

~enriching the children's lives as they are guided daily by teachers who are keenly aware of the many opportunities to interpret religiously the everyday experiences of the children.

~assisting First United Methodist Church of Henderson in its responsibility to the community in giving Christian training.

~helping parents in the understanding of the developmental tasks of children, and in the development of Christian homes which will nurture the children in the Christian faith.

Preschool Goals

To promote health, physical growth, and motor development

To promote language skills

To increase independence in meeting and solving problems

To promote expression through art, music, and movement

To build self-esteem

To provide daily living experiences

To help children observe, investigate, seek and acquire information to make choices

To experience the Christian values and faith that our church community offers

FUMC Preschool Board

Barbara Brown
Karrie Clark
Robin Goen
Beth Reid
Emily Ricks
Sarah Roper
Michelle Strong
David Luckert – Pastor
Debbie Tipps – Children’s Minister

The preschool operates with a board of trustees who determine and administer the policies of the preschool as set forth in its Bylaws. The board has an open-door policy, and welcomes comments, concerns, and issues through an open forum. The board normally meets once a quarter. If you would like to sign up to speak in open forum at any preschool board meeting, please contact the director or a board member.

Payment of Fees

Enrollment Fee:

\$50.00 due with the enrollment forms and is **non-refundable**. It also does not apply to any other fee.

Insurance Fee:

\$9.00 insurance fee is due at the parent meeting. This policy covers all accidents that might occur at school.

Supply Fee:

Supply fee for the year:	½ August	½ January
2 days a week = \$160	80.00	80.00
3 days a week = \$ 190	95.00	95.00
4 days a week = \$ 215	107.50	107.50
5 days a week = \$ 235	117.50	117.50

You may pay ½ in August and ½ in January, or you may pay the entire amount in August.

Late Pick-up Fee:

You will be charged a fee of **\$1 per minute**, starting with 1 minute after 12:00, 4:00 and 5:15.

Late Payment Fee:

A \$25 late fee will be charged after the **10th** of the month.

Schedule Change Fee:

A \$25 re-enrollment fee will be charged **each time** you change your child’s schedule after the first 2 weeks of preschool.

Returned Check Fee

A \$25 return check fee will be charged for all returned checks.

Tuition

Monthly Tuition for Sunrise Care (7-7:30 am)

If your child stays:

1 day a week:	\$10 per month
2 days a week:	\$20 per month
3 days a week:	\$30 per month
4 days a week:	\$40 per month
5 days a week:	\$50 per month

Monthly Tuition for Preschool (7:30 am-12:00pm)

If your child stays:

2 days a week:	\$160 per month
3 days a week:	\$190 per month
5 days a week:	\$235 per month

Monthly Tuition for Lunch Bunch (12:00pm-4:00pm)

If your child stays:

1 day a week:	\$50 per month
2 days a week:	\$100 per month
3 days a week:	\$150 per month
4 days a week:	\$200 per month
5 days a week:	\$250 per month

Monthly Tuition for Late Day (4:00pm-5:15pm)

If your child stays:

1 day a week:	\$15 per month
2 days a week:	\$30 per month
3 days a week:	\$45 per month
4 days a week:	\$60 per month
5 days a week:	\$75 per month

Tuition is due on the **FIRST** of each month. Tuition will be considered delinquent after **the 10th** of the month. **A \$25 late fee will be added to your statement if tuition is late. It is the responsibility of the parent to pay the tuition and any late fees. If tuition is more than one month late, you will be asked to withdraw your child unless prior arrangements have been made with the director and approved by the FUMCP board.** After the first of the following month the delinquent bill will be turned over to the preschool board for review. Expenses for a preschool child are figured on a monthly basis. Therefore, August is pro-rated since we only attend for a portion of the month and the same monthly fee is due each month September through May. **No fees or tuition will be refunded.** Please do not ask for a reduction in fees or tuition due to absenteeism. If you see that your child can no longer attend our school, please let us know **two weeks** in advance. If not notified two weeks in advance the parents will be charged tuition for those two weeks. If we have a waiting list for that class we need time to notify parents of an opening.

*A 5% discount per month will be given to families with 2 or more children enrolled. This is 5% of the total family tuition.

*A 10% discount per month will be given to children whose parents are members of FUMC Henderson. This is 10% of the total family tuition.

*Neither discount applies to enrollment fees, supply fees, insurance fees, or any other fees.

Tuition must be paid by **check or **money order**.

****CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Please make checks or money orders payable to **FUMC Preschool.

If you use online bill payment procedures, you may set up FUMC Preschool to automatically receive a check each month.

**There is a locked box on the sign in table where you can leave your checks. The black mailbox beside the sign in table may be used for other paperwork and/or notes to the director. It is checked several times each day.

Waiting List Policy

First United Methodist Church Preschool will keep a waiting list when our rosters are full. We reserve the right to keep our classes smaller than the state mandated ratios. Enrollment from the waiting list will depend on a variety of factors including date the enrollment was requested, availability of age-appropriate classes, and enrollment of siblings.

We do not require a fee to be put on the waiting list.

When an opening becomes available, the family will be notified via email and/or telephone. If you do not respond within 3 business days, the next person on the list will be given the opening. Any time that an offer for enrollment is declined the child's name will be taken off the list unless the parent provides a new date for seeking enrollment.

Once you have confirmed that you want to enroll, you have one week to pay the enrollment fee and fill out the admission papers. Families on the waiting list may be contacted periodically via email or phone and asked if they want to stay on the list.

To place your child on our waiting list, you may call the preschool at 903-657-4881 or email preschool@fumchenderson.org. Information required: name and birthdate of child; parents name, phone number and email address; number of days and times you want your child to attend; and date of requested enrollment.

Reserving A Place for Future Enrollment

A parent wishing to reserve a place for their child/children for future enrollment during the school year will be required to pay \$150.00 per month to hold the space. The tuition is **non-refundable**. If the parent is late with the monthly tuition, there is a possibility of this space being filled with a child waiting on a vacancy list in that classroom.

Hours Of Operation

7:00am - 7:30am: Sunrise Care (open only to students who have signed up)

7:30am - 8:00am: Gathering Time

8:00am -12:00pm: Morning Preschool Program

12:00pm - 4:00pm: Lunch Bunch Program

4:00pm - 5:15pm: Late Day Program

Infants and toddlers can choose any 2, 3, 4 or 5 days a week to attend FUMCP. Students in classes 2 years old through 4 years old can attend full time 5 days a week or on specified days with a part time schedule.

In addition to our school year preschool program, FUMCP offers a part time summer program. Days and hours for the summer program will be announced in the spring with an opportunity for all students to attend.

Drop Off Procedure

We have developed this procedure so that morning drop off transition will go as smoothly as possible. We are not only responsible for the safety of your child but also for all the other children in our care. Please follow this procedure to help eliminate any potential safety problems.

1. Please **sign your child in** at the table in the foyer in front of the director's office. You will need to sign your initials and the time you dropped them off. There will be a post it note pad to write the staff or your child's teacher information they will need for that day (example: different person picking up, leaving early that day etc.). You may then attach the note to your child's class clipboard.
2. You and your child should walk to their room and hang up their backpacks and coats or put things in their cubbies. If your child stays for lunch, please place their lunch box on the floor in the main hallway under the correct class lunch box sign. 2's, 3's and 4's will go to the glass room for "gathering time". Under ***NO*** circumstances are children to be left in the hallway. If your child does not want to stay in the glass room, you will have to remain with them in the main foyer until the teachers collect the children and go to their rooms. If your child is in the Infant or Toddler class they will go directly to their room each morning.
3. Please make your goodbyes short, reassure your child that you will be back to get them and then leave. If your child is upset when you leave rest assured we will not let them cry for an extended period of time. We will call you if your child continues to cry for a prolonged period of time. Please feel free to call and check on them at any time. Most of the time, children have calmed down and are playing before you have time to get to your car. Each child will more than likely go through a rough transition time sooner or later. Please remember that drop off time is **not** a time to visit or conference with the teacher or

staff member in the room. They are **responsible for watching all the children in the room**, and cannot do this properly if they are trying to have a conversation with a parent. Please communicate with a note, or call to leave instructions or to make an appointment for a conference when she can give you her undivided attention.

4. We **do not** serve breakfast. Your child needs to have breakfast before they come to school. If they eat on the way and have not finished, you will have **to remain with them in the foyer until they have finished eating or drinking**. Everyone has snack time between 9 and 10 each morning. This also includes infants, crawlers, and toddlers who are eating solid food.

5. Children **must be present in the morning** program in order to stay for Lunch Bunch or Late Day.

Please **DO NOT** double-park in the circle drive at anytime.

Pickup Procedure

Parents will need to park in the church's parking lot and come in to get their child. For noon pickup, all 2's, 3's, and 4's will be in the classroom. You will need to sign your child out and come to the classroom to pick your child up.

At 4:00 and 5:15 pick up, weather permitting, we may be on the playground. If the weather is bad, the children will be in the Great Hall or the Glass Room. For the children's safety on the playground, **your child will be brought to the gate for you**. Please **do not** enter the playground area. Remember to sign out your child with initials and time. Please do not double-park in the circle drive.

If someone not listed will be picking up your child please do the following: Send a note that morning with your child describing the person, the relationship to your child *and the person's phone number*. Tell the person to be prepared to present his/her driver's license as we may ask to see it. If you need to call later to report that someone different will be picking your child up, please do the following: Call the school and tell us the same information.

Sunrise Care 7:00-7:30

Sunrise Care is only open to those who have previously enrolled. Payment for this program will be made on a monthly basis. We **do not** allow extra days. **Your child will only be able to stay on the days they are signed up for.**

Preschool Morning Program 8:00 - 12:00

Our classes **begin at 8:30am SHARP**. All classes begin their academic day with "Circle Time" or structured learning time. **This is the most important part of your child's day**. As we all know young children's attention span is very fragile. Once the child's attention is diverted you can never get them back to where they were. We encourage our children to be here on time. We feel this is an opportunity to teach children the importance of being on time. We take every opportunity to prepare your child for the upcoming school years ahead. We want to make sure they have all the tools, emotionally and educationally to

make their school years as successful as possible. Children who are prepared are more confident and make the transition to public or private school more easily. We take pride in guiding children from the “help me” stage to the “I can do it myself” stage. Our program provides worthwhile experiences in daily living, and these experiences lead naturally in the direction of the readiness skills that are basic to success in a child’s education.

All staff members are current on CPR and First Aid. **All** staff members are required to have 24 educational hours per year and 1 hour of SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome every year.

The school has a large, fenced playground with plenty of shade for outside activities. **The children play outdoors every day, weather permitting, if the outdoor wind chill is above 50 degrees.** We also have 2 large indoor recreation areas.

We are a state licensed facility and must maintain a child - teacher ratio. Because of this your child **may only attend on the days they are registered for.

Lunch Bunch Program 12:00 - 4:00

Lunch Bunch is what we call our program for children who stay from 12:00-4:00. All lunches are provided by that parents. We do not cook at FUMC Preschool. The daily nutritional food needs is the responsibility of the parent. FUMC Preschool is not responsible for meeting the nutritional value or the child’s daily lunch needs.

Infants:

FUMC Preschool allows a private space for parents to breastfeed their babies. Please contact the director for more information on breast feeding while your infant is in our care. There are refrigerators and microwaves in these classrooms. Because we are a state licensed facility you **are required to label everything** your child brings to school. This includes clothing, diapers, diaper rash cream, blankets, pacifiers, cups, food, food containers, lunchboxes, backpacks, diaper bags, etc. Make sure you use their first name and last initial. (see separate Infant Room handout for more specific information)

Crawlers/Toddlers:

Lunch in these classes will be around 11:15-11:30. Crawlers & Toddlers should have a Lunch Box/Bag with finger foods (if your child stays past noon) –Remember that a well-balanced meal provides the food children need to grow, think, fight infection, and fuel their bodies. Please make sure **the lunch box/bag is labeled with your child’s first name and last initial as well as everything that you pack for him/her to eat.** Please do not send anything in a glass container. There is a microwave and refrigerator in these classrooms. All children who are walking will need **a mat, crib-sized blanket, and travel-sized pillow to be left at preschool.** This will all be kept in an individual plastic box or bag provided by the preschool. If your child has something that needs to go back and forth please inform your child’s teacher. Also, we ask that **you put any personal items such as silkies, taggies, stuffed animals, or blankets in your child’s backpack upon arrival each morning.** Two of our goals are to teach independence and how to share with others. Therefore, when children bring personal items to school the children are naturally

reluctant to share which causes hurt feelings among the children in the classroom. (see separate Crawler/Toddler Room handout for more specific information)

2, 3 and 4 year olds:

Each day your child may stay for lunch bunch. During this time your child will be able to eat lunch, nap and play. Your child must be here for the morning in order to participate in Lunch Bunch. Lunch transition will begin at 11:50 each day. Your child will need to bring their lunch including a drink, even if you want them to drink water. We cannot heat or refrigerate food for the older children. Their rooms are not equipped for this. We prefer that you bring your child's lunch with them in the morning. If an emergency arises and you cannot, please have it here no later than **11:00**. We **strongly discourage** fast food. This causes hurt feelings with the other children and does not usually meet daily nutritional needs for a healthy mind and body. If you want to pick your child up for a special lunch, be aware they **will not** be able to return for the remainder of that day. You are welcome to come and eat lunch with your child in a designated area. They must return to their room by **12:30**. We ask that you notify us when you are going to do this so we can have a place set up for you. Please only do this when you are sure your child will not be upset when you leave. Sheets are provided for nap mats. The mats have clean sheets put on them every week. We will provide you with a small plastic box for your child to store a **travel size** pillow and **beach towel size** blanket. Make sure the lid will close easily with both inside. We **do not** allow extra days. **Your child may only stay on the days they are registered for.** After nap time your child will be able to play in a variety of activities. **We go outside every day weather permitting.** Children staying will be given an afternoon snack. You may pick your child up at any time, but we recommend waiting until 3 when naps and snack are done.

Late Day Program 4:00 - 5:15

During this time your child will be able to play in a variety of activities. **We go outside every day, weather permitting.** We **do not** allow extra days. **Your child will only be able to stay on the days they are signed up for.**

Discipline Policy

A major goal of FUMC Preschool is to assure the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of each student. We strive to minimize the occurrence of problematic behaviors by maintaining a low child-teacher ratio and by providing activities that are appropriate to the developmental levels and interests of each age group. We believe that a team approach involving parents, staff members, and children is the most effective way to encourage positive student behavior. In dealing with any behavior issues that might arise, we adhere to the following policies:

1. Discipline shall be directed toward teaching the child the acceptable behavior. Positive approaches to behavior management will be the first strategies used, including the use of positive suggestions, redirecting the child to appropriate activities, and praise for appropriate behaviors.
2. Time-out procedures may be used if the above procedures are ineffective. This may involve a designated time-out place within the classroom. The time spent in

- time-out will be limited to one minute for each year of the child's age. Any child put in time-out will be monitored during the period and will not be left alone.
3. If classroom time-out procedures are ineffective, the child may be given a short time-out in the school office. The child will be under adult supervision at all times.
 4. If the above procedures continue to be ineffective, the parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and/or preschool director to discuss the behavior and determine a plan for improvement.
 5. If FUMC Preschool staff determines they are unable to manage the behavior of a child and the behavior presents serious risk of injury to the child, other children enrolled, and/or the staff, then the child **may be suspended for up to 3 registered school days.**
 6. If, after the behavior suspension, there is still a risk of injury to the child, other children enrolled, and/or the staff, then a board meeting will be held to determine if FUMC Preschool is able to meet the needs of the child. As a last resort, the FUMC Preschool board may ask the parents to find a setting that will better fit the needs of their child.
 7. All discipline shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of each child. No child shall be subjected to punishment of a physical nature nor be subjected to derogatory or loud language.

Biting Policy

While biting is a normal behavior in the early childhood years, with proper interventions, most children stop biting after a few days or weeks. No one wants their child to get bitten or to bite someone else. It happens in a split second, usually with no warning. Most, but not all children will bite or get bitten in the early childhood years. Please know that we will handle each situation with Christian understanding and kindness. We also ask the parents to do the same. **Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis.** The names of the children involved are kept confidential. Each time a child bites, the incident is documented by the caregiver, and a verbal or written notification is given to the parents of the child who has bitten as well as the parents of the child who has been bitten.

The staff of FUMC Preschool will:

- try to intervene or distract the child and say 'no bite' firmly, but calmly, if he/she is about to bite
- say 'no' or 'no bite' firmly, but calmly, if he/she does bite
- move the child away from the other children and ignore him/her for one minute per year of the child's age after each bite
- remind the children not to bite from time to time, including perhaps a short reminder that 'biting hurts'
- provide some praise and positive attention when he/she isn't biting and is playing nicely
- keep to a good routine all day, including meals, naps, and playtime
- document and try to decide why and when a child is biting. Is he/she overtired? Is he/she teething? Did another child try to take his/her blanket or toy? Is anything going on at home that has him/her out of her routine? Is the child using biting as a way to communicate? Does the child have an earache?

In the event that *extreme or **excessive biting occurs within 15 school days, the following steps will be taken to ensure the health and safety of all children at FUMC Preschool.

- Bite #1: document and notify parents
- Bite #2: document and send child home for the rest of the school day
- Bite #3: document and send child home for the rest of the school day in addition to 2 consecutive school days
- Bite #4: document and immediate dismissal from FUMC Preschool

*Extreme biting: when the bite breaks the skin, causes bleeding, causes immediate bruising, or is on the face.

**Excessive biting: when it impedes the instruction and/or the safety of the other children in the classroom

***The age of the biter will be taken into consideration.

Inappropriate Behavior Policy

First United Methodist Preschool places the highest priority on the health and safety of its employees, parents, children, and visitors. Consequently, acts of violence, threats, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior are prohibited and **will not** be tolerated. If the parent/guardian or family member of a child enrolled in FUMC Preschool exhibits any of these behaviors towards the Director, a teacher, a group of teachers, other parents, any child, a member of the FUMC Preschool board, or any other personnel at FUMC Preschool while on the facility grounds, the Director, or any FUMC Preschool board member, can evict the parent and his/her child from the FUMC Preschool facility and terminate enrollment immediately. The eviction will result in the loss of the current month's tuition that has been paid and the supply fee for that semester. Neither the parent/guardian in question, nor the spouse of this parent/guardian will be placed on any future vacancy lists at FUMC Preschool All incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately and confidentially.

Potty Training Policy

Your child **must** be potty trained **before** they can enter the 3 year old program. These classrooms are not equipped for changing diapers and they do not have aides in their classrooms. **Pull-ups are not recommended at FUMC Preschool. This includes Pull-ups with Velcro.** If your child is ready to start potty training they will need to wear cotton training pants with the plastic pants over them. They will also need **3-4 complete changes** of clothes including socks and 1 pair of shoes every day. Make sure everything is labeled with your child's name and place them in a Ziploc bag also with their name on it. If your child is not ready for this, they will need to continue to wear a diaper. Here is a good rule of thumb to know whether or not your child is ready to begin potty training: If they are staying dry for longer periods of time, staying dry at night, and showing interest

in sitting on the potty. **Potty Training begins at home. Once your child has been successful AT HOME for at least 2 weeks, please inform your child's teacher when you and your child are ready to start potty training at school** We will work together to ensure your child's success. For more information on potty training, please ask us for a copy of our guidelines and suggestions.

Health Policy

Individual Enrollment information sheets and records are kept for each child. These records are accessible for examination at all times by parent/guardians, and authorized agents of the DFPS. They are confidential to others. Current immunization records with the signature of the person who administered the vaccines must be provided upon admission. If your child has a notarized waiver from the state of Texas to be exempt from vaccinations for medical, philosophical or religious reasons, know that in case of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease (or, in some circumstances a single case), your child may be excluded from attendance at FUMCP for several days up to several weeks. They may also be isolated from children with weakened immunity systems or from infants too young to be vaccinated. Children with known infectious diseases shall **not** be admitted to the FUMC Preschool. In case of sickness or accident, immediate notice shall be given to parents. Adequate medical care shall be given until the child can be removed from the facility. All FUMC Preschool Staff will be trained in First aid and CPR by an approved American Heart Association trainer. Re-admission after a disabling illness shall be allowed upon receipt of a signed statement from the child's doctor. The child must also be able to participate in **all** daily preschool activities, **this includes going outside for recess.**

Your child **will** be sent home for the following:

- 1. Armpit temperature of above 100.5 degrees.**
- 2. 2 episodes of diarrhea in 24 hrs.**
- 3. 1 episode of vomiting in 24 hrs.**

Your child may return to school when they have been **free** of the above named items **without** the aid of medication for a **full 24 hours** (This does **not** mean 24 hours from the time they were picked up from preschool, but 24 hours from the last episode. The child must be completely well for 1 full day without the aid of medication before they can return.), or you have obtained a health care professional's statement that child no longer has an excludable disease or condition. (This statement **must be specific** to the illness they were sent home for.) We understand parents have to work, but when you bring a child back too soon you are infecting the other children in the room and the preschool staff. *If the 24 hour exclusion period ends during the middle of the school day:*
Your child must be here by 11:45, if you intend for your child to eat lunch at preschool, If you intend for your child to nap at preschool, your child must be here by 12:30.

Medication

In general medication will not be administered at Preschool! Medications such as Epi-Pens and inhalers will may be kept at the preschool for those who have prescriptions, in the case that there is an emergency. Other prescription medication can be given at the discretion of the director. Factors considered will be side effects, dosage requirements, and ability of parents to come and give medication. If your child requires non-emergency

medication to be administered such as cough medicine, Tylenol, Motrin, etc. then you must bring the medication and administer the medication to your child. It is against state guidelines for your child to have any type of medication, prescription or otherwise in their lunch boxes, backpacks or diaper bags.

FUMC Preschool may not be appropriately staffed to accept students with special medical or behavioral needs. If your child requires special accommodations in order to be successful in the preschool setting, you may be asked to find a more appropriate setting for your child. Each case will be handled on an individual basis, and a board meeting will be scheduled to discuss each case. If your child has a food allergy, please notify the director when enrolling. An Allergy Action Plan from your doctor will be required in order to ensure the health of your child.

Parents may request a form from the office to have sunscreen and/or insect repellent applied to their child for outdoor activities. The sunscreen and/or insect repellent is to be provided by the parent.

Texas state law requires that every child 4 years and older enrolled in a Department of Family and Protective Services licensed child-care center is screened for hearing and vision. Your child's pediatrician/physician may do these in-office during routine well-child checkups. Insurance will usually cover them since they are part of the routine checkup. If your physician does offer this service and your child has been screened, then we need proof of hearing and vision screening results to satisfy state law. Screenings must be reported to the state of Texas annually. If you choose to have your physician perform the screenings, please make sure to verify with the doctor that the screenings meet the criteria listed in the box below. (Just a simple check of the eyes and ears are not sufficient for these screenings.)

For **VISION SCREENING**, a distance acuity for the right and left eyes, e.g., 20/20, 20/30, etc. Approved charts for distance acuity testing include: (1) Snellen Alphabet or Sloan letter chart, (2) Snellen "Tumbling E" Chart, and (3) HOTV Crowded Test set.

For **HEARING SCREENING**, the results of the pure-tone audiometric Sweep-Check Screen must be recorded for both the right and left ears. A Sweep-Check Screen is to be conducted at an intensity less than or equal to 25 dB; at the following frequencies: 1000, 2000, and 4000 Hertz.

If your doctor does not provide this service or if you choose **not to have these screenings performed at the medical facility, we can give you the name of someone who can perform this service for a fee.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be sent home at the end of each semester for our 2's, 3's and 4 year olds. Toddler 2 classes will receive one at the end of the year. Reports are based on daily observations and informal testing by your child's teacher. These reports are only an indicator of how your child has progressed through the year. Please remember to sign the report cards and bring them back so they may be sent again in May. If you have any questions regarding your child's progress report, please set up a conference with your child's teacher.

Visitation and Conferences

Our school maintains an open-door policy and we hope parents will feel free to come in and visit. Please remember that a teacher's first responsibility is to the children. Drop-off and pick-up time is not a good time for a serious conference. Teachers are very busy at this time. However, teachers do and will welcome the parents setting a time and date for a conference. If the teacher or director feels a need for a conference, the teacher will make the appointment. Again, any time a parent feels the need for a conference, please do not hesitate to ask for one. Remember that a crisis at home affects the child's behavior at school. Please let the director or the teacher know of the joyous happenings, the upsetting experiences or important changes at home that might affect his/her behavior at school. These conversations will be considered confidential and will help the teacher better understand the child's behavior.

Field Trips

We take our 3 and 4-year olds on several field trips throughout the school year. A note will be sent out before the field trip explaining transportation rules and laws. If you do not wish for your child to participate on this field trip, please make other arrangements for the day.

Library

All 3 and 4 year olds will have the opportunity to check out a library book each week. The book must be returned the following week. Through library time, we are striving to teach the children responsibility and instill the importance of reading.

Toys, Food and Candy

Please **do not** allow your child to bring his/her toys to school. The children are taught to share the toys at school, but when a child brings something that belongs to him/her, they are naturally reluctant to share. If this becomes a problem the toy will be confiscated and given to the parent at pick-up time.

Please **do not** allow your child to bring candy, gum, food or drink into school with them in the mornings. This includes breakfast food. If they have not finished their breakfast you must remain with them in the foyer until they are finished. We serve a nutritious snack each morning. There may exceptions to these rules only at the request of your child's teacher. Examples might be school parties, show and tell days, or other special occasions.

Birthdays and Class Parties

Birthdays are very special to young children. Parties are permitted but should be kept simple. If you would like to bring special refreshments for your child's birthday, please notify the teacher in advance to facilitate planning. We suggest individual servings such as cookies, fruit, cheese, crackers or other easy-to-eat snacks and juice. Please feel free to come and help your child celebrate. If you want to give out party invitations at school there must be one for every child in the class, otherwise you will have to mail them. Class parties will be held to celebrate Christmas and Easter. These will be coordinated by the preschool.

If you choose to have flowers, candy baskets, stuffed animals, balloons, etc. delivered to preschool for your child, it will be left on the sign-in table and may be picked up at the end of the day when your child leaves.

Clothing

Children are very active at preschool. We will be playing in sand, painting, playing outdoors, and participating in many other messy activities that might cause damage to clothing. Please do not send your child to school in clothes he/she may be afraid to get dirty or which you want to save for special occasions. We try to be careful, but as you know accidents do happen. Children can be very disturbed to think their parents would be angry with a ruined outfit. **Please label all articles of clothing your child might wear and remove.** Don't take it for granted that they will know which one is theirs. *Please do not dress your child in items they cannot undo or remove to go to the bathroom.*

Examples of these are belts, overalls, leotard-type shirts with snaps in the crotch.

For your child's safety and the safety of the other children hair beads, tiny hair clips, or any other decorative item which may be a choking hazard, is prohibited.

Earrings must be secure at all times. **We go outside every day, weather permitting.**

Please send a sweater or jacket as Texas weather can change quickly in the fall and spring. When selecting school shoes for your child, select shoes that give support and allow freedom of movement for climbing, running, skipping and other activities. Flip-flops and backless shoes do not provide the support and safety required; therefore, **flip-flops and backless shoes are not permitted** at preschool. These pose a great safety hazard to your child when playing on the playground. We also find that your child is less likely to keep their shoes on during the day. We do ask that your child wear socks and tennis shoes on the days that they attend motor skills. They run, hop, skip, jump, balance, etc. and need secure footwear in order to perform adequately. We also ask that girls wear shorts under their dresses and skirts.

Extra Clothing

Because emergencies arise, **each child** should have an extra set of clothing, labeled with their name, in a Ziploc bag at school or in their backpack. This includes socks and a pair of shoes. If you leave a set at school we will send this home to be changed at the end of each season or big growth period.

Gang Free Zone

Licensed Child Care operations are in a Gang Free Zone. This means a designated area around the child care facility is prohibited from gang related activity. The zone is any area within 1000 feet of the child care center.

First United Methodist Church and Preschool Disaster Policy

First United Methodist Church of Henderson is a designated disaster shelter. When planning for evacuees, FUMC will follow the guidelines of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) of Rusk County. In the event that First United Methodist Church of Henderson receives evacuees for any disaster, the following precautions, as well as the guidelines of CERT, will be taken to ensure the safety of our Preschool children and staff:

1. A staff member of the church and/or preschool will be present at all CERT meetings in preparation for the evacuees.

2. The Children's Center will be locked down at all times. All doors leading into the center will remain locked while children are present. Children will be allowed to travel to the playground only when two caregivers are present.
3. The doors to all classrooms will remain closed at all times.
4. Each classroom staff member will have access to phones as a means of communication with office personnel.
5. Evacuees will only be allowed in designated areas of the church, which does not include the Children's Center.
6. All evacuees will be registered with church personnel and will be required to check in and out upon each arrival and departure. Two volunteers will man the check in/check out desk at all times.
7. While on the church property, evacuees, volunteers, church and preschool staff are required to wear a wristband that will be visible at all times. Wristbands are color-coded to indicate into which categories the evacuees, volunteers, and staff belongs.
8. There will be a law enforcement officer on the church property 24 hours a day for as long as evacuees are present.
9. All parents of preschoolers will be notified in writing if there is a possibility that FUMC may receive evacuees.
10. In the event that parents do not wish to send their child to preschool while evacuees are present, there will be no refund or pro-rating of monthly tuition for the days their children do not attend.
11. In the case of immediate community emergencies, each teacher will be responsible for notifying parents by telephone of unforeseen circumstances causing the church to receive evacuees.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Designated Safe place inside: basement (4's classrooms, prayer chapel, workroom – same room as severe weather)

Designated Safe place outside: back parking lot behind Henderson Federal Savings Bank

In the event of an evacuation:

~Person in charge will: contact emergency personnel (911, police department, fire department, etc.); alert staff that an emergency situation has occurred which requires evacuation; pass out clipboards with sign/in sign/out sheets; remind staff to bring their attendance books with emergency contact numbers as well as cell phones and purses; instruct staff to meet at designated safe place (inside or outside)

~Attendance will be taken as soon as classes are all evacuated to designated safe place.

In the event of relocation:

~Support staff will be in charge of supervising children while teachers of each age group call emergency contacts – beginning with parents, using cell phones. Parents will be notified that an emergency situation has occurred, that we will be relocating, and the place of relocation (Henderson Civic Center, Lake Forest Park, Henderson, TX 75652.)

~They will be loaded on the 3 church vans driven by Cathy, Rebecca, Casi and/or Betty in the following order: 4's, 3's, 2's, Toddlers, Crawlers/Infants.

~Hallway person is responsible for gathering emergency kit which includes: emergency notebook from hallway, first aid kit, and emergency kit from paint room.

~Parents are welcome to pick their child up at any time during this process as long as contact has been made between the person picking up the child and the teacher in charge.

Pet/Animal Policy

We welcome pets/animals to our preschool as long as the following guidelines are met:

1. We must have AT LEAST 10 days' notice if you or your child will be bringing a pet/animal to school to ensure we have plenty of time to notify the other parents in writing.
2. You MUST provide documentation showing dogs, cats, and ferrets have been vaccinated. You MUST have a statement of health from a local veterinarian for dogs, cats, ferrets, and other animals other than small rodents, such as guinea pigs, mice, and hamsters.
3. Children must not have contact with chickens, ducks, and reptiles, such as snakes, turtles, lizards, iguanas, and amphibians, such as frogs and toads. If you bring any of these types of animals, they must be in a container to prevent them from getting loose or the children having contact with the animal.

Publications

On occasion, we will publish pictures on the FUMC website, church bulletin, church newsletters, Henderson Daily News, and/or the FUMC Preschool Facebook Page (FUMC Preschool – Henderson). Children's names will not be used in connection with pictures on the internet. If you do not want your child's picture to be used, please contact the director.

Preventing and Responding to Abuse and Neglect

All staff members are trained annually on preventing and responding to suspected abuse and/or neglect of children. This training includes methods for increasing awareness of prevention, warning signs, and procedures to follow if a child has been suspected of abuse and/or neglect. We take this matter seriously and all cases will be treated with utmost confidentiality and respect. Parents of children who are suspected victims may obtain assistance from the Rusk County Children's Advocacy Center at (903)657-0790, or report it to the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-800-252-5400).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the director at any time.

FUMC Preschool: (903)657-4881

Director: Cathy Hooper

chooper@fumchenderson.org

The First United Methodist Preschool does not practice discrimination in any manner against race, religion, sex or national origin. School policies are distributed to all parents and staff before each school year begins. The First United Methodist Preschool is licensed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and follows all of their guidelines.

The TxDFPS minimum standards are available for review in the director's office or are available on the web site listed below.

Our most recent inspection report is posted on the bulletin board in the Children's Center.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Website

<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

Local Licensing Office: 903-533-5233 Representative Millicent Dickey

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

2017-2018 Calendar

Thursday, August 17	Open House 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Monday, August 21	School Begins
Monday, September 4	Labor Day Holiday (no school)
Tuesday, October 24	Fall Carnival
Friday, November 3	Staff Development (no school for students)
Monday Nov. 20-24	Thanksgiving Holidays (no school)
Monday, December 25-29	Christmas Holidays
Monday, January 2-5	Christmas/New Year's Holiday
Monday, January 15	MLK Holiday (no school for students)
Tuesday, March 6	Spring Family Fun Night
Monday, March 12-16	Spring Break (no school)
Friday, March 30	Good Friday Holiday (no school)
Tuesday, May 22	Graduation
Wednesday, May 23	Last Day – Close at noon, Staff stays until 3

Bolded Dates: Preschool closed

*In the case of inclement weather or unforeseen natural disasters, we will follow the schedule of the Henderson Independent School District.