

Butler United Methodist Preschool Handbook

Overview

The Butler United Methodist Preschool is an outreach program of the Butler United Methodist Church and is dedicated to the children of the church as well as the children of the community. We are in the 32nd year of nurturing and teaching children and hope to continue providing this service for many more years to come.

Our goal is to provide the children of this community with a wholesome self concept, an eagerness for learning and to grow socially, emotionally and spiritually in a Christian atmosphere.

Organization

The Preschool Program is governed by a board of directors made up of members of the church. Currently those serving are: Maxine Allen, Kay Giles, Nancy Wilson, Ellen Burgamy, Judy Comer, Elsie Allen, Kelly Murphy and the church pastor.

Preschool classes are held Monday through Thursday for half days, August through May. (We try to follow the local school calendar as closely as possible.) Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis and limited due to classroom space.

Curriculum

The program has a curriculum that works toward developing readiness for learning academic skills. The children will grow socially and intellectually as they interact with each other in imaginative play with blocks, tools, puzzles, games, puppets and housekeeping toys. Horizons are broadened by a variety of books available in each classroom. Special events and field trips stimulate the desire for exploration and discovery while encouraging the expression of ideas. Creative expression is encouraged using paints, crayons, markers, and clay and collage materials. Singing, rhythm instruments and creative movement develop music appreciations as well dramatic interpretation. Indoor and outdoor play equipment encourages the physical development of large motor skills.

Financial Policies

There is an application/registration fee of \$35.00 which is due with the pre-registration form. Tuition is \$75.00 per month and due by the 1st of each month. There are no deductions due to illness or any other reason. There will be a \$10.00 late fee for tuition not paid by the 5th of the month. Checks should be made payable to BUMP and given to your child's teacher. Nonpayment will result in a request for withdrawal from the preschool; however, the board will consider hardship cases on an individual basis.

Application and Enrollment

Children should be 3 and/or 4 years of age by Sept.1, in order to enter into the preschool. Children need to be toilet trained, although accidents are understandable (see preschool policies and procedures.) Applications for enrollment are available by contacting the school, a teacher and or a board member. Priority will be given to currently enrolled students who have submitted the application by the end of the current school year. Additional placements will be filled on a first come basis.

Registration for the program will occur in July for the subsequent school year. Recognizing that there may be more applications than placements available, a waiting list will be utilized.

Prior to admission the following forms must be completed:

- Copy of certified birth certificate
- Immunization certificate from the Health Dept or physician
- An application with emergency information
- Tuition Agreement Form
- Guidelines/Policy Agreement Form
- A Preschool permission form (as needed)

All forms must be updated each September. However, please inform the staff if there are any changes during the course of the school year in the following information: phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, health status and authorization to release form as well as any custody changes. Also please be sure to notify the staff if a family event has occurred that may affect your child's behavior.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

You may drop your child off between 7:55 am and 8:10 am. Instruction time for the children begins at 8:10 am. Please use the social hall entrance at the side of the church. One of the teachers will meet you at the door to get your child settled in his/her class. From past experience we have found that the children adapt more quickly if the parent doesn't linger when leaving their child. Sessions end at 11:30 am and you may pick your child up at the same entrance between 11:30 and 11:45 am. Parents are expected to pick their child up on time.

Authorization to Release Form (part of registration form)

Our preschool Authorization to Release Form requires that you identify one person who will usually pick up your child. In the case of an emergency or unpredictable circumstance, the other individuals designated on this form will be allowed to pick up your child. The staff must receive a phone call or note which includes the name and description of the person to whom you are allowing us to release your child. If the staff is unfamiliar with the designated person, they will require positive proof of identification (picture ID). The person picking up your child must be at least 18 years older and will be responsible for your child once they leave the building. If a problem should arise, the teacher will contact the parent for instruction before allowing the child to be released. If there are custody issues we need the parent/guardian to inform the staff and present copies of the legal documents.

Preschool Schedule

7:55-8:10 am Arrival and Attendance
8:10-8:30 am Free Play in Classrooms
8:30-9:00 am Story time and Music
9:00-10:30 am Instructional Time in Classrooms
10:30-11:00 am Snack
11:00-11:30 am outside Play
11:30-11:45 am Pick up Time

If the school is closed, opened late, or dismissed early due to bad weather or other emergencies parents will be notified by the teachers. We will also try to follow the local school system in the event of inclement weather.

Program Goals and Objectives

For the Teacher:

1. Provide an education in a Christian atmosphere.
2. Make learning a fun experience.
3. Expose each child to academics of letters, shapes, numbers, colors, etc.
4. Develop social interaction with other children and adults.
5. Treat and teach each child so that he/she is prepared to advance to the next learning level.

For the Children:

1. Learn to listen to others.
2. Respect others and their property.
3. Wait their turn to talk and participate.
4. Listen and follow instructions.
5. Learn to sit at a table for short periods of time.
6. Learn songs, poems, pledge and prayers.

7. Participate in group activities.
8. Learn name, address, telephone number, parts of the body, days of the week, months, seasons, weather, holidays and concepts such as big, little, tall and short.
9. Learn about health, hygiene and safety.

Policies and Procedures

Toilet Training

All children are required to be toilet trained to attend the program. In order to be considered toilet trained a child must be able to:

**Recognize when he/she needs to use the bathroom
Must be able to independently pull pants up and down
Independently clean themselves**

If a child has a restroom accident, the teacher will call the parent to come and get the child to go home for the day.

Clothing

We encourage you to dress your child in clothing that makes independent bathroom use more successful. Bodysuits, belts with hard buckles, outfits that fasten in the back or in the bottom and suspenders are not practical for preschool. All students should wear appropriate shoes with laces tied, Velcro or buckles. We spend time each day outside so your child needs shoes in which they can run and play. Flip flops are discouraged.

We do understand that accidents happen so a change of clothing in the child's book bag is requested. Also each child should bring a T-shirt that can stay at the school. We will use them to protect the child's clothing when they paint.

Meals

We do not serve meals at preschool, so please make sure your child has breakfast before coming to school. They need to be well rested and ready to participate in the activities.

A snack is provided by the school each morning, so your child does not need to bring any food items to school. However we do need to know if your child has any food allergies.

Illness

If your child has any communicable illness (ie virus, cold with fever or excessive coughing, strep throat, chicken pox) he/she must remain home until he/she is no longer contagious. Please notify us if any child hood diseases are going through your household so that we and the other parents can watch for symptoms in the other children. Equally important, many of these common diseases are potentially dangerous to pregnant women, so please make us aware so that we can take the necessary precautions to protect our staff and volunteers.

Any child with a suspected contagious illness will require early dismissal. Suspected illnesses include a fever of 100 degrees or greater, more than one episode of diarrhea or loose stool, runny nose with greenish/yellowish mucus, congestion with barking cough, nausea/vomiting, unknown rash and reddened eyes. Upon returning to the program you child needs to be free of signs and symptoms of contagious illness.

If your child will not be attending the program on a given day due to illness or other reasons, please notify the staff.

Head Lice

As with any program that involves children in close contact with one another, head lice can become a problem. We, at BUMP, have been fortunate that we have had very few incidents of this nature. We discourage the sharing of clothing, combs and brushes by the students because this is one way that head lice is transmitted from one child to another. Should you suspect your child of having head lice, please notify the teacher and keep your child home until the head lice is treated and the head is free of the lice. If you have questions about how to treat the problem you can contact your child's doctor or the Health Dept. Should a teacher suspect a child of having head lice, the parent will be contacted to come and pick up his/her child. We also asked that when you return the child to school, please bring/send a note from the doctor or Health Dept.

Field Trips

During the school year we take several field trips. Before each trip you will receive a permission slip. It is very important for you to complete and return the permission slip in order for your child to participate. We will also need several brave moms, dads, and/or grandparents to help with transportation and chaperone duties. Car seats will be utilized by any child who is still required to be in one. We asked that the parent provide the seat for field trips as needed.

Parties

You are welcome to share your child's birthday with us at school. If you decide to do so, you are responsible for all of the party supplies, food, and juice for the students and teachers. Birthday parties should begin at 10:45 am. Cookies, chips, juice or soft drinks usually work best. You are also responsible for cleaning up after the party.

During the school year we also have parties for the children to celebrate special holidays. We need every parent's participation in order to make these parties a success. Parents will be assigned to a party committee and this committee will organize the party. Each committee shall select a chairperson, among themselves, whose job it will be to coordinate the committee. We realize that many of you work outside of the home and have other responsibilities so we hope that this will make things easier for everyone. A list of parties and the committee members, along with telephone numbers, will be given to the parents at the beginning of the school year by the teachers. We would like for the parties to be a "fun" time for the parents as well as the children and not a hardship. We ask that the committee not spend over \$10.00 per committee member. Any unusual expenses need to be brought before the board for approval and payment.

The following is a general guideline for the holiday parties:

The committee members are responsible for: paper products, cupcakes/cookies, chips, juice; setting up the party area and cleaning up afterwards; and any decorations the committee decides on and the school does not provide. For the Fall Festival and Fun Day the committee is also responsible for setting up and running the games. Each committee will need to have at least one planning meeting to organize their party.

The school and teachers are responsible for: buying prizes and furnishing games, some decorations, contacting Santa and the Easter Bunny.

As with all activities, other things will come up that have not been addressed here, so please make sure you communicate with each other and with the teachers.

Confidentiality

As employees and volunteers, everyone at our school is held up to certain levels of confidentiality. Employees and volunteers are required to refrain from discussing individual children with parents in hallways, at ballparks, in the grocery store, etc. Also if you are a parent seeking information about your child, we suggest that you seek out his/her teacher. If an issue should arise which you and the teacher cannot resolve we encourage you to attend the board meetings so that we can address the issue(s) as a group and find a resolution.

Behavior Philosophy

The preschool staff uses positive methods of discipline, which encourages self-control, cooperation and positive self-esteem. A child will never under any circumstances be physically punished, humiliated, or threatened.

All students should display appropriate behavior towards other students and teachers. Aggressive behavior, as well as profanity (including obscene gestures), will not be tolerated. Other behaviors which are discouraged are: biting, kicking, hitting, pinching, screaming, talking back, etc.

If a child misbehaves, the teacher will take the child aside to speak about the incident. Time out will be used at the discretion of the teacher. If necessary the teacher will call the parent to come and get the child for the rest of the day. Parent-teacher conference will be held at the discretion of the teacher. These conferences will be held with or without the board members. Suspension or expulsion is a last resort and is at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Parents will be held responsible for destruction of church property.

Communication

Another of the goals of this preschool program is to maintain close communication between home and school. An Open House is held in the fall to introduce parents/guardians to the program. Grandparents' day is held in the fall so that extended family can become familiar with the program. The classroom teacher maintains contact with parents through notes, phone conversations and monthly newsletters. Parents may request a conference at any time. Should the classroom teacher have a concern or question about your child, she will request a meeting with you. If you would like to visit the school, we ask that you call your child's teacher to set this up. Please keep in mind that one of the primary purposes of any preschool program is to ease the child's transition from home to school. If your child would be upset by your presence we ask that you refrain from visiting until your child has had time to adjust.