

Cornerstone United Methodist Church Preschool

Parent Handbook 2022-2023

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1. Introduction

Mission Statement

The mission of Cornerstone UMC Preschool is to foster a spiritual growth for children, families, and staff through loving, qualified care and Christian education.

History

CUMC Preschool has been serving the needs of the community since the summer of 1985. We are a state-licensed facility and operate five half-days per week.

Philosophy

CUMC Preschool is an early childhood program designed to provide a loving, Christian environment. It is staffed by highly qualified teachers to help children grow socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and spiritually through a variety of play experiences. We provide developmentally appropriate tasks necessary to prepare children for the demands of the public school system. We teach the Christian ethic of "loving thy neighbor as thyself," while respecting the differences of others. We teach the children to love themselves and to accept their many feelings which ultimately leads to a growing sense of independence and accomplishment. We strive to meet all of these important areas in order to help each child develop a good basis for growth and expansion for a happy, self-assured childhood.

Safe Sanctuary Policy

Cornerstone UMC Church has had a Safe Sanctuary Policy in place since November 2005. The preschool and the church developed this policy for the safety of everyone. This policy requires two adults with children at all times.

Licensing Information

We are required by law to follow the "Minimum Standard Rules" for licensed child-care centers. If you would like to review these standards you can go to the website at <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>.

Outside the preschool office is the latest copy of our *Licensing Report*. If you ever need to contact the local licensing office, you can go to their website at www.txchildcaresearch.org

For the latest updates you may log onto the following website: <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/protective-services-providers/child-care-licensing/minimum-standards>

Texas Penal Code

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang free-zone where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Our High Quality Early Childhood Program

Our program defines a high-quality early childhood program as one that meets and promotes the needs of the children and adults (parents, staff and administrators) who are involved in the program. Each day of a child's life is viewed as leading toward the growth and development of a healthy, intelligent, and contributing member of society.

We provide a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development of young children. All children are welcome regardless of race, sex, religion, or nationality. In our program, you will encounter:

- Frequent, positive warm interactions among adults and children
- Planned learning activities appropriate to the children's age and development such as: block building, painting, stories, dramatic play, centers that encourage development and growth, and active outdoor play times
- Specially trained teachers
- Sufficient staff/child ratios to respond to needs of individual children
- Many and varied age-appropriate materials with opportunities for enrichment
- Nutritious snacks
- Regular communications with parents
- Effective administration
- Ongoing systematic evaluations of staff and program



As a *high quality program*, we encourage your child to:

- Get along with other children and adults
- Improve physical skills and coordination
- Respond to music through listening, singing, dancing, clapping and playing rhythm instruments
- Experiment with many art materials to develop creativity
- Develop confidence and independence in the world outside your home
- Grow and develop through play
- Learn at his/her own developmental pace
- Learn about God's love and God's world
- Develop a positive self-esteem, as we believe each is a child of God and a person of worth

2. Curriculum

CUMC Preschool's curriculum is based on a well-rounded choice of unit themes that will change every week or two. These themes are central to all areas of the curriculum: arts, science, math, pre-reading, language, music, and Bible. Our themes are designed to be highly motivating and challenging for the children. Unit themes might include topics such as: Community Helpers, Bears, Farm Animals, Creepy Crawlers, Texas or Dinosaurs.

Every day each child explores learning centers, which support and enhance curriculum areas. Learning centers might include: cooking, block building, art, dramatic play, reading, science, math and manipulatives, writing and snack. A child's day has an equal balance of group experiences, such as story time, calendar time, games and singing, as well as unstructured time for individual exploration.

Each class participates in activities with a music/gross motor skill teacher and a Bible class at least twice a week. Every school day the children have playground time or indoor play during inclement weather. This type of activity encourages free play on climbing, sliding, imaginative play equipment and may include such activities as tricycle riding, jumping, bouncing, water and sand activities.

Special Activities

Every month special activities are planned for the children. Look for these special days on your child's class calendars. Holiday parties, special programs, science, cooking, and theme days are just a few of the activities you will see throughout the year. Occasionally, your child may be asked to bring or wear something special to class in order to enhance your child's Preschool experience. Cornerstone t-shirt days are always fun for everyone and will be on chapel days, which are the last Monday and Tuesday of each month. If you have special items that you would like to share which would also enhance particular themes, please notify your child's teacher.

In addition to our daily activities for the children, we offer evening and/or family activities, such as: Meet the Teacher, Open House, Christmas at Cornerstone, Spring Music Program for 3s, 4s and Learn-A-Lot, Donuts with Dads, and Muffins with Moms. Your child's teachers or the administrative staff will be happy to answer any questions about specific special events. Below are just some of our special events:

Meet the Teacher

This is a time during the day for you and your child to come up to school and meet the teachers for the new school year. It is a come-and-go period of time for you to visit your child's classroom. You can stop by to say hello, pick up some special paperwork, see your child's classroom, and enjoy looking around. The teachers will give you important information to get the school year off to a great start. This occurs a day or two before school begins, and your letter you receive in August will give you specific times.

Open House

This is an evening event for the entire family, which provides an opportunity for you to experience some of your preschooler's activities. It also provides a chance for families to meet.

Pajama Days

The children and staff dress in pajamas for an all-day pajama party.

Disney Days

The children enjoy a full day of Disney activities. Many parent volunteers are needed to help during this day of activities experienced on a rotating basis.

Christmas at Cornerstone

All members of our preschool families are invited to participate in this evening event of Christmas crafts, a cookie creation, and holiday music.

Donuts with Dads

Dads are encouraged to come to school with their child and celebrate. The children look forward to this day, preparing a special surprise for their dad. When Dad is unable to attend, a brother, uncle, neighbor or even Mom, is welcome to join us. This event is from 9:00-9:30 on the specified days.

Family Picnics

This is an opportunity for family members to bring a picnic lunch and join their child on our playground for a picnic with their class and teachers.

Multi Cultural Day / Texas Rodeo Days

These are fun days of special activities and centers that support the curriculum we are teaching. We provide hands-on learning activities with the help of our wonderful volunteers.

Muffins with Moms

The children love having their moms come to celebrate Mother's Day. Sharing a muffin and juice as well as a sweet surprise for mom is one of the children's favorite days. If a mom is unavailable to attend, anyone the child loves is welcome. This event is from 9:00-9:30 on the specified days.

In-house Field Trips

We will be bringing field trips to our preschool. We may have Mother Goose, The Cypress Fire Department, a local Dentist, and more visit our school. By bringing field trips to Cornerstone, we are able to offer the entire school the option of enjoying all of these in-house field trips and therefore, enhance everyone's curriculum.

Chapel and Christian Education

Chapel services are held monthly on the last Monday and Tuesday at 9:15 a.m. The school gathers for songs, a sharing time, and prayer. Parents are always welcome to join us for this special event. Children will also have a Bible class several times a week, depending on their days of attendance. Our Bible teacher will provide a Bible story or lesson with special songs and occasional activities providing a wonderful opportunity for our children to grow in God's love. Christian values and qualities such as being kind, helping one another, being responsible, sharing and forgiving, and taking care of God's world are emphasized during Bible class as well as in the classrooms.

Mission/Outreach Projects

An important mission of being a Christian school is teaching children to help others. The Preschool participates in various outreach programs. Your help is always needed and appreciated during these times. Watch for giving opportunities in the monthly Preschool Pages and in the monthly Bible class news.

3. Staff and Administration

Staff

Our Preschool staff is chosen for their knowledge, love, and dedication to young children regardless of their race, religion, sex, or nationality. We are an equal opportunity employer. All of our teachers have had experience working with young children and are required to take a minimum of 24 hours of training each year in the areas of teaching skills, behavior management, parent communication, learning centers, first aid and CPR.

Preschool Administration

The Preschool Administration consists of an Executive Director, Assistant Director/Curriculum Coordinator, Financial Coordinator, and Administrative Assistant. The Preschool administration has an open-door policy, and we welcome parents to visit us with any areas of concern, questions, and comments regarding our Preschool.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is directly responsible for establishing and administering the policies of CUMC Preschool. The Board consists of a Chairperson, Pastor, Executive Director, Assistant Director, 3 Church Members at Large, and 2 Staff Representatives.

4. Family Participation

Family participation is encouraged in our program through involvement in party celebrations, special events, and volunteerism in the many programs our Preschool offers.

Holidays and Parties

We have special events that involve parent participation like Christmas and Valentine’s Day parties. We ask each family to help at parties or celebrations during the year. The volunteer form for various activities was in your child’s white registration envelope. When children see parents playing an active role in their school, it lets them know you value and take their education seriously.

Volunteers

We value our parent/family volunteers very much. Volunteers are needed in many areas, such as: fund-raising, brown bag projects, teacher appreciation, classroom parent readers, homeroom parents, science and cooking projects, dad helpers and more! Volunteers must know and follow guidelines as stated in the *Parent Handbook* to meet licensing requirements.

Some parties and holidays require special help from parents in advance. The teachers send home information in the class newsletter. The volunteer coordinator will contact parents when extra help is needed. If you ever have questions, always feel free to call your child’s teachers or the school office. You will be called to help if you are needed.

Birthday Celebrations

Each child’s birthday needs to be special. We love to celebrate this day with your child. You may bring any special treat this day. Your child’s name will be listed on the class calendar, so you will know which day to celebrate. We ask that you do not bring birthday party invitations to school unless the entire class is invited. The school directory includes classmates’ information.

Multi Cultural Day

This is a very special day at school where parents share stories, pictures, games, and mementoes depicting their family’s heritage. If you would be interested, contact the preschool office.



5. Promotion of Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

Cornerstone UMC Preschool strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day.

When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through a dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

- ◆ Toddler age (18-24 month) children will participate a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.
- ◆ Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten (2-5 years old) children will participate a minimum of 45 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day.

Opportunities for active play may overlap with outdoor play when weather permits.

Cornerstone Preschool will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping, to the extent of their abilities.

All children will participate each day in:

- ◆ Two occasions of active play outdoors when weather permits.
- ◆ One or more structured or teacher-led activities or games that promote movement over the course of the day.
- ◆ Continuous opportunities to develop and practice age-appropriate gross motor and movement skills.

Physical activity may take place in the classroom, during Music and Movement class, or on the playground, when weather permits.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- ◆ Gym shoes or sturdy shoe equivalent
- ◆ Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket (without any hood and neck strings preferred for safety reasons).

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- ◆ Footwear that can come off while running or that provide insufficient support for climbing.
- ◆ Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as those with drawstrings or loops.

When weather conditions prohibit outdoor play, physical activities will occur in the classroom or gym during the scheduled outside time. Classroom teachers have activities planned for "rainy days".

5. Paperwork, Policies and Routines

School Records

We are required by State Licensing to keep up-to-date records on each child enrolled at CUMC Preschool. Each child in the program must have an individual file containing the following required information before he/she can be allowed to attend school:

- A Medical Information form (immunization records, examination statement with physician's signature, insurance information, allergy release, and emergency release form)
- Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan—if applicable
- Registration form
- Confidential Child Information sheet
- Volunteer form

These items must be completed and in the student's file PRIOR to entering school. All medical information must be kept up-to-date for licensing. Please bring medical updates to the preschool office or have them faxed to the office at 281.859.4567. UPDATED POLICY: Your child will not be allowed to attend class until his/her file is complete.

Immunizations

The following list outlines the required immunizations and number of doses of vaccine that your child must receive in order to be in compliance with the Minimum Standards issued by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services and the Texas State Department of Health:

18-24 Mos.

- 3 Hep B's
- 4 DTap's
- 4 Hib's -TriHBit is DTap + Hib
only 3 req. if Comvax which is Hep B + Hib; 2mo., 4 mo., & 12-15 mo.
- 4 PCV's (prevnar, streptococcus, pneumococcal)
- 3 IPV's (OPV-polio)
- 1 MMR
- 1 Varicella
- 1 Hep A (2nd by 24 mos. – **children not fully vaccinated by age 2 yrs. can be vaccinated at subsequent visits (occasionally, the series is started at age 2 yrs.)

2 years old

- See 18-24 mo. list above
- Check for 2nd Hep A

3 years old

- See 2 year old requirements

4 years old

- See 2 year old requirements



Should your child receive any additional immunizations during the school year, please advise the school so we may make a notation of the dates the vaccines were administered. A 30-day grace period will be allowed to compensate for illness making it impossible for your child to receive an immunization. If your child has not received the necessary immunizations after the 30-day grace period, we must have a written statement from your physician stating the reason for the delay. Otherwise, your child will not be allowed to attend classes until the immunizations are current.

For children entering the program during the school year, the parent has seven days in which to return completed medical information indicating all immunizations are current and dates each immunization was administered.

Vision, Hearing, and Speech Screenings



According to The Texas Department of Family & Protective Services "Minimum Standards for Child - Care Centers", *First-time enrollees who are four years of age and older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of age by September 1st of each year will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment.*

As a courtesy to you, the Preschool arranges for a licensed examiner to come to the school to administer the vision and hearing screenings. You will receive a letter with this information and be provided with dates and times for the screening. It is the responsibility of the parent to either have these screenings done here for a nominal fee or to have another private source do the screenings. If parents elect to have this done privately, a copy of the vision and hearing acuity results (not just that the child passed or failed) must be provided to us. If the child fails either the vision or hearing screening and is referred for further evaluation, a copy of the follow-up procedure with diagnosis as to treatment or non-treatment must be provided to the school and becomes a part of the child's permanent record. Optional speech and language screenings are offered in the spring.



Health

We maintain high standards of health to keep all the children well. Our staff promotes good personal hygiene through frequent hand washing and teaching common health courtesies ("cover your sneeze, please!"). We do tend to see an increase in illness when school begins and during the flu season. It is our policy to keep your child home if they do not feel well or:

- are on first 24 hours of antibiotics
- have had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- first days of a cold or constant runny nose
- heavy or constant cough
- sore throat, headache or stomach ache
- chicken pox must be scabbed or seven days have passed since breakout. A director needs to check pox before the child can return to class.

Children must be fever-free (below 100.4) without fever reducing medicine for 24 hours.

CUMCP does not require staff to have additional vaccinations such as Flu, Covid or Shingles, but it is our policy that all CUMCP staff must follow the same guidelines listed above.

When we call a parent

We try not to call parents to come and get their children, but it may be necessary if:

- the child won't stop crying after all attempts have been made to comfort him/her.
- the child is ill
- the parent is more than ten minutes late

The child is brought to the director's office and cared for there until a parent can come.

Breastfeeding Locations

We have several locations available for mothers to breastfeed their infants during regular preschool hours. Contact the preschool for available locations or any questions you may have.



Injuries

Should a child experience a minor injury while at CUMC Preschool, (i.e., scrapes, bumps, bruises, splinters, etc.), first aid will be administered. An injury report form will be completed describing the nature of the injury and the first aid procedure used. The original injury report form will be sent home with the child and a copy will be maintained in the child's permanent record. Any type of head injury warrants a parent call.

In the event of a more serious injury, the staff will administer first aid (staff are trained in CPR and first aid procedures), dial 911 for assistance if necessary, and contact the parents. If a parent can not be reached, we will transport the child for immediate medical care. A member of the administrative staff will remain with the child until one or both parents arrive. If necessary, the administrative staff member will remain with the parents to assist in any way possible. An incident report will document the injury and will be signed by the parent. Any injury requiring a doctor's care is reported to State Licensing.

Preschool Hours

We begin receiving children at 9:00 a.m. and school ends at 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. **A late fee will be administered for any late pick up.** There is no childcare available before or after school hours. Teachers are not available until 9:00 a.m. Children you may see in the rooms before and after school are staff members' children. When car line is completed, the entrance doors are locked for security purposes. A doorbell system is in place if you arrive after car line is complete.

ALL CHILDREN MUST BE DROPPED-OFF TO A PRESCHOOL STAFF MEMBER. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BY EITHER USING THE DROP-OFF CAR LINE OR WALKING YOUR CHILD IN DIRECTLY TO THEIR CLASSROOM. THIS IS FOR THE CHILD'S SAFETY. DO NOT DRIVE TO THE DOOR AND HAVE YOUR CHILD ENTER THE SCHOOL ALONE.

Children's Product Certification

We are required by State Licensing to maintain a notebook tracking items recalled for safety issues. These items, if being used in our school are removed. This notebook is available upon request to review in the preschool office.

Child Abuse Policy

Chapter 34 of the Texas Family code requires that any person "having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect" must report the case to any local or state law enforcement agency and to the Child Protective Services. Any suspicion of child abuse or neglect will be carefully documented and reported to Child Protective Services.

All staff are trained annually in child abuse/neglect. The school will make every effort to make parents and staff aware of community classes on child abuse/neglect. The school will coordinate with community for further awareness.

Cell Phone Policy

We are a cell phone-free zone; i.e. cell phone usage is not allowed in the car line, the parking lot or inside the building.

School Cancellation Policy

It is our policy that school days cancelled due to weather or unforeseeable circumstances will not be made up regardless of decisions made by CFISD. In addition, tuition will not be refunded for these missed school days.

Transmittable Illness

It is essential that parents notify the school if a child has a transmittable illness. This includes, but is not limited to Covid, flu, chicken pox, head lice or pinworms. The name of the child is held in confidence. With any transmittable illness, the director must approve the child returning to class.



Medication

We prefer the parent give any prescribed medication to the child either before or after school. However, if medication is necessary during program hours, the medicine must be brought to the Director's office in its original container or box. A Medication Request form must be completed by the parent and accompany the medication. No medication will be given without the written permission of the parent. Record of administered medication is kept in the office. **No medication is allowed to be sent in the child's backpack, including inhalers, sunscreen, bug repellent, etc.**

Pick-up and Drop-off Routines

We have a routine for students, ages two through five, that is very quick and safe for the children. Please follow these guidelines:

- Carpools are encouraged.
- A car line is available. Drop-off in the morning begins at approximately 8:55. Parents/caregiver will unload their child/children from the car,
- In the afternoon, car line pickup will begin at 1:50. Parents/caregiver will secure child/children in to the car.
- Cars will have a sign provided by Cornerstone with the child's name or carpool name. This sign should be displayed in your car during pick up. You will receive your sign at Meet the Teacher.
- Pull your car up to where the children will be loaded/unloaded. Put your car in "park" while the children are being loaded or unloaded.
- Do not use cell phones while driving through the line.
- Wait until the teachers and children are completely out of the way before leaving.
- Be extremely careful if walking children between parked vehicles. Always hold your child's hand when crossing. Be alert at all times so accidents don't occur.
- The car line waiting area is for children who are being picked up by the drive through line. If you want to pick up your child personally rather than go through the line, we ask that you park in the parking lot and pick them up from their classrooms at or **BEFORE** 1:45 Monday through Friday. Do not park in the car line area.
- In order to give our full attention to the children during pick up time, we ask that conversations with teachers and staff members be done at a different and more appropriate time when they can give you their full attention.
- Children two and younger should be walked in and picked up from classes until told differently by your teacher. We ask that parents of two-year olds park in the lot until the class begins to use the car line. Your child's teacher will inform you of this time.
- At the Fire Marshal's direction, **please avoid parking by any red curb area.**
- Designated handicap parking spaces are only to be used by those with a permit.

Late Pickup Guidelines

Pick up should be completed by fifteen minutes after the hour. Starting at 2:15 a **late fee of \$10.00** will be due upon late pick up after the 2nd time. An additional \$5.00 charge will be added to the late fee for each additional ten-minute period you are late. You will pick-up your child in the office if after car line.

Our pick up and drop off is offered as a convenience to parents and is very effective. We appreciate you helping us by following the above guidelines. We encourage use of the car line because of space limitations in the hallways. Drop off and pick up are NOT an appropriate time to discuss your child's school happenings.

Inclement Weather Policy

During times of inclement weather our car line procedures for drop off and pick up change. You may use the car line for drop off when the "Rainy Day" sign is posted on the education building. The first 2 cars will park at stations 1 and 2 in front of the sanctuary doors, and you will walk your child to the church glass doors where teachers will meet you to take your child through the building to their class. The next 2 cars will park at stations 3 and 4 in front of the education building and walk their child to the education building glass doors where teachers will meet them and take them to class. *Pickup procedures will follow the same guidelines.* You will park, walk to the appropriate door, and a teacher will be waiting there to hand you your child.

An adult should supervise children at all times. Please do not drop-off your child unless a staff member takes them from you. Please be patient and DO NOT pull around cars in the car line. Safety is our priority.

Crisis Team

A Crisis Team is established yearly. The team will follow written crisis procedures in case of national, local or internal crisis. The team will meet in case of emergency and follow guidelines established to assist staff, preschool children, and families.

We want to let you know that Cornerstone UMC Preschool has a complete Crisis Plan and Crisis Team established. Our Crisis Plan covers emergency procedures for situations such as: tornados, hurricanes, explosion, fire, kidnapping, nuclear incident, hazardous material release, power outage, ruptured water lines, and biological and chemical attack. Our Crisis Team is made up of church, preschool administrative staff and teachers. We will use the ASI gymnasium (8920 Barker Cypress) facility next door as our evacuation location should the need arise.

We follow the Cypress Fairbanks school district's guidelines in cases of emergency. Therefore, if a disaster were to occur it is so important that you listen to the radio or television to see what Cy-Fair schools are doing. If they are dismissing schools, we will do the same. If they are having a lock down situation, we will follow those procedures.

What is a lock down? It is taking immediate shelter and locking the doors with NO child being released until the all-clear signal has been issued from local authorities. This sounds scary, and as parents ourselves, we know our first instinct is to go to our children. It is so important we stay calm and do what is best for the children. We are asking you to please listen to the radio or television and follow the directions given. As teachers, our responsibility and commitment is to you and your child. We know that our own children will be well taken care of by their schools and staff.

The Preschool has extra supplies (water, food, diapers, first aid kit, etc.) and activities for the children that would make everyone comfortable in the interim. We would leave the classrooms and take everyone to one large room so we can all be together. We will take all emergency records and medications with us and call you from our cell phones (providing they are working). We have solicited several parents who would keep us in touch from the outside.

Remember the most important items:

- Stay calm – we love your children and will take good care of them in any emergency situation.
- Make sure all of your emergency phone numbers are current, especially cell phone numbers.
- Listen to your radio or television.
- Experts recommend keeping any conversation with your children brief and age appropriate when discussing a disaster.

If you find yourself in a similar situation and cannot get to Cornerstone, notify us when possible and please be assured that we will be here for you and your child.

Child Release

The safety of CUMCP students is of the highest importance. To ensure safety, we follow strict child release procedures. No child may be released to anyone without parent consent. We use the following child release guidelines:

- Carpool permits
- Pick-up Consent (found on Emergency Form) for emergency only
- Written notes
- Parent phone calls
- Please advise anyone picking up your child, they will be asked for a Driver's License, if not recognized by the staff member releasing the child/children.



Child Absences

Please notify the preschool office or your child's teacher if your child is sick or going to be absent for any reason.

6. School Adjustment and Behavioral Guidelines

Behavioral Guidelines

Each year we are asked "How will my child be disciplined?" Small classes and age-appropriate activities help children stay active and engaged from the beginning. We set reasonable rules that the children can understand and follow. It is our goal to help each child develop a strong self-image, self-discipline and feel loved by his/her caregivers and friends. Children of this age also want to please their caregivers very much. Usually a look or gentle reminder is all that is necessary to control behavior. Occasionally, this is not enough and we will follow these guidelines:

- The teacher will remove the child from the area and redirect his/her activity.
- The child will be asked to reconcile with a child who has been hurt or has hurt feelings.
- For a repeated behavior, the child will take a time away in his/her classroom to cool off for no more than three minutes. Parents will be notified in writing if their child has been in time away two or more times in a day.
- Your child may visit the Director in her office if the child needs time alone to settle down. This time is spent talking about alternative actions and calming the child down.
- Phone and/or personal conferences will be held to form a team approach (parents, teacher and director) if misbehavior is serious. Every effort and improvement in the child's behavior is reinforced and encouraged by all those working with the child.
- If a child's behavior does not improve and other children are being hurt, we will ask the parents to come pick up their child from school for the remainder of the day.

Copies of all behavior notifications will be kept on file at the school. These notices are kept in the Preschool office and are strictly confidential. A parent may see their child's file and view the behavioral report, in the presence of the director, upon request.

If at any time you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to call the teacher or the Directors. We are all here for you and your children.

Easing Separation

On the first few days of school, it helps the teachers form strong bonds with your child if you leave with ease. Please stay no longer than needed to let the teacher know anything special for the day. It is hard to separate and crying is normal. Your child's crying usually lasts only while parents are nearby. Please tell your child good-bye and that you will return for them later; don't leave without telling your child good-bye. Please know that we will cuddle and care for your child to help them adjust. You may call to check on them during the day. If a child has trouble adjusting, the Director will call the parents to develop a special plan that meets the needs of the child. Children go through different phases of separation anxiety in their childhood. The most important thing is that your child knows that you love them and that we also love and care about them. When your child feels this support, they usually move quickly through this phase.

7. Parent Communications

We work faithfully and hard to communicate with you, our parents. Teachers communicate with you during evaluations, conferences, with written notes on your child's growth and through e-mail. We encourage you to provide input and ideas during those conferences or any other time you feel it is necessary. Sending notes in your child's backpack, telephoning the teacher, or requesting a special conference at any time are also options available for you.

We understand that the drop-off system can limit parent/teacher contact. As a result, we send home monthly calendars and notes regularly. Backpacks are checked daily for notes from home also. It helps us if you check your child's (children's) backpack(s) after each school day.

Teachers have a short planning time to return calls. Calls may be returned or taken after 2:15 p.m. (at the school) or in the evening (from the teacher's home). Teachers are not allowed to come to the phone during the class day unless there is an emergency. However, if you need a message delivered, phone the school and we will deliver your message to the teacher for you.

Please keep your child's teacher informed of special circumstances that may arise in your family: parent out of town, an unusual injury or illness or anything that may cause a change in your child's behavior or mood. We can give special attention and support to help your child get through tough times.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Anytime you wish to discuss your child's progress or any concerns, we are happy to schedule a conference. Several times per year, we have special parent-teacher conference communications. These include written progress updates or assessments that go home in your child's backpack, an end-of-year developmental checklist, and phone conferences. These updates, assessments, and checklists are based upon classroom observation and informal testing in motor, social, language and readiness skills appropriate to age levels. The assessments are to help the parents and teachers see areas of the child's strengths and areas we can still work on. Remember these are not "report cards."



Below is a table of parent-teacher conferences/communications:

<i>Age of Child</i>	<i>September</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>May</i>
18-24 months	Assessment Report and Phone Conferences	Assessment Report	Assessment Report Phone Conference
2 years	Assessment Report and Phone Conference	Assessment Report	Assessment Report Phone Conference
3 years	Assessment Report and Phone Conference	Assessment Report	Assessment Report Phone Conference
4 years	Assessment Report and Phone Conference	Assessment Report and Face-to-Face Conference	Assessment Report
Learn-a-lot	Assessment Report and Phone Conference	Assessment Report	Assessment Report and Face-to-Face Conference

Handling Difficulties

Cornerstone takes pride in providing an open-door policy. If a situation occurs that needs resolution, we will work diligently with individuals to resolve a difficulty or difference. Teachers and administrators are available for conferences and individual meetings. In situations requiring an appeal, the Cornerstone UMC Preschool Board of Directors is involved.

School Improvement or Grievance Plan

If at any time there is an issue that needs to be addressed, there are three chronological steps that may be taken if needed:

- Meet with the Director or Assistant Director with a written statement of the issue and a written plan for improvement or change.
- Enlist a School Board member about the issue with the written statement and plan for improvement or change.
- Go to the School Board for a review of the issue with a written statement and plan for improvement or change.

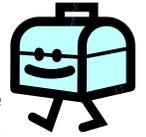
In most instances, the Director and Assistant Director can address steps needed, but the school board is available if further steps are needed for reconciliation.

8. Dress Code, What to Bring to School, Snacks & Lunches

Dress Code

It is important to dress your child for comfort and safety. We play very hard at Preschool and sometimes get very messy. Please send your children in rubber-sole shoes. We prefer no sandals since they cause a safety issue during climbing or running on the playground. Jackets are needed on cold days. We will go outside to play unless it is raining. On cold days, please dress your child warmly, because outdoor play is essential to their daily schedule. Raincoats are needed for rainy days during traffic pick-up: no umbrellas please. And remember – tennis shoes, tennis shoes, tennis shoes!

What to Bring to School



Children will need to bring a **full-sized** backpack everyday. Lunch should be brought everyday. A change of clothes should be stored in the backpack everyday for all children. Please make sure your extra clothes are appropriate for the season so your child can be comfortable if a change is needed. Children in diapers should bring all needed supplies.

Our 18-24 months and 2s classes will nap during the school day. Each child will need their own nap mat (no larger than 50" x 20") purchased by families and sent to and from school each day.

Occasionally, we may need special items for show and tell. Please feel free to contribute or share any material or knowledge you may have on any of our themes. Security blankets may be brought if needed. No toys should be brought to school. A special toy getting lost or broken hurts all of us.

LABEL! LABEL! LABEL! LABEL! EVERYTHING SHOULD BE LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME: BACKPACK, NAP MATS, THERMOS, LUNCH BOX, AND COAT. It is very possible to have four identical lunch boxes or three denim jackets. The children cannot always tell which one is their lunch box and cannot always recognize their coats among ten different ones. Lost and Found articles will be kept for one month and then donated.

Snacks and Lunches

Parents should provide lunches including all food, drink, and eating utensils. In order to assist parents in knowing what or how much of your child's lunch was eaten, teachers (when possible) will send the uneaten portion home in the lunch box. Daily notes are given to parents of young children in the 18-24 months classes.

Each parent on a rotating schedule provides snacks. Your child will take pride in sharing snacks with his/her friends. If you should miss or forget your snack turn, you will be asked to send a peanut-free replacement snack for our pantry. **Please make sure that all snacks are ready to eat and unopened.**

Foods to be shared with the class or for group lunches like grapes, hot dogs, etc., need to be cut into bite size pieces. Foods that are served heated should be brought to school already heated. All foods should be nutritious as the children use lots of energy throughout the day. We are required by the state to monitor lunches and snacks for nutritional content. Snacks and lunches should include at least three of the food groups. Please refer to the chart below:

How do I know what a child's daily food needs are?

The daily food needs for children 12 months through 23 months are included in the following chart:

Food Groups	Number of Servings To Meet 1/3 Daily Needs	Number of Servings To Meet 1/2 Daily Needs	Serving Size
Milk	1 and 1/3	2	4 oz. Milk or 1/2 oz. Cheese or 4 oz. Yogurt
Meat/ Meat Alternative	1	1 and 1/2	1/2 to 1 oz. Cooked meat or 1/2 to 1 Egg or 1/2 c. cooked beans
Vegetables and Fruit	1 and 1/3 +	2 +	2 to 3 Tb. Cooked vegetables or 2 to 3 Tb. Canned fruit or 1/4 to 1/2 Small fresh fruit or 1/4 to 1/2 c. Juice
Grains	1 and 1/3 +	2 +	1/2 Slice Bread or 1/4 to 1/2 c. Cooked Cereal or 4 oz. to 1/3 c. Pasta or Rice or 1 or 2 Crackers

The daily food needs for children two years through five years are included in the following chart:

Food Groups	Number of Servings To Meet 1/3 Daily Needs	Number of Servings To Meet 1/2 Daily Needs	Serving Size
Milk	2/3 of One Serving	1	1 c. Milk or 2 oz. Cheese or 1 c. Yogurt
Meat/ Meat Alternative	2/3 of One Serving	1	2 & 1/2 oz. Cooked meat or 1 Egg or 1/2 c. Cooked beans
Vegetable	1	1 and 1/2	1/2 c. Raw or cooked vegetable or 1c. Raw leafy vegetable
Fruit	2/3 of One Serving	1	1/2 c. Canned or chopped fruit or 1 Piece fruit or melon wedge or 1/4 c. Dried fruit or 3/4 c. Juice
Grains	2	3	1 Slice Bread or 1/2 c. Cooked cereal 1 oz. Ready to eat cereal or 1/2 c. Cooked pasta or rice or 3 to 5 Crackers

If someone in your child's class has food allergies, you will be asked to avoid those foods in the snack and in lunches. Your child's teacher will bring any food allergies to your attention. Please pay close attention to these notices. Foods containing the allergen or foods processed in an allergen environment will not be served. Parents who have children with food allergies may send special snacks for their child. We will be serving only water during snack time, so you will be responsible for only the snack and all items that relate to eating the snack. Please do not send candy or gum. You can have snacks fit our theme, so feel free to be creative!

Snack Suggestions

fruit
muffins
carrot sticks
vanilla wafers

cheese cubes
animal crackers
yogurt
graham crackers

Ritz bits
½ a banana, apple or pear slices
goldfish
pretzels

9. Tuition and Fees

Tuition and Fees

Our annual registration fee (\$110 for 2-3 day \$160 for 4-5 day classes) is due at sign-up or upon enrollment. Families with outstanding tuition balances will not be allowed to register until their account is brought up to date. A deposit equal to one month of tuition will be due in May (this will be applied to May tuition of the next year), along with a supply fee of \$45 x the number of days your child attends, and other required forms. The next tuition payment will be due by the 8th of each month, September through April. **Your deposit and fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable.**

Payments may be made by debit card, credit card, cash or check. A \$20.00 late fee will be assessed for tuition received after the 8th of each month. Students are subject to dismissal from enrollment after the 16th of the month for non-payment unless arrangements have been made for payment. Returned checks fees will be added to the students account. After 2 returned checks all payments must be made by cash or money order.

A two-week written notice is required when withdrawing your child from school and tuition is paid during this time. No tuition credits or reimbursements will be given. Non payment of fees may result in your child being removed from school.

The tuition fees are as follows:

2 day class	\$260.00
3 day class	\$355.00
4 day class	\$395.00
Learn-a-Lot (5 day class)	\$440.00

Financial Assistance

If you are in need of tuition assistance, please contact the preschool office for more information. Each year our budget and enrollment will determine our ability to provide assistance.



10. Classroom Changes and Program Evaluation

Classroom Changes

At Cornerstone, changes in room or teacher assignment are minimal. Parents whose children are affected are always informed when any change in room or teacher is necessary. We make every effort to ensure that any change is smooth for the children. We strive to always provide the best possible environment for the child.

Program Evaluation

At least once a year, parents are asked to evaluate how well the program is meeting their child's needs. We ask for feedback and suggestions on curriculum, special activities, school procedure, and parent expectations of school programs. Program evaluations are typically done in the spring.

***We look forward to an exciting year with your child.
Our staff is always available.
We all want your preschool year
to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.***

Thank you for choosing Cornerstone UMC Preschool.



As a reminder:

- Changes or updates to school policies will be communicated through the Preschool Pages (a monthly newsletter to parents) and email notifications.
- Please follow us on Facebook: Cornerstone UMC Preschool; and on Instagram: cornerstone-umc-preschool.
- An addendum to the Parent Handbook may be issued if special circumstances arise.