

Parent Handbook



St. Andrew's United Methodist Church
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www.standrewsumcpreschool.com

Dear Preschool Families,

As a mom and grandmother, I know the excitement and energy that surrounds the start of a new school year. As St. Andrew's begins another preschool season, we look forward to partnering with you as your children, grow, discover, and learn, and we are grateful for the opportunity to assist you and your family in this work.

As one of the pastors at St. Andrew's I look forward to getting to know you and your children. If you ever need a listening ear, a visit in the hospital, have a faith question or a question about the community, please let me know. St. Andrew's also offers weekly worship, fellowship and study on Sundays and Wednesdays throughout the school year, and you are welcome at any and all. We also invite you to check out our calendar at st.andrewsumc.com for additional outreach and other special events.

Thanks again for entrusting your children to us!

O God, we thank you for the treasure of children in our midst; Watch over them as they learn and play; keep them safe from harm; imbue them with wisdom; defend them from all evil; help us to meet their needs and hold all of us in the palm of your hand. Amen.

(prayer by Robin Antonia Henrich, Esq. Women's Uncommon Prayers)

Grace and peace,

Pastor Sherri
sbarnes@wnccumc.net

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Andrew's Preschool! I'd like to thank you for sharing your children with us. Preschool education is an important facet in a child's development and by being enrolled in St. Andrew's your child will benefit from the expertise of well-trained teachers, the strong foundation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum, and a supportive religious education program.

The school was founded in 1960 as a kindergarten and over the years has seen many changes. But the love and concern for young children have been constant and your child will become one of the St. Andrew's family who has been nurtured by a strong Christian based early childhood education.

Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. New parents need to familiarize themselves with the school's policies and returning parents will find some changes from last year. Carefully reviewing each policy will eliminate confusion later on in the year. Should a question arise, please do not hesitate to ask. Our doors are always open to our parents. I am looking forward to getting to know each one of you and your children.

Kindest Regards,
Shannon

Shannon Brakstad
Director

GOALS OF ST. ANDREW'S PRESCHOOL

The Preschool program should help each child learn:

- To work happily and cooperatively with other children in a large group; to work and play with others in a program of learning activities that provide daily practice in sharing possessions, taking turns and assuming responsibility; to stick to a job, to put away toys and equipment, and to participate in group activities as a leader and a follower.
- To develop a sense of security and a good self-concept about his/her capabilities.
- To express him/herself creatively using materials such as paper, glue, scissors, paints, clay, crayons, blocks, and dramatic play.
- To establish and practice desirable health habits, such as toilet routine and hand washing, and desirable attitudes toward nourishing foods.
- To care for his/her own possessions and to work with other children to share in caring for the preschool property.
- To develop motor skills and coordination through play with appropriate materials such as puzzles, manipulative and constructive toys, blocks, playground apparatus and riding toys.
- To learn to respect authority, to express emotions in an appropriate manner and to develop self-discipline appropriate to the child's development.
- To express him/herself verbally; to participate in discussions and conversations with other children; and to develop good listening skills.
- To develop an appreciation for good children's literature and stories.
- To participate in rhythms, songs, dramatizations, dances, and other musical activities.
- To develop cognitive skills of comparing, sorting, classifying, problem-solving, testing, observing, cause and effect, and building concepts appropriate to the age of the child.
- To learn to feel God's love through the love, caring, and respect shown to them, and to develop an understanding for the basic elementary aspects of Christian living.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for the one-, two-, three-, or four-year class, a child must be that age on or before AUGUST 31 of the school year. Children entering the three- and four-year-old classes must be potty trained. Each child is required to have a health form completed by a physician before entering Preschool. All immunizations required by North Carolina school laws are required for Preschool.

TUITION

The current tuition is listed as follows:

One Year Olds	3 days	\$280
Two Year Olds	2 days	\$250
Two Year Olds	3 days	\$280
Two Year Olds	5 days	\$530
Three Year Olds	2 days	\$250
Three Year Olds	3 days	\$280
Three Year Olds	5 days	\$530
Four Year Olds	5 days	\$340

Tuition is due by the first of the month. A 10% discount will be given to siblings. A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged if payments have not been received by the seventh of the month. A \$25.00 fee will be imposed for all checks returned insufficient funds.

Monthly tuition is paid in full, regardless of absenteeism. Since we operate solely on tuition fees and on a very close budget, tuition must be paid by the first of that month to which the tuition would be applied. Late tuition will result in the child being suspended from the preschool until arrangements for payment are made.

MATERIAL FEES

The yearly Material Fees help to cover the cost of classroom supplies during the year. This fee is due before the school year begins. The fees are as follows:

1's - \$30
2's - \$40
3's - \$60
4's - \$75

WITHDRAWALS

The registration fee and deposit is non-refundable. The director of the preschool must be notified in writing one month in advance of the withdrawal of a child. The deposit applies to the last month's tuition. Tuition will be required for any month in which your child has attended preschool for one or more days.

PROGRAM TIMES

We ask for your cooperation in getting your child to school at 9:00 a.m. and picking him/her up promptly at 12:45 p.m.

Pick-up begins at 12:45 and will finish at 1:00. Any parent who has not picked up his/her child by 1:00 will be considered late and charged a fee of \$5.00 for the first five minutes and \$1.00 per minute after. Teachers are expected to clean and disinfect their rooms after the children depart and having to watch a child while waiting for a parent prevents the teacher from doing their classroom duties. The late fee will be paid at the time it is incurred.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND HOLIDAYS

Please check the school calendar in the back of this book for school closings and holidays.

When bad weather warrants the closing or delay of the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System, the preschool will be closed and the teachers and/or director will communicate through email, app or social media. Or you can call the school's phone to see if the preschool has closed. Closing messages will be posted by 7:00 am.

It is possible that we may close due to unforeseen circumstances such as power outages or heating issues. These are circumstances beyond our control, and we will do all that we can to avoid such closures.

If closing due to a pandemic, the parents will pay the tuition of the last month that we were open. Teachers will be paid through this month.

The school does not make up any of these unscheduled closings.

HEALTH INFORMATION

We do not require that your child have a medical examination before preschool entrance since most yearly check-ups are given on or near the child's birthday. However, all immunizations must be up to date and the Physician's Statement must be signed by the child's pediatrician. The signed Physician's Statement, the Emergency Card, and the Get Acquainted Form must be returned before your child starts preschool in September.

ILLNESSES

Much of the success in the health of the children rests on the parent's cooperation. *If a child does not appear to be well enough to participate in activities as usual and/or has any symptoms of sickness, please keep them at home.* If we notice symptoms, we will:

- Immediately separate the child from the other children in the class.
- Contact the parent to have the child picked up.
- Continue to observe the child for other symptoms.

We cannot allow a child to remain inside during outdoor time, as all the teachers are busy supervising the playground. If a child has been ill, we request that you keep him/her at home until he/she is able to participate in all regular activities.

Please notify the Preschool teacher immediately when your child has contracted a communicable disease such as the flu, COVID-19, measles, chicken pox, etc. so that she may inform the other parents of

the child's exposure. By such cooperation we hope to protect other children in the preschool and younger brothers and sisters.

The Preschool staff cannot administer any medication to a child during school hours.

SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF A CHILD FROM THE PRESCHOOL SETTING

- Fever (temperature 100.4 °F or higher) or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rash
- Eye discharge – thick mucus draining from the eye or “pink eye”.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health and safety of the other children in our care.
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Earache

EXCLUSION

Any child will be temporarily excluded from the preschool if he/she has one or more of the following conditions:

CONDITION

Chickenpox

TERMS OF EXCLUSION

Until 6 days after the start of the rash, or until sores have dried.

COVID-19

Until 5 days after the first day of symptoms or date of COVID-19 test, if they have no symptoms. They may return after 5 days if they have no symptoms or symptoms are improving and they have been fever free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medications, but must continue to wear a mask for an additional 5 days to minimize the risk of infecting others.

Diarrhea Illness

24 hours after diarrhea as resolved.

Fever

Until fever free for 24 hours

Hand/Foot and Mouth Disease

When lesions heal or drooling ceases.

Impetigo (skin infection)

Until 24 hours after treatment and lesions are not draining.

Pinworms

Until 24 hours after treatment and bathing

Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)

Until 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Rash with fever or joint pain

Until diagnosed not to be measles or rubella.

Ringworm	Until 24 hours after treatment has begun and lesions have begun to shrink.
Runny nose (green)	Until 24 hours after medication. If persistent after 5 days, a doctor's note will be required.
Scabies/Head Lice	Until 24 hours after treatment has begun and the child's head is clear of lice
Strep Throat	Until 24 hours after the initial antibiotic treatment and fever has ended.

DROP-OFF and PICK-UP

Drop-off and pick-up are at the side preschool door of the church. Look for our logo on the doors. Park in a parking spot and walk your child to their classroom. Drop-off in the morning will begin at 9:00 and pick-up begins at 12:45. You will pick up your child from their classroom at the end of the school day. We ask that parents pull into the parking lot from Archdale or Emerywood and exit from the back of the parking lot onto Montpelier. Please park in a parking spot and not along the curb. This should help avoid congestion in the parking lot and add to the safety of the children. Please remember as you pull in and leave the parking lot: CHILDREN ARE IN THE PARKING LOT! YOU MUST DRIVE SLOWLY AND BE ALERT AT ALL TIMES!

If you need to pick up your child early, you MUST first contact the Preschool Office.

If several parents want to form a carpool, please send a note to the teacher listing children and parent's names. This must be signed by all parents. We will not let a child go home with someone without written permission.

CELL PHONES

We are a NO CELL PHONE ZONE! Do not walk up for drop-off or pick-up talking on your cell phones. Your children are excited to see you and tell you about their day so be prepared to give them your undivided attention! For the safety of the children, please wait until you are out of the school parking lot.

CLOTHING

Since Preschool children are playing actively at school and using materials such as clay, paint, water, and sand it is advisable that they be dressed comfortably in clothes that do not require "being careful." Since flip-flops, crocs, and slick soled shoes are difficult to climb and run in, we prefer that you send your child in sneakers. Please make sure that all personal articles are well marked with the child's name.

We go outside unless it is raining. Be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather conditions that day.

CONFERENCES AND FEEDBACK

During the year, parents may wish to talk with the teacher regarding their child's adjustment and progress. If so, we urge you to call your child's teacher. You may make an appointment or just talk on the phone.

Our staff welcomes comments and suggestions to improve the quality of care for your child. When areas of concern arise, the problem should be brought to the attention of the classroom teacher who will hear your suggestion and/or grievance and attempt to work through the problem. If additional communication is necessary, the problem can be taken to the director. As a final step, the preschool committee will address concerns that have not been resolved by the preschool staff.

MESSAGES

Any message sent from parents to the teacher should be sent in an email to the teacher or written form rather than asking the child to “tell the teacher.” If a written note, place in your child’s folder that remains in their backpack. When your child is to ride home with someone other than the regular carpool, please email the teacher or send a note with the child when he/she comes to school. For your child’s safety, we will not allow a child to leave with someone else unless we have written notification.

BIRTHDAYS

We request that the birthday cake be kept for the home celebration. You may bring small cupcakes, cookies, or ice cream cups and birthday napkins and cups if you wish. Please do not send goodie bags. Because they are such a safety hazard, balloons are not permitted at preschool for any occasion. You are invited to attend the celebration and remain for a visit. If you are planning a birthday celebration outside of school for your child including classmates, please send in an invite for every student.

WHAT TO SEND WITH YOUR CHILD

- A complete set of extra clothing in a zip-lock bag (marked with the child’s name) to be kept in his/her backpack in case of accidents. Make sure that the clothes are seasonally appropriate. We will ask that summer clothes be replaced in October with winter clothes and then winter clothes be replaced in April with summer clothes.
- One’s and two’s should keep at least 2 diapers in their backpack at all times.
- Each child will need a snack, lunch and labeled water bottle.
- Appropriate outerwear for the weather including coats, hats, mittens, (gloves are too difficult to get on and off), and boots if you desire. Label everything with your child’s name.
- Each parent is asked to contribute a roll of paper towels, a box of tissues, and a box of wipes to help cut down on classroom expenses.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY TOYS WITH YOUR CHILD

It is difficult for children to “share” a special toy with other classmates.

LUNCH

The teachers will assist children with their lunches, but the children should bring food and drink that they can manage themselves. Sandwiches, finger foods, and fruit are suggested for all ages. For the one year old class, please do not send food that will have to be fed to the children. We will not serve candy at lunch time, so if you send a pre-packaged lunch that comes with candy or send candy in your child’s lunch, the candy will be sent home in the child’s bag. Also, please do not send glass containers or carbonated drinks in your child’s lunch. These items, like candy, will be sent home also. Lunch is a time that we stress healthy eating habits so please plan your lunch menu accordingly.

The following foods can be **choking hazards** for children under 4 years of age:

- Hot dogs
- Chunks of meat or cheese
- Whole grapes
- Hard, goeey, or sticky candy
- Chunks of peanut butter
- Raw vegetables
- Raisins
- Chewing gum
- Popcorn
- Nuts and seeds should not be included in their lunch

Please make sure that any of these items sent are chopped into small pieces.

SEPARATION

Young children and parents are often uncomfortable when separated from each other. It is important to remember that a child who is frightened when separated from a parent will soon learn to trust and depend upon other people. Learning to overcome this fear is essential to healthy social development.

If you feel that your child might be upset the first few days of school, please let the teacher know. Our teachers are well-trained and expect children to be concerned when their parents leave.

Prepare yourself before school begins by looking forward to the new and exciting experiences that your child has in store. Good feelings are contagious, and children instinctively react to their parents' manner.

Prepare your child by enthusiastically talking with him/her about the beginning of school. This way your child will feel more comfortable and in control if he/she knows what to expect. A few days before school starts, begin to set a regular school routine. Bedtime stories and laying out clothes the night before add continuity to the day and become predictable. Predictability in turn is comforting.

On the first day of school be calm and relaxed yourself. When it is time to say "good-bye" please do so confidently with a kiss or a hug. Be firm but friendly about leaving. If your child cries or whines, prolonging the good-bye will only make it harder on you both. The teacher will assume responsibility for the child at this time. When you arrive home, please feel free to call the preschool to check on your child. Our teachers are used to the adjustment period and know the best procedures for helping your children adjust. You can be assured that they will be loved and cared for when they are in our care. This process, when used consistently, really works.

If you have any questions regarding our separation policy, please contact the director or your child's teacher.

PRESCHOOL BOARD

St. Andrew's Preschool Board consists of representatives from the church, parents, and staff. These individuals set policy and guidelines for the preschool under the advisement of the director. Such a policy includes tuition adjustments, staff salary, yearly goals, etc.

A list of Board Members may be obtained in the preschool office.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

The following rules will be always reinforced by the teachers:

- Stay on the mulch.
- Feet first on slides.
- Swings must stop before getting off.
- Keep sand in the sandbox.
- Hands off the fences.
- Children may not go behind the storage shed or treehouse.
- Do not play with sticks or limbs.
- Go down slides, not up.
- Do not stand on swings.
- Children are never to touch the gates.

DISCIPLINE

Our first step in effective discipline is that our teachers understand the age group they teach and are well prepared each day with a variety of activities.

Within each classroom positive rules and guidelines will be established. Children are encouraged to try new things and are taught new things at their level. When a child does not follow the guidelines for the class, he/she will be reminded of the rules. If the reminder is ineffective, the child's attention will be redirected or there will be some time allotted out of activities for a child to think and prepare himself/herself for appropriate behavior.

Repeated biting, hitting, kicking or any other inappropriate classroom behavior will not be tolerated. Teachers and children expect to be treated with respect. Any discipline problems that persist or are disruptive to the class will be shared with parents so that teachers, parents, and child can work together to correct the inappropriate behavior. If we do not feel that we can meet your child's needs, we will give you 2 weeks' notice to find a more appropriate placement for your child.

2023-2024 School Calendar

September 4	School Closed/Labor Day
September 5 - 8	First Week of School/Dismissal at 12:00 pm
November 10	School Closed/Veterans Day
November 22 - 24	School Closed/Thanksgiving
Dec 18 – Jan 1	School Closed/Christmas Break
January 2	Return to School
January 15	School Closed/Martin Luther King's Birthday
February 1 - 2	Registration (2024-2025)
February 19	School Closed/Presidents' Day
March 29 - April 5	School Closed/Spring Break
April 8	Return to School
May 20-21	Last Days of School
May 22	Graduation for 4 Year Olds 9:30 am
May 23-24	Teacher Workdays