

THE UNITED CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL
CHAPEL ON THE HILL

The United Church Nursery School was established in 1961 as a service offered by the Education Department of The United Church, Chapel on the Hill, a non-denominational church, to its members and to the community. The program is licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services. We welcome you to the Chapel on the Hill and look forward to sharing the nursery school experience with you and your child.

Non-discrimination Policy: The United Church Nursery School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, religious or ethnic origin in administration of its educational/admission policies or scholarship program.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

SCHOOL HOURS: ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

- Enrichment Program** **9:00 am - 12:00 noon, Monday - Friday**
The Nursery School entrance door on the lower level is opened at 8:55 am. Teachers use the time prior to 8:55 am for preparation of the classrooms.
- Afternoon Options** **12:00 pm - 1:30 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**
12:00 pm - 2:55 pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
- Carpools** If you are interested in forming a carpool please see the director for a list of people who may live near you.
- Parking** **Park only on the SIDE of the Education Building.** The spaces at the end of the building are reserved for the Church staff. **For security, please lock your car if you leave valuables in it. Please do not leave ANY children unattended in the car.**
- Additional parking** The Church has occasional special programs and services during the Nursery School hours. If the upper parking lot is full or congested, additional parking spaces are in the lower lot in front of the Church. Thank you for walking up the hill.
- Parking lot safety** We urge parents to drive **slowly** in the parking lot. Use the utmost caution when driving or walking with children in the parking lot. **Please hold children's hands or keep children very close to you as you cross the parking lot.** Small children are not easily seen from a car. **We urge you to buckle each child in your care in a car safety restraint and to wear one yourself.**
- Entrance** Please enter through the fenced playground and use the outside stairway. The classrooms are on the lower level. **For safety's sake, please CLOSE the PLAYYARD GATE ANYTIME you open it. Latch the gate and replace the rope on the post.**
- Church phone number & answering machine** **The main phone number for the school is 865-482-2221.** The phone is in the Director's office and has an answering machine. If you are trying to reach the school, and don't get an answer, please leave a message. The director checks for messages frequently. If you have an emergency situation and need to speak with the director immediately, you may call the Church phone number, 865-482-1016. The Church secretary will find someone to help you. **Please only call the Church number in an emergency.**

ARRIVAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Bring children inside Parents are responsible for bringing their child or carpool into their respective classrooms in the building. **It is for the children's safety that we ask you to accompany them. Please "sign-in" each child with one of his/her teachers. Your children are under your supervision until they are signed in and settled in the classroom; this includes hallways, bathrooms, playgrounds, parking lots, and all school property.**

Please be on time **For your child's benefit, please try to bring him/her on time. Being late often makes it difficult for your child to join a group and to separate from you.**

Hints for difficult separation The teachers are prepared to assist you and your child when he/she has difficulty separating from you. The teacher's hug and individual attention will help the child become involved in the activities.

Parents are welcome to come into the classroom to see the activities with your child. However, in our experience, for a child having separation difficulties, it is often easier for the child to separate and to make the adjustment if the parent leaves quickly or does not stay long. However, it is important to tell the child good-bye. It is often difficult for the parent to leave a child who is crying. The teachers are experienced and are glad to help the child through the transition time. Once the parent has gone, the child usually becomes interested in the classroom activities. The director will be glad to report to the parent when the child settles into the activities and discuss with parents hints for making separation easier.

We encourage parents to be confident and positive in talking with the child about coming to nursery school. Expect the best. If the parent's personal anxiety shows, the child will also be anxious. This is an important growth step.

DEPARTURE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Dismissal time Morning classes end at 12:00 noon. Afternoon classes end at either 1:30 or 2:55 pm.

"Check out" policy **Upon arrival, please be sure to "sign-out" your child or carpool children with your child's teacher who has the clip board. After your child is signed out, your child or carpool children are under your supervision; this includes hallways, bathrooms, playgrounds, parking lots, and all school property.**

Late pick-up policy Please call the School (865-482-2221) if an unusual delay occurs in picking up your child. **Be respectful of the teachers and your child; be prompt.**

If the child has not been picked up by ten minutes past pick-up time, the parents will be called to come pick up the child or to make arrangements for someone else to pick up the child. In the event that the parents can't be reached, we will contact the designated emergency friend. (You may leave a specific phone number where you can be reached that morning as a note to the teachers or by signing the Parents' Sign-out on the clip board by the Tuition Box.)

Authorized person **Unless notified, we are only authorized to release your child to those people listed on your Enrollment Information form.**

Pick-up by someone other than If your child will be picked up by someone other than you or the usual carpool, please **send a note** with the child to notify the teachers. If the new driver is unfamiliar to the teachers, please include the driver's full name, phone number, and a description

- usual** of the person. On the shelf outside Room 107, there is a red basket with forms "Permission for going home with a friend" which you may use. If during the morning your pick-up arrangements change, **you may call the Nursery School Director** to identify the person who will pick up your child.
- I.D. request** The staff will ask for a picture I.D. (identification) of anyone unfamiliar to them who arrives to pick up the child even if you have notified the director. **This is for your child's protection.**
- Anxious children** Please be considerate. Some children become anxious when their parents are late arriving for pick-up. In addition, the teachers have other responsibilities after the children are gone.
- Re-assume responsibility for your child** Parents are welcome to stay and visit with one another when you come to pick up your child. It's an excellent opportunity for families, both parents and children, to form friendships. However, when you arrive to pick up your child, then you again assume responsibility for your child. With so many families coming and going, many with younger children, **it's very important for you to watch your child closely even as you visit.** Please ask the director if you need assistance getting your child to leave.
- Dismissal areas** Children will be dismissed from their (1) **classrooms**, the (2) **"hall toy" area** (Rm 101 and the adjacent hallway), or (3) **one of the outside play areas** (the tricycle area and adjacent "little woods," the fenced playground or the front hill of the Chapel).
- The classes rotate the use of the 3 outdoor play areas. Teachers may place a **sign on the door frame of the classroom indicating the play area to be used that day.**
- Occasionally, classes will take a **walk in the woods or neighborhood**, or go to Fellowship Hall. **If you don't see your child's class, check with the director.** The class will return shortly.
- Dismissal safety rules** **Children must wait inside their outdoor play area for the adult to get them:** that is, inside the rope of the tricycle area, inside the fence of the swings area, on the sidewalk at the bottom of the hill area. **Please come into the play area to pick up your child.**
- Policy of dismissal to someone appearing to be impaired** **The Nursery School is dedicated to providing safe situations at all times for the child. At dismissal, if, in the opinion of the teacher and director, the parent, guardian or person designated to pick up the child appears to be impaired, possibly due to alcohol or drug consumption or emotional or physical state, it is the policy of the school to try to encourage that person to call another person, a taxi or make some other arrangement for taking the child. If we believe that by driving, the person is putting him/herself or others at risk, we will call the police and make a report.**

NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM:

Morning Enrichment Program

- Classrooms Activities** Rooms 106, 108 and 109 will be used. Activities may also be held in other classrooms. The teachers will set up the classrooms with different activities daily. The first part of the morning will be a "free-choice" time in which children may use all of the areas and equipment in the room. Teachers will interact with the children to develop a trusting relationship and to help the children develop language and other skills. Equipment and activities will be varied according to the developmental levels of the children. The emphasis

is on the child being with other children in a play environment, having fun while developing life and cognitive skills, learning basic concepts and having pretend play.

For example, art activities will focus on the "process of art" rather than "finished craft projects" which limit a child's creativity and learning aptitude and require a lot of teacher assistance. The goal is to help children learn how to use art materials and to enjoy their own creations. Children will help pick up and put away the day's equipment and materials. Teachers will sing songs, do finger plays and movement activities with the children. There will be periods for sharing and discussion during transition times. There is a group bathroom time to wash hands before the snack. There will be a group time for the teacher to read stories. Teachers will usually have outdoor play or active play in the hall-toy area at the end of the morning. The teachers will be flexible and adapt the morning's activities to fit the particular needs of the group that day.

Hand washing For good personal hygiene and to minimize the spread of germs, children will be shown how and required to wash hands upon entering the classroom, after using the bathroom, before eating, and at other appropriate times.

Sunscreen Sunscreen should be applied to the child before coming to school if outdoor play in sunny conditions is likely. If a parent wants the teacher to apply sunscreen to the child, the parents must give written authorization to the teacher and will supply the sunscreen that is to be applied. The bottle should be plainly labeled with the child's name, and will be kept in a locked container in the director's office.

OPTIONAL PROGRAMS:

Friday Kids' Lunch In

Kids' Lunch In This is an **optional service provided by the teachers and not part of the Nursery School program**. It is **separate from** the afternoon classes held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The teachers take turns being involved. Scheduled dates will be listed in the calendar. Sign-up sheets will be on the hall bulletin board the Monday prior to the Friday Kids' Lunch In.

Fee + Bring Own Lunch For a separate fee payable to the teachers in charge that day (money is paid directly to the teachers, *cash only please*, and is not a part of their salary), children may bring a sack lunch and a drink and stay from 12:00 - 1:30 pm or 12:00 – 2:55pm.

Activities Children will eat lunch together in room 107. They will then have outdoor/ indoor play time.

Afternoon classes

Days Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons
Hours/ sessions 12:00 - 1:30 (half session)
 12:00 - 2:55 (full session)
 Parents may choose one, two or three half or full sessions per week.

Reservations Standing reservation will be for a specific session or sessions for an entire month. A reservation for an occasional or "drop-in" session must be approved by the director and is contingent on space being available to maintain appropriate child:adult ratios. A sign-up sheet will be on the shelf above the lockers outside room 107. All reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis.
Parents may enroll their children in both the morning and afternoon classes.

EMERGENCY DRILLS, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, DISASTER PLANS:

Emergency Drills	The school is required to have an "exit-the-building" drill at least once per month. Twice a year the school will have a "tornado drill" in the building.
Emergency Preparedness; Disaster Plans	Department of Human Services and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (T.E.M.A.) require the school to have written plans of action for various emergencies. Those plans include evacuation of the building and walking to a safe shelter, a plan for remaining in the building ("sheltering-in-place"), and a plan for evacuation by staff vehicle to a safe shelter outside of Oak Ridge. There are plans for reuniting children with their families. The school is required to have on hand first-aid supplies, food, water and blankets should we have to remain in the building. The Nursery School staff are trained in the components of the plans and how to implement them.
Information for Parents	Parents will be informed of the Emergency and Disaster Plans of the school at the Parents' Orientation in August and will receive a separate handout which summarizes the plans of what the school will do and what parents should do in the event of an emergency situation.

SCHOOL CALENDAR, VACATIONS AND SNOW DAYS:

School calendar	Nursery School will be in session approximately from mid August until the beginning of June. The exact dates are determined yearly. The calendar is posted on the wall by the information bulletin boards.
Holidays	Days will correspond to those of the Oak Ridge City Schools. The holidays are <u>usually</u> Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and spring and/or Easter break. Occasionally, the schools will add other vacation days.
Teacher conference/workshops	The Nursery School may close in the fall for the conference of the Tennessee Association for the Education of Young Children (T.A.E.Y.C.). Parents will be notified <u>if</u> the school will close for a conference and the exact dates of the closure.
Closure due to weather or emergency	The Nursery School will follow the Oak Ridge Schools (<u>not Anderson County Schools</u>) in closures due to inclement weather. If the Oak Ridge Schools are closed, the Nursery School programs will be closed as well. If the Oak Ridge Schools open 1-hour late , Nursery School will also open 1-hour late and still end at the regular time. If the Oak Ridge Schools close early due to weather conditions or emergency , Nursery School will dismiss at the same time as the Oak Ridge Schools. Please check the internet for closings. The director will also send out an email letting parents know of the school closure. Oak Ridge Schools are allotted 3 snow days which are not made up within the school year. The Nursery School Board will determine if and when snow days will be made up if more than three occur.

CLOTHING FOR SCHOOL:

Label clothing, and all personal belongings	Please mark all clothing, jackets, hats, mittens and other personal belongings with your child's name. Teachers have permanent markers if you need assistance. Children often don't recognize or remember their possessions. Unmarked items will be put in the Lost & Found box.
Clothing for school	Please send your child in play clothes . We often work with messy materials, and we play outdoors in the sand, the woods, and grass. We want children to have these experiences

without worrying about keeping clean.

- Clothes children can manage alone** As much as possible please choose clothing that your child can manage alone, such as elastic-waist pants. Avoid clothes with complicated buttons or belts. This is especially important for developing independence in the bathroom.
- School shoes** Please send your child in sneakers or shoes that can be securely fastened. Sandals, "flip-flops," shoes that slip off easily or those with slick soles can be dangerous to children as they run and climb.
- Outdoor clothing** We make an attempt to play outside every day. Please be sure your child is dressed for outdoor conditions (jackets, hats, hoods, mittens). Occasionally, classes will go outside early in the morning when it may be cooler than predicted for noon. Even in cold weather, classes will go outside for a short play period. If you don't wish for your child to go outdoors with the class, please plan to pick him/her up early.
- Extra set of clothes** Please bring an extra set of clothes for "emergencies": shirt, pants, underpants, socks. These will be kept in the child's locker. Remember to exchange them periodically as the season changes and your child grows.
- Soiled or wet clothes** Soiled or wet clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. **Please replace the clothing in your child's locker for another clothing "emergency." If for some reason, there is a problem with your child's extra clothes, the school will provide extra. Please launder and return any nursery school clothing your child wears home.**

BRINGING PERSONAL ITEMS TO SCHOOL:

- Sharing** Children are encouraged to bring interesting items to share with their class, **especially nature objects and living things** (like frogs, insects, rocks, etc.). If you do bring in a live creature, **please make sure it is in a safe container for both it and the children** (i.e. no glass jars, etc.)
- Personal Toys** We discourage children from bringing personal toys or money to school. These items may be easily lost or broken & it's often difficult to share with everyone in the class. If a child brings a toy to school, the teacher will ask that it be kept in the locker during school. The teacher's time is best spent in interacting with the children than with keeping separate children's personal toys from the school's.
- Security items** We understand that some children have security items that they may want to bring to school - a stuffed animal, a blanket, etc. Children will be encouraged to leave their security items in their lockers so that they can more freely play in the room. A child may have the security item as needed as long as it is not the source of disruptive behavior.
- Tote bags or backpacks** We do not require children to have tote bags or back packs but they may be brought. If one is brought, children will be encouraged to carry it themselves and take responsibility for it. Please check it for school notes, art work, or wet clothing.
- Chewing gum** We ask that parents not bring their children with chewing gum in their mouths. We are concerned about choking during exciting play as well as the difficulties that arise when it is accidentally dropped and ends up stuck to another child.
- Individual food brought** If your child needs to bring along the rest of his/her breakfast, we ask that you have your child finish eating in the car before coming into the building. An individual

from home snack from home for your child to keep in his/her locker is not necessary.

MID-MORNING SNACK AND BIRTHDAYS:

Mid-morning snack Children take turns bringing a nutritious snack for the class. It's an opportunity to share with their friends, to try different foods, and to help us offer a variety of foods. The Health Department requires that all snacks are in individual serving containers. You may use baggies, plastic or paper containers or buy foods that are individually packaged. The Nursery School provides 100% juice. Children will be encouraged to try new foods but no one will be forced to eat.

Notifying you of your turn to bring the snack You will be notified when it's your child's turn to bring snack in the following ways: **(1) teachers will post a monthly calendar by their classroom door with the snack assignments, (2) teachers will send a note home with your child indicating which day your child should bring the snack. Suggestions for healthy snacks are posted outside the classrooms.** Recommended serving size for preschoolers is one tablespoon for each year of age, so a four year old would get 4 tablespoons, which is ¼ cup.

Snack day is special to children If your child is absent on his/her snack day, please don't bring the snack anyway. Wait until the child returns and reschedule it with the teachers so that the child doesn't miss participating in the sharing of the snack. If you forget to bring the snack on your designated day, please send in a non-perishable snack for the teachers to keep on hand for the next time someone forgets.

Food allergies **If your child has an allergy to any food or ingredient which might be present in a commercial or home-made product, PLEASE DISCUSS THE CHILD'S CONDITION WITH THE DIRECTOR AND TEACHERS. Parents may be asked to bring a personal supply of snacks for their child to be used in lieu of the snack planned for the day. If your child has a food allergy an Allergy Action Plan form must be filled out annually to keep in your child's file. Protection of the child is of great concern.**

Birthdays Birthdays are a special time for children, and each will be recognized. Teachers usually schedule a child to bring the snack on his/her birthday. Children with summer birthdays celebrate a "**half birthday**" about mid year. **Licensing standards require us not to serve frosted cupcakes or cakes or candy as part of our snack. Consider something a little different as a birthday snack: muffins, oatmeal cookies, pizza, watermelon, mini sandwiches, etc.** (The Nursery School still provides the juice.)

Special request about birthdays **Unless the whole class is involved, we request that you not bring to Nursery School birthday party invitations or gifts for an after-school party.** Those children not involved will have hurt feelings about being excluded. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding of the children's feelings.

ILLNESS AND INJURY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

When not to send child to school In general, don't send your child to school if he/she doesn't feel well, has a fever, diarrhea or vomiting, nasal discharge or cough sufficient to suggest a respiratory infection, untreated "pink-eye" or skin infection (such as impetigo). Keeping your sick child at home will help control the spread of infectious illnesses at school.

When to return to school after In general, a child may return to school if there has been no fever in the last 24 hours, after the child has taken a prescribed medication for 24-48 hours (i.e. antibiotic for strep throat & impetigo), if the child is not vomiting or does not have diarrhea, if the child

an illness	doesn't have a nasal discharge or cough sufficient to suggest a respiratory infection. Your child will recover more quickly at home and will enjoy Nursery School more when he/she is feeling well. Children diagnosed with scabies or lice shall have proof of treatment and be free of nits prior to returning to school.
Illness occurring at school	If your child becomes ill <u>during the morning</u> (e.g. vomiting, diarrhea or fever), the parents or the designated emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. We don't have facilities or staff to be able to care individually for a sick child.
Report contagious diseases	Please notify the school if your child contracts a contagious disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, "pink eye," head lice, etc. so that we may inform the other parents of the date of possible exposure. If your child is diagnosed with and has exposed other children in the program to: hepatitis A; food poisoning; salmonella; shigella; measles; mumps; rubella; pertussis; polio; haemophilus influenza type B or meningococcal meningitis; we need to know so we can notify all the other parents and report to the health department. This is a DHS licensing rule and will help control the spread of these diseases.
Report of routine absences	It is not required but helpful to report to the director "routine illnesses" (colds, other virus). If the child is absent for any reason for several days, the school would appreciate being notified. Thank you.
Medications affecting behavior	If the child has been given a medication that might affect his/her behavior in class (e.g. might make the child drowsy or overly stimulated), please inform the teacher and describe how it might affect the child's behavior.
Medication given at school	THE SCHOOL WILL <u>NOT</u> ROUTINELY GIVE MEDICATIONS TO CHILDREN. If it is absolutely necessary to give medication while at school, (e.g. for an allergic reaction), the director must be informed. The medication must be clearly labeled with the child's name. A note must be attached with clear instructions for giving the medication. For a serious condition, the parents will supply written instructions from the child's physician as to symptoms and response to the child's condition. The director will keep the medication in the office and administer the medication to the child. The only exception is a child who requires immediate medication or an injection because of an allergic reaction (e.g. epi-pen for bee sting) and then the teacher may administer it and it will be kept in the classroom.
Special health needs	If your child has special health needs (e.g. food allergies, asthma), please include that information on your child's enrollment forms. Please inform the teachers and director of the special needs. A conference can be arranged to discuss the child's needs.
Minor injuries	If your child has a minor injury during the morning we will treat it as follows: scrape or slight cut: wash with soap & water & cover with a band-aid bruise or slight bump: apply cool compress or gel pack We will inform parents of the treatment given when they come to pick-up the child.
Injury that requires immediate medical care	If your child has an injury that requires professional care, the parents will be notified to meet the director and child at the Emergency Room of Methodist Medical Center, as authorized by the parent's signature on the Enrollment Information form or the child will be taken to the local Oak Ridge medical facility designated by the parent.
Parents can't be reached?	If we are unable to reach the parents by phone to notify you of the child's being transported to the Emergency Room, we will contact the designated emergency friend indicated by you on that form. We will also continue to try to reach the parents.
Accident	The school has accident insurance for medical payments for each child. If the child requires

Insurance	professional medical attention, this insurance may be used for that care.
Emergency phone Numbers	You will be asked to list cell, home and work numbers where you can be reached in case your child becomes ill or there is an emergency. If your phone numbers change, please inform the teachers and director.
How to reach parents	When you sign your child in, please leave a number where you can be reached if you will be away from your regular phone while your child is at school.

DISCIPLINE; BITING POLICY

Goals for behavior	The goals for children's behavior are to help them learn acceptable and appropriate behavior and to learn to control their own behavior.
Expectations	It is the philosophy of the program that a child will generally try to behave according to the expectations of the important adults in his/her life. We tell children what the appropriate behavior is in a loving and consistent manner and follow through with what we expect of them. The emphasis is on the positive, what the child can appropriately do, as opposed to the negative in which one only tells the child what not to do. Our goal as teachers is to help the child learn appropriate behavior not to only punish misbehavior.
Setting limits	We consider the setting of limits for behavior and consistency to be extremely important. It is appropriate for children to push those limits, to see what will happen. By providing consistent limits in a loving, helpful way, we provide children with the security that the teacher is an adult who cares enough about them to stop the misbehavior and help them learn appropriate behavior. Follow through with what you've determined to be the consequence is essential in developing a sense of security. The limits will change as the child grows and matures, but we feel it is important to start with young children in following through with the limits we have set so they can learn by "small steps."
Techniques	Simple redirection to an appropriate activity is often sufficient. Simple statements can be helpful: "Hands are for ... not hitting." Teachers can say "I'm going to help you remember how we ... You'll learn to remember yourself soon." As children develop, teachers can help them verbalize the "problem" and learn to work out solutions. In peer interactions, teachers help children problem-solve together, encouraging them to find a mutually acceptable solution. Learning to say what one wants and what one does not want is important at this age. If a child's behavior is out of control or misbehavior is repetitive, sitting down for a few moments of "cooling-off time" may be helpful. Being temporarily denied the opportunity to continue playing in an area is a logical consequence of a repetitive misbehavior.
Protecting others	We emphasize that children and adults may not hurt other people. If a child is being hurtful, the teacher must stop the child from hurting another child, the teacher or the parent. The teacher will try to determine the reason for the hurtful behavior in order to help the child learn that it is an unacceptable means to get what he/she wants. This is followed by a statement of what is an acceptable means.
Biting	Biting is a normal, though undesirable, behavior during certain stages of development, especially - but not limited to - younger children. Biting is often an impulsive response to something the child did not like and does not yet have other skills to deal with. Sometimes it is an attention-getting behavior. No matter the reason, it is unacceptable. The child will be firmly told that they may not bite another person, that biting is what the child does with food. The child will be directed to another area or activity away from the bitten child. The child will be watched closely to try to prevent another occurrence and helped to learn appropriate means of expressing what he/she is feeling or wants.

The bitten child If a child is bitten, the teachers will tend to that child emotionally and physically. If the bite has bruised or broken the skin, the teacher will wash it well with soap and water and place a cool compress or gel pack on the area. The parent will be told of the injury when he/she comes to pick up the child.

COMMUNICATIONS TO PARENTS:

Calendars, newsletters and other information notices will be placed on your child's locker additionally an electronic copy will be sent out via email. PLEASE PICK UP YOUR HARD COPY WHEN YOU BRING YOUR CHILD. It's important to know what is happening in the school and your child's class.

It is most convenient to pick up the notices when you arrive for the day. Notes not picked up then will be available from the teacher when you check out your child at dismissal.

Calendar: Parents receive a calendar at the beginning of each month listing dates of programs, activities, holidays, etc. **Please keep the calendar for reference during the month.**

Newsletter: Parents will receive a newsletter in the middle of the month. It will include information about programs or activities, requests, and articles about parenting and children as well as the calendar for the next month.

Website: The calendar and nursery school news can also be viewed on our website, ucnschool.org. Volunteer sign ups can also be found there as well.

Special Notes & Reminders: Special notices and reminders will also be sent home from time to time.

PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS AND THE FAMILY AND PARENT HELPERS:

Nursery School Board The Nursery School Board serves as the governing body for the school, establishing general policies and procedures for operation, according to the guidelines of the Nursery School charter and bylaws. In addition, the Board provides leadership for fund-raising activities and "work parties" to assist with maintenance of major equipment. The Board is comprised of three parent members who serve 3-year terms and two representatives of The United Church.

Conferences Parents and teachers are encouraged to communicate information about the child at arrival and departure times. **We request that you and the teacher not discuss the child in the child's presence. Parents may also discuss their concerns with the director. At any time during the year,** parents and teachers may request a conference. We will try to schedule the conference at about 12:20 pm to allow more time and a more private atmosphere for discussion.

Family changes Children are sensitive to major changes or stressful events in a family's life (e.g. job loss, divorce, illness, death, family discord). Children may not understand such situations but their behavior may be affected by them. We respect your privacy. However, please inform the school of the situation if you feel it would be helpful in understanding and working with your child.

School readiness conferences Parents who have concerns about their children's readiness for kindergarten are encouraged to have an informal discussion with the teachers about their classroom observations or a conference with the teachers and director.

- Parent visits** Parents may visit their child's class at any time.
- Parent participation in the class** We encourage parent participation in our daily and program. If you have a special talent, enjoy reading or telling a story, would like to help with a cooking project, go for a walk with the class, etc., please consider sharing your attention with all the children.
- Parent Substitutes** The Nursery School has been fortunate in having parents willing to be substitutes in the classroom. There will be an orientation in September to acquaint you with classroom management and our philosophy of working with children. (An individual orientation may be arranged during the year if a parent is willing to substitute but did not attend the September orientation.) There is a minimum-wage salary. Many parents have found the greatest reward is their involvement in the program and the skills they develop while working with the teachers. We welcome your participation. You add to the quality of the program.
- Parent Helpers** **All parents are encouraged and expected to participate in some way.** Parents greatly assist and enhance the program by helping with maintenance of our equipment, such as repair of wood blocks, tricycles, toys, and books. Other tasks such as laundering towels, making play-dough, etc. can be done for your child's individual class. Parents also help by baking cookies for the Christmas parties, boiling eggs for Easter, etc. Many tasks can be picked up and done at home.
- Classroom sign-up sheet** **Sign-up sheet for parents are on each classroom's door frame:** Teachers will have sign-ups for on-going tasks such as laundering towels or making play-dough.
- General sign-up sheet** On the small bulletin board in the hallway next to Room 108, the teachers and director will post other needed tasks. If you can help, contact the person who placed the request for more details. "Recyclable supplies" are often needed for activities and will be posted on this bulletin board also.
- Morning "work parties"** Occasionally, a group of Parent Helpers will meet in the morning to help wash toys, assemble registration materials or packets, mend books, etc.
- Evening "work parties"** Several times each year, a group of Parent Helpers will meet in the evening (or during the summer) for bigger projects: repair of the riding toys, weeding and working up sand and pea gravel, cleaning/painting the tricycle house, swing sets and railroad ties or helping get the classrooms ready in the fall.
- Thank you to all the parent helpers! We appreciate your willingness to share your time and efforts to enhance our program. We welcome your participation!**
- Parents' Brunch** Parents are occasionally invited to morning brunch with the director. These are opportunities to get acquainted with other parents and share experiences. The exact dates and times will be listed in the Nursery School calendar. There will also be a sign on the bulletin board by the Nursery School entrance. Discussions about parenting topics are often planned. A particular topic can be arranged if there is an interest. Younger children are always welcome.
- Discussion and sharing groups** Parents' Discussions often provide opportunities for sharing and discussion of specific concerns of parents. From time to time, parents will express an interest in more time to focus discussion on a particular topic. The Nursery School is happy to arrange time for a discussion group. Please indicate your interest to the Director.
- Kindergarten readiness** When making the decision about school readiness, parents may wish to add to their own personal knowledge of their child by discussing with the teachers their observations of the child in the classroom. The parents may also request that the Nursery School use the

Brigance Kindergarten Screen with their child to provide additional information. Parents are asked to sign a permission form for administering the screening and we only screen those requested. A conference would then be scheduled to show parents the completed assessment and to discuss the teachers' and parents' observations of the child. **We would like to emphasize that this is not a test or a predictor of future success in school. The intent is to provide information about the child's current development.**

Abuse Prevention Curriculum As required by DHS, we will present a curriculum of personal safety information for the children, involving stories, pictures and discussions. A display of the materials will be available to parents or parents may ask to see the materials in the director's office.

Fund-raising events From time to time, the Nursery School Board will organize fund-raising events such as Pancake Breakfast. Assistance and participation by the Nursery School families is greatly appreciated, and is usually a lot of fun, too.

School pictures We have for some years had a photographer take individual children's pictures and class pictures. **There is no obligation to participate.** **If** we are going to have this available this school year, a note will be sent home with the details.

T-shirts We have also taken orders for T-shirts with the Nursery School logo on the front. **Ordering the shirts is optional.** **If** we are going to order shirts this school year, a note will be sent home with the details.

SPECIAL EVENTS AT NURSERY SCHOOL:

Orientation for parents There will be an evening orientation meeting for parents just before classes begin in the fall. Parents will be notified of the meeting by a letter mailed in mid August. At the orientation, the director will discuss some of the Nursery School policies and procedures, and plans for the school year. Parents will receive the packet of enrollment forms and materials, class and carpool lists and the child's classroom assignment and teachers' names. There will be an opportunity for parents to visit the classrooms, meet the teachers, and see some of the equipment. There will not be a sitter service provided.

Christmas Sing and Party The last morning before the Christmas holiday, the Nursery School children will invite their families to a program of seasonal music in the Chapel followed by refreshments in the classrooms. The program begins at 11:00 am.

Fundraisers We may have a fun activity such as a pancake breakfast to help support capital improvements and our scholarship program.

Spring Sing Usually in conjunction with the Spring fund raiser in March, the Nursery School children will invite their families to a spring music program in the Chapel.

Family Brown Bag Picnic The Nursery School will invite parents to bring a "brown-bag" picnic lunch to the last day of school for both the M-W-F and T-Th classes. It's a fun way to celebrate the school year and say good bye. (Children who come 5 days will have a picnic both days.)

Church Events Occasionally, The United Church will have family events that they will invite you to. We encourage you to participate if you desire. They are always happy to welcome visitors.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

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- Registration** Registration is opened first, from January 15-February 15, to members of The United Church and to families of currently enrolled children. Beginning February 16, registration is opened to new families. Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration information may be submitted via fax, email, mail, or in person. However, it is required by DHS that you visit the program before enrollment. There is a registration/supply fee, payable at time of registration.
- Non-discriminatory Policy** The United Church Nursery School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, religious or ethnic origin in administration of its educational/admission policies or scholarship program.
- Age requirement** Our DHS license requires that children be at least 16 months old in order to be enrolled.
- Maturity requirement** For a successful preschool experience, children should be mature enough to participate in the classroom activities.
- Registration confirmation** To confirm the child's place for the next school year, payment of the final month's tuition is required by June 1. The payment is non-refundable.
- Tuition** **Tuition is due the first of each month. Make checks payable to The United Church Nursery School, marked "tuition."** Checks may be placed in the "**Tuition Box**" on top of the lockers outside Room 107 or mailed to The United Church Nursery School, 85 Kentucky Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.
- Late payment** **Parents are responsible for discussing with the director what arrangements can be made if payment will be late.**
- Child enrolled for the whole school year** The tuition is based on reserving space for the child for a whole school year. Therefore, the tuition is a fixed rate with no reduction in fees due to vacations, holidays, absences. Except in unusual circumstances, there is no adjustment of fees for absences due to illness. Written requests should be submitted to the Board.
- Withdrawal from school** **A 30-day notice is requested if you plan to withdraw your child from the school.** The regular tuition will be charged until the director receives notification of the intention to withdraw from the school.
- Scholarships** The By-laws of the Nursery School allow for tuition scholarships **when the school is financially able to do so.** By providing scholarships, it has allowed a number of children to experience the Nursery School program who would not otherwise have been able to attend. Parents will be asked to sign a scholarship request form. Parents receiving a scholarship for their child are required to participate or assist in the program in a non-monetary way.
- Contributions to Scholarship Fund** Contributions to the Scholarship Fund, in the form of honorariums, memorials, and gifts are welcome and appreciated and may be given to the Director or placed in the Tuition Box on the shelf above the lockers. Please write "Scholarship Fund" on the check. **Thank you for helping us help children.**

ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Admission procedures	For their children to be admitted to the program, parents are responsible for completing the following forms and information as required by the Department of Human Services and for updating the information as changes occur in the information. These forms will be available at the Orientation Meeting for Parents before school begins, or from the director.
Enrollment forms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health history and immunization record, signed or stamped and dated by a physician or certified health care provider. DHS requires that the completed form, which is available at your physician's office or the Dept. of Health, must be on file or brought the first day in order for the child to be able to attend. A physical examination is required for all children younger than 30 months, and encouraged for older children. Failure to comply with Department of Health immunization guidelines in a timely manner will result in the child being disenrolled from the school. 2. Enrollment information: emergency phone numbers & special medical needs of the child, if any; transportation plan; permission for emergency treatment; child's health history and family information; parent declarations. 3. An Authorization for Disaster Card (a card that would be kept with the Emergency/ Disaster plans of the school). 4. Permission to use family information (address, email, phone number) on class lists and possibly photographs in newspaper articles 5. Verification of receipt of Personal Safety Information. 6. Verification of receipt of Influenza Information.
Emergency phone numbers	Parents are requested to keep current the information in their child's file and on the Authorization for Disaster Care card. It is especially important to notify the director of any change of phone numbers in case of an emergency.
Verification of parents knowledge of kindergarten law	The State of Tennessee has a law making kindergarten mandatory before a child may enter first grade. If your child is 5 years old on or before August 15, he/she may remain in a preschool program another year. However, he/she will be required to attend kindergarten the year following the last preschool year. Parents will be required by DHS to sign a form acknowledging that they have been informed of the law.

POLICY AND CRITERIA FOR REQUESTING WITHDRAWAL OF A STUDENT:

The goal of the United Church Nursery School is to provide an environment that is safe, secure, loving, educational and developmentally appropriate for each child and to work cooperatively with the parents to meet the individual needs of the children. If a situation should arise in which the program does not seem able to meet the child's needs or in which the child does not seem suited to the program, it is the policy of the school to make every attempt to discuss the situation with the parents to try to continue the child's participation in the program. The Nursery School Board and Director would make the determination that the situation has not improved and is not benefiting the child or the program. The Board and Director would then make the decision to ask the parent to withdraw the child from the program.

Circumstances which might result in a decision for a request for the child's withdrawal might be:

1. The child's behavior is so disruptive that it creates such a negative environment as to prevent the other children from benefiting fully from the program.
2. The child's behavior is out of control to the extent that the child poses a threat to the safety of the other children and to the staff.
3. The parent of a child is threatening to the safety of the other children and to the staff.

POLICY FOR HELPING CHILDREN ADJUST TO A NEW TEACHER

In the event that a teacher leaves her position during the school year, a new teacher will be hired as soon as possible. If the teacher who is leaving gives adequate notice, the new teacher will work with her for several days to ease the transition. If this is not possible, the children and their parents will be informed of the upcoming change and the teachers and director will work together to help them adjust. Since we always have two co-teachers in a class, the children will have a familiar teacher with them even if one leaves.

All teachers sign a contract for the school year when they are hired. They receive an employee handbook, and sign a statement agreeing to abide by the responsibilities, requirements and policies in the handbook. The handbook states that a 30 days' notice is required from a teacher who decides to quit.

POLICY FOR CRIMINALS AND SEX OFFENDERS

Parent or legal guardian must provide documentation of criminal history. If they are still on probation or report to a parole officer, the parole officer's contact information must be provided to establish contact between the school and law enforcement. If they are on the Sex Registry, they must comply with the Tennessee State Law and their specific guidelines.

To the extent that the United Church Nursery School officials have actual knowledge that a parent, legal guardian, or other person seeking to be present on school property or at school sponsored activities is a registered sex offender, the following procedures apply:

1. Pursuant to Tennessee State Law 40-39-211(d), anyone on or within 1,000 feet of the Nursery School campus (defined as the church property) must notify the Nursery School director of their status at the time of enrollment of their child. This notification must include status, and if they are on parole or supervision and with whom.
2. Any registered sex offenders who are also parents or legal guardians of a child or children enrolled at the United Church Nursery School will only be permitted on school property to pick up and drop off their children, pursuant to Tennessee State Law. And can only be in attendance at school-sponsored activities with written approval from the director and applicable law enforcement. No other persons known to be registered sex offenders will be permitted to be present on school property or at any school-sponsored activity for any reason.
3. A parent or a legal guardian, to whom this applies, must comply with all legal requirements as stated in the Tennessee State Law. Failure to do so may result in that person's losing the privilege of visiting the United Church Nursery School or attending any school-sponsored activities, regardless of location.

If parents are concerned, please consult the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation website (<http://www.tbi.state.tn.us>).

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