Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool Parent Handbook

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**PHILOSOPHY**

Through a warm, accepting climate, we provide an educational program that encourages the growth of the whole child. Our continuous, interactive curriculum strives to meet the spiritual, physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of the preschool child. Under the guidance of qualified teachers, the unique talents and abilities of each child is valued. Since play is the language of children, a Christian atmosphere promotes healthy attitudes and places emphasis on the importance of good decision making. The intent of this program is to foster a positive outreach between the Satellite Beach United Methodist Church and the community. The preschool serves children who are at least two years of age by September 1st of the year in which they are enrolled.

**STANDARDS**

Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool is licensed by Department of Children and Families and visited by a representative of that office at least twice a year. The programs license is renewed annually and meets or exceeds all requirements set forth by the following organizations.

The center has been inspected and approved by:

* The Department of Children and Families (DCF)
* The Satellite Beach Fire Department
* Early Learning Coalition of Brevard (ELC)

The Preschool is a member of The United Methodist Association of Preschools (UMAP), Florida Conference.

**ADMISSIONS POLICY**

Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool admits students of any race, color, religion, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

**OUR STAFF**

The staff is a team of dedicated professionals who have the welfare and best interests of your child as their top priority. In addition, every effort is made to maintain a low child-teacher ratio.

Everyone on the staff is required to have the State of Florida forty-hour childcare certification and five-hour literacy training offered through DCF (Department of Children and Families), with an additional minimum of 10 hours of childcare related training per year. The state requires fingerprinting and an extensive background check, which is done upon employment. Each classroom has a lead teacher with an AA, AS, FCCPC or BA and credits in Early Childhood Education or in process.

**CURRICULUM**

**The curriculum includes the following developmentally appropriate goals based on the guidelines and standards of both UMAP & VPK Florida Standards:**

Children will grow **socially** and **emotionally** by learning to…..

* Listen
* Take turns
* Make new friends
* Make choices
* Think for themselves
* Follow simple directions
* Express feelings in socially acceptable ways
* Work both individually and in a group
* Identify with an adult other than a parent
* Feel safe and secure away from home
* Respect others

Children will grow **physically** and **mentally** by…..

* Developing large and small muscle coordination
* Developing visual and auditory discrimination
* Developing language skills
* Recognizing colors and shapes
* Recognizing some uppercase and lowercase letters
* Recognizing letter sounds
* Recognizing and writing some numbers
* Working creatively with their hands
* Learning to cut with scissors

Children will grow **spiritually** by…..

* Experiencing various types of prayer
* Hearing age-appropriate Bible stories
* Exploring God’s wonderful creation
* Celebrating major Christian holidays
* Singing songs about God and Jesus
* Hearing faith language such as *God, prayer, Jesus, love, and worship* used in the classroom

**Artistic Experience**

An important part of the curriculum is art. A variety of materials are available daily in the classrooms. Playing with play dough, cutting, pasting, drawing, and painting are not only fun for the children, but appropriate experiences to promote learning. It is an opportunity for children to express original ideas, develop fine motor skills, improve coordination, learn to recognize colors, shapes, and textures and develop creativity along with pride in their accomplishments. The staff focuses more on what children are learning from the experience rather than the finished product sent home.

## **Chapel and Music**

A special chapel time with the pastor or other Christian educators is held once a week for three-day and five-day classes in the Sanctuary at the end of the day. The children enjoy songs, prayer and Bible stories.

All three-year-old and four-year-old classes have music other days of the week at the end of the day in Faithland. Some songs they learn will be performed at music programs throughout the year.

**Program Enrichment**

The Preschool invites resource people and special programs to enhance the curriculum. Events and programs are scheduled throughout the year.

**Field Trips**

Trips are scheduled once or twice per year depending on when rooms cannot be used due to special events such as when the church is used as a polling site.

**Transportation for field trips is not provided. Parents are requested to drive their child.**

There is always a need and appreciation for parental involvement to help make these programs and special events meaningful for the children.

**Lunch Bunch**

Based on enrollment, more playtime will be provided until 1:50 p.m. Children participating will bring a snack lunch clearly marked. Fees must be paid in advance to ensure space is available. Late fees will apply. The preschool reserves the right to cancel Lunch Bunch for the day due to special events or lack of participation. The program will focus on large muscle development, music and movement, art, obstacle courses, or extra playground time.

**Please refer to the Lunch Bunch Policies and Agreements page at the end of the preschool application. The schedule will be announced before school starts at Meet the Teacher.**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Age of Child**

A child must be two (2) by September 1st to be in the Two-Year-Old class, three (3) by September 1st to be in the Three-Year-Old class, and four (4) by September 1st to be in the Prekindergarten (VPK) program. All children in the three and four year old classes must be potty trained before entering school.

**Tuition**

Tuition is due the first of every month, except for VPK students. A $25 late fee will be charged if tuition is received after the 10th of the month. Returned checks will not be processed again but will be assessed a $30 returned check fee that should be included with the reimbursement check, money order, or cash.

**School Hours**

School hours are from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. School begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. (except for the Twos) each morning. Prior to that time, teachers are busy with final preparations for the day. Parents are requested to remain outside the Preschool until doors are open. Classes end at noon and dismissal will begin shortly after 12:00. Please be prompt in picking up your child. Occasionally, a problem may arise to detain you. A phone call to inform the school that you will be late would be greatly appreciated.

**Before Care**

Based on enrollment, 50 minutes of before school care in Room Y7 will be offered for a monthly fee or drop in fee. Children may be dropped off to play before being escorted to their classrooms. Please see the Lunch Bunch Policies and Agreement page at the end of the preschool application. The schedule for beginning Before Care will be announced at Meet the Teacher.

**School Calendar**

Opening Date, Closing Date, Holidays, and Emergency Days (Hurricanes) are the same as Brevard Public Schools. Every effort will be made to follow the makeup days identified by the school district but Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool reserves the right to alter days. Parent Orientation and Meet the Teacher will be scheduled for the week before school starts. A calendar of events will be emailed during the summer.

**Late Charge**

A late charge of $1.00 will be applied for every minute after classes end and $1 for every minute after 2 pm for Lunch Bunch if a parent is late picking up their child.

**Drop Off**

When dropping off your child, please display your child’s name in BOLD letters on your windshield. Please **refrain from being on your cell phones** during drop off and pick up. This time is needed for teachers to talk to you. **When delivering your child to the classroom, it is your responsibility to make your child’s presence known to the teacher or assistant****and to sign in your child.** This is a Department of Children and Families (DCF) requirement. When the children are on the playground, at music, or chapel, please walk your child to the appropriate location, sign student in and verbally touch base with your child’s teacher before leaving.

**Please talk to the Director about procedures for dropping off and picking up a two-year-old.**

**Arrival Time**

Arrival time is very important and each child needs to have that special greeting time with their teacher. This positive interaction helps with the transition from home to school as your child begins the day. If parents are in the doorway trying to talk to the teacher or cope with a difficult separation, the teacher cannot fully focus on the students already present or those that are arriving. If a discussion is needed with your child’s teacher, please schedule an after school meeting.

**Pick Up Time**

Safety is our first priority. Please follow these guidelines during this time:

When picking up your child, please display your child’s name in BOLD letters on your windshield. This will only be necessary for a little while until the staff can quickly associate you and your car with your child. Teacher’s will escort the children to their cars and may briefly speak to parents about their child.

**PLEASE FASTEN YOUR CHILD INTO THEIR CAR SEAT BEFORE MOVING YOUR CAR.**

**Please talk to the Director about procedures for picking up a two-year-old.**

If a child is not picked up using the drive-up method, cars should be parked in the West Parking Lot then walk to the lobby of the church using the North sidewalk that is parallel to Jackson Avenue. Please wait outside the North end of the lobby and the teacher will walk your child to you as soon as possible. Then exit immediately and return to your car the same way you entered. The above guidelines also apply to parents riding bicycles.

Please note the car loop will have precedence over walkers. The car loop will be cleared first before bringing children to the back, so please be patient. **Cars should be turned off if the driver leaves the driver’s seat.**

**Drop off and Pick up of a Child**

A reliable person must deliver and pick up your child. The person who brings the child must stay until a member of the staff has taken the child into the center. Your child will be sent home only with persons known by the staff to be authorized to check out the child. Additionally, direct permission may be given to staff in the form of a note for someone else to check out your child from the preschool at the end of the day.   
This adult this will need to show a picture ID in order for a child to be released. After the first week, parents will be expected to drop their children off and pick them up without leaving their cars.

#### Tardiness

#### Students are considered late after 9:10 a.m. when curbside drop off is over. Due to the expectations of the VPK program, chronic tardiness will be grounds for withdrawal from the program.

**Early Dismissal**

If your child needs to be dismissed early, please send a note to your teacher stating the expected time of departure, so your child can be ready for pick up at their classroom. Please call ahead so the teacher can be notified if it is a last minute event.

**Backpacks**

Backpacks are optional, but we do request no wheeled backpacks, should be large enough for art.

**Playground**

It is imperative the playground rules are followed. Do not let your child walk up the slides, hang from any of the bars, or jump off the high platforms. If a restroom is needed before school starts, do not go to a classroom and disturb the teacher. Use the restrooms in the Fellowship Hall or the Main Office.

**Absences**

Teachers do take roll each day and would like to know if your child is ill or will not be in attendance. Please call the school between 8:30 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. if your child will be absent. The preschool number is 777-0116 ext. 203. VPK students will be dropped from the program for excessive absences.

**Food**

Please provide your preschooler with a wholesome snack every day, avoiding snacks with high sugar content. Snacks should be easy to open by your preschooler. Please do not send a snack for the class unless the teacher has requested it for a special occasion. Parents may not be aware that some children may have food restrictions and would be unable to participate in the snack. Water for the children will be provided. Absolutely no soda of any kind is permitted. The following foods are choking hazards and will not be served to our children: nuts, hard candies, whole hot dogs, popcorn, raw carrots cut in circles, and whole grapes. If one of these items is in your child’s lunch box, the staff is instructed to leave it in the lunch box and include a note to the parent explaining why the item was not offered to the child.

**Clothes**

Washable play clothes are the most suitable for school. A complete change of clothes, including shoes and socks, should be sent to school and will be stored in the classroom for your child. Please mark each item with your child’s name and place all items in a zip-lock bag.

**Shoes**

Shoes should be closed-in loafer or athletic-type shoes appropriate for running, jumping, climbing, and other preschool work. **Rubber sole shoes are best.** No cowboy boots (unless the boots have a rubber sole), crocs, platforms, high-heeled shoes, backless shoes or sandals of any kind will be allowed. Shoes that flip off are unacceptable as well. If your child arrives at school with inappropriate shoes, you will be asked to take your child home with you and return with proper shoes. This includes special program days.

**Birthday Celebrations**

Your child’s birthday is a special time and to help make it enjoyable, the following requests are suggested:

* 1. Bring a simple snack such as cupcakes or special cookies from a professional kitchen.
  2. Birthday cups, plates and napkins are great to send.
  3. Water is provided but juice may be sent.
  4. “Goody bags” are welcomed but should be small and simple.
  5. Your child will be given a birthday crown. Hats and balloons are not acceptable.
  6. Planned games or other competitive activities will not be allowed.
  7. Please feel free to come and visit your child’s class during party time. If possible, make arrangements for younger siblings so the focus on this special day can be on your birthday child. Please be on time!
  8. Private party invitations will only be handed out if every student in the class receives an invite.

**Toys**

The school is well stocked with educational toys. **Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school except** **on “Show and Share Day”.** The toys may cause a distraction to other children and take away from the child that has brought a special item. Please follow your teachers specific guidelines.

**Guns, swords, and war toys are not appropriate at school at any time.**

**Conferences**

A parent-teacher conference is scheduled in April. In the event there is a need to speak with your child’s teacher earlier in the school year, please send a note to your child’s teacher or call to schedule an appointment. All teachers are happy to communicate through email.

**Parent Involvement**

The staff looks forward to working with you throughout this school year. After teachers develop a trusting relationship with your child (about a month), visits to the school by parents are welcomed. Please make arrangements for younger siblings who might try to get “involved” in classroom activities. Parents dressed or speaking inappropriately in front of or to students will be asked to leave and not be invited to visit again.

#### Traffic Parents

#### Volunteer parents are asked to come a little early on their day to walk students to the classrooms from the loop. Please only assist with this task if you do not have the responsibility of a younger sibling to hold onto while serving as a traffic parent. Younger children can distract the adult from focusing on the arrival of students. An adult is responsible for holding each child’s hand and ensuring the student arrives at the classroom door safely. If you are not the parent on duty that day and not asked to fill in for someone else, please do not linger by the loop. Parents should use discretion about what they talk about in front of the students. Focus on making the start of that child’s preschool day pleasant. Teasing students is never acceptable.

**Smoking**

Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not allowed on the church campus.

#### Halloween

#### The school program does not celebrate Halloween. The traditional Halloween themes and symbols including witches, ghosts, death, black cats, superstition, fear, and darkness are contrary to basic Bible truths. We do not accept special treats, costumes or goodie bags portraying these themes. In general, smiling pumpkins, stalks of wheat, displays of produce and the like, are acceptable harvest symbols during this time of year. (Scripture References: Ephesians 5:11 and 2 Corinthians 6: 14-17, Deuteronomy 18:10-11).

#### Christmas and Easter

#### The school acknowledges these holidays as joyous times of the year to enthusiastically celebrate and emphasize both the birth of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection from the dead. Activities and symbols that compliment these themes are prominent in our classrooms. Myths and symbols such as Santa Claus, elves, the Easter Bunny, and other secular symbols are acceptable, but are not emphasized in the program.

**Emergency Plan**

The SBUM Preschool’s emergency plan is attached. It is required by law to practice a fire drill once a month and a severe weather drill once a year. Please note there may be events when children will not be released due to dangerous conditions. Do not drive to the preschool in dangerous conditions of any kind, as children will not be released until the situation passes. The school will evacuate to the Nursery room, a windowless room with access to bathrooms, in the event of severe weather or chemical threat and remain in the room until the threat passes. The following locations are options depending on location and severity of threat.

**Emergency Evacuation**:

* The Rock (Old parsonage on the corner of Lee and Avocado)
* East Sunday school building (Faithland or hallway)
* Schechter Center (Recreation Department on Jackson and S. Patrick)
* Nursery room for severe weather or chemical threat

**HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Records**

**Attendance**

The Preschool will maintain records of attendance, health, and identification for each child.

**Medical Records**

Your child’s health and well-being are of primary importance. Upon enrollment, a Statement of Good Health (State of Florida gold physical form) from a doctor and your child’s immunizations records (blue) must be provided to the school. These DCF forms can be obtained from your pediatrician. The school policy requires these forms be submitted at the time of enrollment. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure their child’s immunizations and physical examinations are kept up-to-date. In order for the school to stay in compliance with state laws, a child cannot return to the center until these records are updated or a physician’s waiver is obtained.

**Health**

All children will be observed upon arrival at school each morning and only well children can remain. The school staff is depending on parents to help maintain this policy. If symptoms of illness are noticed, parents will be called to take their child home. Should a child become ill during the day, the child may be isolated from other children and care will be provided until an adult can pick up the child. **It is the parent’s responsibility to pick the child up as soon as possible**! If work is more than 30 minutes from the preschool, arrangements to pick up the ill child need to be made with a friend or family member that is close to the school. Please ensure these names are on your child’s pick up list.

**Please Note**

The fun of school likes to be shared with all the children that attend the Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool Program but illness is something that needs to stay at home and NOT be shared with anyone. The program is not equipped to take care of sick children.

**Keep your child home if the following symptoms are noticed within the past twenty-four hours:**

* + Fever and sore throat
  + A constant untreated cough
  + Signs of possible communicable disease: skin rash, inflamed eyes, diarrhea, vomiting, and/or persistent runny nose

**If a child is sent home, the child may not return to school the following day. The school Director and staff reserve the right to use their judgment, even if a doctor’s release was received for a child to re-enter school.**

**Notify the School**

Please contact the school immediately if your child has a communicable disease or has been exposed to one.

**Medication**

The center does not administer any medication to students nor allow students to administer it to themselves.

**Outside Time**

The center is unable to offer care for children who cannot play on the playground. All children must go as a group to outdoor playtime. Picnic tables and benches are available for quiet activities while on the playground. Please keep your child home if your child is too sick to participate in outside play.

**Allergic Reactions**

Please notify the school if your child is allergic to insect bites, foods, or any other substance that could be life threatening.

**Satellite Beach United Methodist Preschool Crisis Management Plan**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reason for Alert** | **Fire in the Building** | **Danger near the Building** | **Severe Weather (Tornado)** | **Chemical Threat** |
| **Signal for action:** | Fire alarm will sound | “There’s NO recess today” | Whistle will sound | Whistle will sound |
| **Action to be taken**:  **Response on WT** | Evacuate  None | Lockdown  (Color of door) understands. | Move to Church Nursery  (Color of door) understands | “Shelter in Place”  (Church nursery or stay in room per threat.) |
| Details:  Always carry your clipboard with emergency pick-up information and the emergency supply kit with you.  To release a child during any emergency the adult must sign their name next to the child’s name on your attendance roster.  **All Clear Call**. | Turn off the lights and close the doors to the classroom.  Exit following the evacuation routes posted in each classroom.  Children may be released to parents following our normal procedures. The person MUST be on the written pick-up list. No verbal directions will be accepted.  Parent signature required on attendance sheet.  Return to rooms. | Close all doors to the classroom and stay inside your room until you are given the “all clear”.  No one is to leave the classroom for any reason in this situation.  All students and staff in an outdoor area must move immediately to the **closest** secure classroom area.  Children will NOT be released to parents during this time until cleared.  Lower blinds.  We can go out for recess. | Move all children to the Church nursery.  Close your classroom doors.  Set people in “watch” positions at different ends of the building with walkie-talkies.  Shift to “duck and cover” if tornado is sighted.  Children may be released to parents as safety allows following our normal procedures.  The person MUST be on the written pick-up list and a signature is required on the attendance sheet.  Return to rooms  (only if it is early in the morning). | Evacuate the building as you would during a fire drill.  Office staff will be outside saying  “Shelter in Place” and will direct your class to the Church Nursery.    Doors will be sealed.  AC units turned off.  We will stay in the Church Nursery until the “all clear” has been given.  Children will NOT be released to parents during this time, once  we are inside the Church nursery.  Return to rooms (only if it is early in the morning) |

### SBUM PRESCHOOL GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY

* + - 1. Clarification or gentle reminder of rules will be made to the child and the teacher will

attempt to redirect the behavior until the child demonstrates appropriate behavior.

* + - 1. The child will be given a choice of a redirected, more calming activity.

Ex. water play, play dough, quiet book area

* + - 1. The child will be removed from the situation and placed with the Director for quiet time

until the child is willing to return to the classroom with appropriate behavior.

* + - 1. If a child continues to be disruptive while in quiet time with the Director, the parents

will be called to take the child home for the day.

* + - * 1. After three calls home, the child will be observed, and a plan of action will be discussed. Outside resources may be recommended.
        2. A child will not be allowed to put him/her or others in danger. Violent behavior will not be tolerated. After three incidents, a student will be withdrawn.
        3. All discipline decisions made by the Director are final.

**Guidance and Discipline Practice**

The staff encourages the development of self-control in young children through positive guidance and loving limits. Our objectives are:

* 1. Positive prevention measures to help eliminate negative behavior in the classroom.
  2. Positive reinforcement techniques to help children learn appropriate behavior.
  3. Positive intervention methods to help children control their negative behavior.

**Parents, please note a signed statement (provided separately) is needed indicating you have read, understood and accept the Guidance and Discipline Practices for SBUM Preschool listed below. This statement needs to be turned into the Director before your child starts school.**

#### THE FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

#### AND

#### GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

**Used by S.B.U.M. PRESCHOOL**

10M-12.013 Child Discipline.

Childcare facilities must ensure that age-appropriate and constructive disciplinary practices are used for children in care.

* 1. Children shall not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening.
  2. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.
  3. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.