



Williamson's Chapel
united methodist church



Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Williamson's Chapel Preschool Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Williamson's Chapel United Methodist Church
is happy to share its facilities with its
members and community in a program of
Weekday Early Childhood Education.

It is our hope that each child and their family
will be enriched from our experiences together,
realizing God's love for all the children of the world.

*Developing Children
who will
Change the World for Jesus Christ*

WILLIAMSON'S CHAPEL UMC PRESCHOOL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of Williamson's Chapel Preschool (WCP) is to support the mission and vision of Williamson's Chapel United Methodist Church of changing lives and changing the world through Jesus Christ while providing developmentally appropriate experiences that will help meet the individual needs and abilities of a child's cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development.

Learning activities and materials will be concrete, real, and relevant to the lives of young children.

The curriculum goals and objectives of the total school program are included in the following developmental areas:

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities will be provided to help foster cognitive growth & an understanding of this world through:

- experiences in dramatic play
- songs, poems, stories, & finger plays
- a variety of sensory-motor perceptual experiences, emphasizing observation, inquiry, exploration, discrimination, & discovery
- activities encouraging creativity & self-expression through painting, drawing, & working with clay

Through these concrete experiences, we will be building a foundation of readiness skills in language and math.

Note: Workbooks, worksheets, dot-to-dot and flashcard drill will not be a strategy used by the teacher to facilitate the learning of content areas, such as math, science, language arts, and social studies.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities will be provided for the child to:

- develop large muscular control, coordination and balance
- develop a sense of rhythm through movement activities
- learn to care for his/her body and to appreciate good health
- learn and practice rules of safety

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities will be provided that will encourage a child to:

- understand home and community
- share, take turns, respect rules
- practice politeness, thoughtfulness, and cooperation
- respect the rights and property of others

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Efforts will be made to provide a happy, interesting, relaxed, and friendly environment that will help the child to:

- accept guidance and authority
- develop a positive self-image
- discover and use socially acceptable behavior patterns
- gain a feeling of security and trust from consistent routine

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The school program will help each child experience spiritual growth through:

- being nurtured by loving adults who are themselves persons of faith
- communicating God's love in verbal ways
- seeing something of God's greatness as the child hears about and sees God's creations
- associating the love of God with the love received from people around him/her
- regular exposure to prayer, Bible stories, verses and thoughts

CURRICULUM

Children grow and mature physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually. They develop in these areas at **their** own rates. They also learn best by doing. Their learning requires experimenting to find out how things work and through their explorations of the world around them, using all of their senses.

Early childhood is a critical time in the development of a child's perceptions of self, others, the world and God. The goal of our curriculum is to stimulate the child's physical, mental, emotional and social development while maintaining a strong spiritual emphasis throughout.

God created each child unique and as an individual. Our curriculum will allow for the differences in ability and interests while encouraging "well rounded" development in every area of a child's life. Our curriculum will be developmentally appropriate-where activities and materials provided for the child are appropriate according to the developmental stage of that child.

Yet as stated before, most children learn best by doing. This takes place through their "play" and during their interactive learning styles. Children thrive when they can explore and experiment with their surroundings. "Play" experiences encourage and enable them to understand themselves and others around them in their world. Our curriculum will provide a wide range of play experiences, creative art, drama, music, science, "manipulative toys", reading/writing, sand/water and many others. Biblical and Christian Character themes, Unit and Seasonal themes will be incorporated into the program and our curriculum will be a balance between a child-oriented and teacher-directed, structured and unstructured environment.

It is our intent that each successive year a child attends Williamson's Chapel Preschool skills and activities will be introduced to build upon skills that were introduced and/or mastered previously.

The following is a list of minimum skills and activities to be introduced in the coming school year. Mastery is not necessary. Each child must move at his/her own pace towards achieving these goals. Drill is not to be used as a strategy for learning. Informal learning experiences are encouraged.

Age groups will be introduced to the following skills and activities during the school year:

TODDLERS:

- Art experiences – *especially those that the children can do themselves*
- Circle time - *brief experiences singing or playing as a large group*
- Learning to separate from parents
- Learning to play alongside peers cooperatively—how to share, etc.
- Developing and using language to communicate with peers and teachers
- Introduction to basic shapes and colors
- Positional and comparative words such as up, down, beside, big, little, dark, light

TWOS:

- Calendar - *by the second half of the school year*
- Cutting - *introduce in play dough, and with tubs of scrap paper etc.*
- Toilet training - *follow each child's lead on this*
- Hand washing
- Traditional and contemporary nursery rhymes

THREES:

- Recognizing their name in print
- Putting on coats
- Cleaning up after snack and lunch
- Talking about the sound letters make - *as appropriate through show and tell & circle time/calendar*
- Correctly holding pencil or crayon
- Phonemic awareness activities
- Participating in morning prayer at circle time and/or snack and lunch times-share prayer requests

FOURS:

- Letter recognition - *through theme-related activities (We currently use Letterland)*
Example: the letter "A" is naturally discussed through a unit on "Apples"
- Numbers 1-20
Concrete learning experiences through sorting and counting items they can feel and touch
- Get Set for School developmental readiness and writing curriculum
- Sorting and patterning
- Cutting - *opportunities to cut simple designs, shapes etc.*
- Language experience. Opportunities for the children to dictate stories words and experiences on to paper.
This allows them to see letters make words, and encourages free expression. Chart paper is available for class stories to display.
- Writing - *learning to form letters in their name*
Give direction as to the proper formation of letters, though children should not be expected to write on lined paper.
- Learn address and telephone number
- Become responsible for hygiene, clothing and personal property
- Opportunities to pray aloud
Example: a circle prayer where each child takes his or her prayer concern to God themselves as opposed to the teacher praying on the children's behalf.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN:

- Increased personal responsibility for their behavior and personal property
- An awareness of themselves as members of families and communities
- Introduction to other cultures
- "Reading" their dictated stories.
- Exploration of reading and writing activities through the use of Making Great Readers and Get Set for School
- Science - asks questions, seeks answers and expresses wonder about the world around them.
- Rhyming words

ARRIVAL AND PICKUP TIME

Preschool hours are 9:00AM - 12:30PM

CHILDREN WILL BRING THEIR LUNCH DAILY. A SMALL SNACK IS PROVIDED BY THE PRESCHOOL DAILY.

PARKING

For the safety and consideration of our preschoolers and other church programming, parking is only permitted in lined spaces or in Handicap spaces if a handicap sticker is visible. Please do not park in the car drop-off line.

ARRIVAL TIME

No sooner than 8:55 AM (*teachers are preparing their rooms for the day*) and no later than 9:15 AM. Prompt arrival contributes to the success of your child's day. Chronic tardiness is disruptive to the morning routine of social play experiences of both the tardy child and of the class as a whole.

We encourage parents to use the car drop-off line in the mornings. We ask that parents form a line and wait for a teacher to remove your child from their car seat. Please have your child unbuckled before you get to the front of the line to allow a staff member to easily reach your child. Please avoid cell phone use during drop-off and pick-up time for safety and precautionary reasons.

***Important: No child is permitted to enter the building unless accompanied by a staff member.
Your cooperation is important to ensure the safety and protection of your child.***

MORNING TRANSITION

IN AN EFFORT TO GIVE EACH CHILD A POSITIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE AND SMOOTH TRANSITION INTO THE SCHOOL YEAR, WE ASK THAT PARENTS SEPARATE FROM CHILDREN AT THE DOOR TO THEIR CLASSROOMS OR AT THE DROP-OFF LINE. THIS MAKES FOR A SHORTER AND EASIER ADJUSTMENT FOR ALL. TEACHERS WILL BE AT THE DOOR AND OUTSIDE TO GREET YOU AND YOUR CHILD.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- Our day ends at 12:30. If you arrive early to pick up your child, please wait in the hallway across from your child's classroom until the teacher opens the door and begins dismissing children.
- If you need to pick your child up early, please let your child's teacher and/or the director know ahead of time so we can have your child ready to go when you arrive.
- Each child must be signed out daily.
- Children must stay with their parent/caregiver when exiting the building.
- We encourage our children to use "walking feet" and "inside voices" in the hallway.
- If someone other than the parent is to pick up a child, we must receive notification from the parent of that child. This person should be listed on your Family Enrollment Form. Only those listed on your child's information card will be allowed to take your child unless other notification is given to the director. Written notice of a pick-up change is greatly appreciated by the preschool staff.
- Parents should inform any person picking up a child that we will ask for identification if needed. It is part of our mission to ensure a safe environment for your child. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.
- If you choose to play on the playground after school hours, please continue to have the children show respect of the equipment and facilities. Food is not permitted within the fence lines.

PICK-UP TIME

Parents are expected to be prompt when picking children up at the end of the school day. After a 5 minute grace period, you will be charged a late fee of \$1/minute after 12:35PM. **Please contact the Preschool office as soon as possible should you be unable to pick up your child on time.** After three late pick-ups your child's teacher will turn the sign-out sheet to the office. The office will send a warning notice home. After the warning, bills for late pick up will be mailed home. Should you receive such a notification, your child will not be allowed to return to school unless the fee has been paid within one week of receiving notice.

LUNCH

Sharing a meal is an excellent opportunity for children to interact socially with their peers and develop table etiquette.

LUNCH GUIDELINES

- Please make sure your child's lunch box and interior containers are labeled.
- We will provide water or you may send a drink for your child.
- We cannot refrigerate lunches so please include ice packs if needed.
- No glass containers; these pose a safety hazard.
- Please avoid sending fast food for lunch.
- Please keep in mind that your child is still developing his/her table skills. We appreciate food that is easy for your child to handle independently.
- Snacks will be light and served earlier in the preschool day.

SAMPLE LUNCH IDEA

- Sandwich in an easy to open container, crackers or cookies, fruit, juice box, utensils if needed and a napkin.

HANDLING ALLERGIES SAFELY

In order to ensure the safety of all children during lunch please ensure that **ALL** sandwiches made with **ANY** type of “butters” (*peanut, almond, sunflower etc.*) and foods with nuts in them are labeled as such on the sandwich bag or container. Foods in their original packaging (*granola bars for example*) do not need additional labeling.

Since there are so many variations in the kinds of nut exposure that can cause allergic reactions for children WCP staff will discuss with parents of children with allergies appropriate protocol for lunchtime safety for each child. Possible solutions include having a nut-free table, not sitting adjacent to children with nuts in their lunch and reminders that all children should only touch and eat their own food.

MESSAGES

Please send all messages in writing. We cannot accept verbal statements from children concerning changes in carpool. If your child is going home with another child to visit, please notify the teacher in writing.

In an ongoing effort to improve the overall experience of our families, words of encouragement, compliments and constructive criticism are all welcomed. However, church policy is to disregard positive or negative feedback that is anonymous. Please sign any written communication so we can respond appropriately.

DRESS FOR CHILDREN

Parents are asked to dress their children so that they will be comfortable. Buy clothing that is washable or better still, use old clothing which will better accommodate the inevitable accidental stains, paint, or magic markers.

Closed toe, rubber soled shoes are best for active play.

Weather permitting, children will play outside daily. Please be sure to send a warm coat daily through the fall and winter.

All students should have an extra change of clothes to be left at school (*including socks and underwear*). Please clearly label these items.

THINGS FROM HOME

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

- A backpack and a lunch box (Please make sure you attach name tags to both. The preschool provides the name tags)
- Any treasure from nature to share with class (please bring in a sealed container)
- Any item to share during Show-N-Tell
- Any security item needed to get through the morning (these items are available as needed and kept in child's cubby when not needed).

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

- Necklaces, rings, bracelets or other items that may become lost easily.
- Money - unless requested for a special purpose.
 - If money is brought to school, please send it in a sealed envelope with child's name on it.
- Toys that aren't meant for Show-N-Tell
- Toy guns, knives, or war toys
- Candy or extra food unless it is a special occasion that has been arranged with the teacher

A WORD ABOUT TODDLERS

It has been the experience of the staff that some toddlers, and less often 2s, are not ready to fully participate in a group setting. Behaviors that may indicate that your child is not ready to be at school include, but are not limited to, trouble separating from parents well into the school year or a pattern of aggressive behavior.

While these behaviors are frustrating for parents, staff and students, they are developmentally typical of children of this age.

Should your child exhibit either of these behaviors or others that concern the staff, your child's teacher will work with you to try to get over these hurdles. A couple of strategies that we use on a regular basis are a shorter school day until the child is better adjusted, and partnering with parents to address behavior patterns consistently at home and at school.

The WCP staff takes their charge to care for your child in the best way possible very seriously and will not ask for a child to be withdrawn lightly. If after an extended period of time the WCP staff feels that your child is not making sufficient progress, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child. Typically this happens no more than once a school year and the decision is based on the overall experience of each individual child and the class as a whole. For example, we want your child's first school experience to be positive. A child who is struggling with separation issues will come to dread school.

Our experience is that children who are asked to withdraw for the above reasons come back and flourish the following year. If it is decided that it's best for your child not to complete the school year, we will refund any tuition that is not used and allow you to register for the following school year as a currently enrolled child/family.

In the end, the well-being of each child at WCP is our first priority.

SPECIAL ENRICHMENT

ENRICHMENT EVENTS - In order to augment regular classroom learning enrichment events and activities will be scheduled for children enrolled in 3s, 4s and Pre-K. Activities scheduled off campus require parents to transport children.

GUEST PROFESSIONALS- GUEST PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS WITH TALENTS TO SHARE WILL BE INVITED PERIODICALLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE WITH THE CHILDREN. ANY PARENT WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN VISITING THE SCHOOL FOR THIS PURPOSE IS ENCOURAGED TO DO SO.

RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES AREA - The Old Fellowship Hall will be available on rainy days. There is a wide variety of gross motor activities for children to play with when the playgrounds are unavailable.

CHILDREN'S THEATER- The Children's Theater of Charlotte will perform onsite for all classes age three and up. If your child does not regularly attend school on the day of the performance you and your child are invited to attend the performance together.

CONFERENCES - Staff members will regularly inform parents of classroom activities and learning activities planned. Parents are free to consult informally with their child's teacher regarding progress at any time. It is recommended that discussion not take place in front of the child or in front of other parents. If a parent or teacher has concerns regarding a child's social/emotional or academic development, a conference may be requested by the parent or teacher to discuss those concerns.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Williamson's Chapel Preschool requires that **ALL** children in attendance submit proof that immunizations are current. A copy of your child's immunization records is due by orientation day. Failure to submit this form may result in your child not being admitted to the program.

SICK CHILDREN

Parents are asked to cooperate with the school in keeping as healthful a surrounding as possible for the children. We ask that you keep your child at home if he or she is sick during the night or in the early morning with fever greater than 99.5, vomiting, diarrhea, or an undiagnosed rash. Children should be fever free without medication for at least **24 hours** before returning to school. ***Due to the tendency of stomach viruses to recur even after 24 hours, we ask that diarrhea and vomiting is gone without the aid of medication for 48 hours before returning to school.*** For the safety of your child and your child's classmates, please err on the side of caution when sending your child back to school after an illness. Please see Common Illness chart on page 12 for guidelines.

If a child is sent to school sick with these symptoms, or becomes ill during the morning, we will contact a parent immediately. Please be certain that emergency numbers are correct and up to date on your child's enrollment form. Any child sent home from school because of an illness may not return to school the following calendar day. This will affect five day, four day and the TTHF classes particularly.

Please notify the preschool office if your child or family member has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. We will notify each class that is affected if a contagious illness is a possibility.

FOOD ALLERGIES

There has been an increase in food allergies, especially peanut and tree nut allergies which can be life-threatening to children. Please indicate allergies on your child's paperwork and alert your child's teacher of allergens likely to be encountered in a classroom setting.

All snacks purchased by the preschool are nut-free and are not processed in a facility that also processes nuts.

Please be sure to ask your child's teacher about any food allergies before bringing food in to share with the class. Even in classes where there are no known allergies we ask that any food brought into school to share with classmates have no peanuts or tree nuts. Many children have not yet been introduced to nuts so parents may be unaware of potential allergic reactions.

EMERGENCY BENADRYL

An allergic reaction can happen within minutes after a child ingests or comes in contact with an allergen. Reactions can be mild causing irritated and itchy skin or they can be more severe causing breathing difficulties. It can take the rescue squad 5-10 minutes to respond to an emergency call. Benadryl given at the first sign of a reaction can help slow down the process. The preschool keeps Benadryl in the office in case of emergencies. By indicating YES and signing the Parent Consent Form, you give the preschool permission to administer Benadryl to your child ONLY in case of an emergency.

INSURANCE

Williamson's Chapel UMC Preschool carries a group accident policy for all the enrolled children in case of accident at Preschool. While not a primary policy, it will provide supplementary coverage. In case of an accident at Preschool which necessitates medical expenditures, parents will need to first file for benefits from their primary insurance company.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

North Carolina state law requires teachers to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If such cases arise, the staff member with the concern will notify the Child Protective Services Unit of the Department of Social Services.

TOILET TRAINING

We require that all children entering a three year old classroom be successfully toilet trained prior to beginning preschool in September. Our three year old classrooms do not have changing facilities, which means a teacher must leave the classroom to change a diaper. We know that the toilet training process is tied to development and individual to each child. Parents should speak with teachers directly and openly about this matter. We will provide support in any way possible. Parents are welcome to pay to hold their seat until their child is toilet trained. Parents, teachers and the director will meet to discuss this option prior to the beginning of the preschool year. When you do begin the toilet training process, we do ask that your child have 2 full weeks of complete success at home before sending them to school in underwear.

MEDICATION

WCP will not regularly administer medications at school. Should it be necessary to store medications at school for emergency use, the following steps will be followed:

1. A signed form from the parents or guardians giving permission for the medication to be administered by a WCP staff member.
2. Parents are to talk to their child's teachers to ensure that they are aware of the condition and understand when and how to administer the medication.
3. There is to be a log filled out when the medication is administered, indicating symptoms presented, time administered, and signature of the staff person administering the medication and when and how the parents were contacted.
4. Medications will be stored in a bag with the child's name in a container in the preschool office.

COMMON ILLNESSES

You will notice from the chart below that good hand washing is important in curtailing the transmission of all of these illnesses. For that reason, we will ask that all staff and students wash their hands upon entering the classroom each day.

COMMON ILLNESS CHART

Please use the chart below as a reference when your child is ill or has been exposed to different illnesses.

ILLNESS	INCUBATION PERIOD	HOW TRANSMITTED	RESTRICT FROM SCHOOL	RETURN TO SCHOOL	PREVENTION OF TRANSMISSION
COMMON COLD	12 hours to 15 days	Via respiratory tract, indirectly by contaminated hands or surfaces	NO	N/A	Good handwashing, covering nose & mouth when sneezing & coughing
CONJUNCTIVITIS (Pink Eye)	24-48 hours	Contact with discharge from eyes	YES	24 hours after the start of antibiotic therapy	Treatment of affected eye, good handwashing, disinfect contaminated surfaces, avoid contact with eye discharge
INFLUENZA	24-72 Hours	Droplets, respiratory tract	YES	When symptom free for 24 hours	Good handwashing, Immunization if advised by doctor
LICE	Eggs hatch in 7-10 days	Direct contact with person and /or objects of infected person	YES	When no nits can be seen in the hair	Good handwashing, not sharing personal articles, proper treatment with a medicated shampoo
RING WORM (Tinea Corporis)	4-10 days	Direct/indirect contact with lesions of infected people or animals	YES <i>If lesion cannot be covered by clothing or light dressing</i>	After medication is started	Good handwashing, good personal hygiene, not sharing personal items
STREP THROAT	1-3 days	Direct contact, respiratory tract, sharing of food and drink	YES	24 hours after antibiotic treatment and must be symptom free for 24 hours	Good handwashing, not sharing personal items

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

REGISTRATION

Williamson's Chapel Preschool offers classes for one, two, three, and four year olds. Placement in classes is based on your child's birthday. Our cut-off dates are as follows:

1-YEAR OLDS	2-YEAR OLDS	3-YEAR OLDS	4-YEAR OLDS	PRE-KINDERGARTEN
One by June 1 st & walking by first of school	Two by August 31 st	Three by August 31 st	Four by August 31 st	Five by August 31 st

Registration is held in January for the following Fall term. Each child must register for the program each year. Children currently enrolled and their siblings who are not currently enrolled will be given first priority. Church members will be given priority over the general public.

At the time of registration a completed registration form and registration fee must be submitted. The annual registration fee is \$85.00 per child. **Registration fees are non-refundable.** September tuition will be due in May prior to summer break.

WAITING LISTS

Children that are unable to be placed in a class due to space limitations are placed on a waiting list. There is a \$10 non-refundable waitlist fee. The fee will be credited towards your registration fee when a space becomes available.

WITHDRAWALS

If a child must be withdrawn from the program, one month’s notice in writing is required. Failure to give written notice one month prior to withdrawal is just cause for being charged tuition for a full month from the date of notification.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition is due on the first of each month and is to be paid one month in advance.

2024-2025 PRESCHOOL CLASSES					
	TODDLERS	2’s	3’s	4’s	PRE-K
2024-2025 MONTHLY TUITION RATES	<i>2 days per week:</i> \$225/mo	<i>2 days per week:</i> \$225/mo	<i>2 days per week:</i> \$215/mo	<i>4 days per week:</i> \$300/mo	<i>5 days per week:</i> \$350/mo
	<i>3 days per week:</i> \$265/mo	<i>3 days per week:</i> \$265/mo	<i>3 days per week:</i> \$255/mo	<i>5 days per week:</i> \$340/mo	
			<i>4 days per week:</i> \$290		
			<i>5 days per week:</i> \$325		

Tuition payments can be made by auto-debit from checking account or credit card (preferred), or check or cash brought into the Preschool office. **A late fee of \$10 will be charged if tuition is not received by the 10th of the month. A \$25 fee will be charged for all returned checks.**

As a non-profit organization, every effort is made to keep tuition rates as low as possible while maintaining a quality educational environment. Tuition is determined based on the cost for the school year and divided into 9 equal monthly payments for your convenience. We realize that there are occasions when your child may need to be absent from school. However, in order to meet our financial obligations, no discounts for illness, absences, vacations, holidays, or inclement weather are offered.

PAYMENT	DUE DATE	APPLIED TO
Registration Fee	At Registration	Registration
Payment 1	May 1, 2024	September 2024 Tuition
Payment 2	September 1, 2024	October 2024 Tuition
Payment 3	October 1, 2024	November 2024 Tuition
Payment 4	November 1, 2024	December 2024 Tuition
Payment 5	December 1, 2024	January 2025 Tuition
Payment 6	January 1, 2025	February 2025 Tuition
Payment 7	February 1, 2025	March 2025 Tuition
Payment 8	March 1, 2025	April 2025 Tuition
Payment 9	April 1, 2025	May 2025 Tuition

SCHOOL CLOSING POLICIES

Williamson’s Chapel Preschool will align our calendar as closely as possible with Iredell Statesville Schools (ISS) calendar for holidays and teacher workdays; however some of our preschool closures may differ slightly from the public school calendar. (See Calendar) In the event of hazardous road conditions due to snow or ice or extreme cold conditions, the preschool will monitor local school districts’ decisions as guidance to make a decision on closures, delays and early dismissals. In the event of inclement weather an

INCLEMENT WEATHER CHART	
Local School districts decision	Williamson’s Chapel Preschool Schedule
Closed	Closed
One Hour Delay	Regular Schedule
Two Hour Delay	Preschool Starts at 10:00am
Three Hour Delay	Preschool will be closed

email and/or text message will be sent as soon as possible to confirm the preschool schedule. We will also communicate this decision on our Facebook page. Please be sure we have updated contact information in case of inclement weather beginning after school has started. We will again follow local districts to decide if preschool needs to close early. In the event that preschool does need to dismiss early please pick up your child as soon as you hear of the closing. We will use all forms of communication that we can to inform families of a weather related early dismissal. It is our goal to get all students and staff home safely.

PHILOSOPHY OF GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

It is the policy of the Williamson's Chapel Preschool that corporal punishment will never be used for any reason in the preschool classroom, or anywhere on the church premises.

The preschool staff is trained to set appropriate limits and boundaries to provide for the safety and well-being of each child in their care. Positive discipline measures will be used to redirect and guide a child's behavior.

The purpose of all existing limits at Williamson's Chapel Preschool is twofold:

- 1. Safety**
- 2. Consideration of others**

In an effort to prevent unacceptable behaviors our staff will:

- Provide a safe and respectful environment
- Prepare a classroom environment with careful consideration given to the developmental characteristics and interests of children, and in a way that offers and promotes acceptable choices
- Set clear and reasonable limits according to the age of the child
- Model behaviors and language that are appropriate, giving children a choice of ways to handle different situations
- Help children recognize, label and understand their feelings
- Praise and encourage children for making acceptable choices
- Be active listeners as children express themselves

In response to inappropriate behaviors our staff will:

- Treat each child with respect, using each situation as an opportunity for growth
- Consistently enforce reasonable limits that have been set
- Listen to and talk children through dangerous or conflict situations, patiently giving them logical explanations they are able to understand
- Ignore an inappropriate behavior if it does not involve a dangerous situation
- Redirect the child to a more appropriate activity
- Model a better way to handle the situation
- Change the current activity to distract attention from the situation
- Allow children to experience the logical consequences of their choices/actions
- Evaluate and make changes to the physical environment if necessary
- Use short periods of time away from the group if needed
- Talk with parents, seeking information that may help us understand and address the specific behavior

By using these techniques, boys and girls learn to redirect their energy into constructive outlets and learn to take responsibility for their own actions.

The school reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior consistently disrupts the physical and learning needs of others. Every effort is made to work with each child's individual needs, and the Director and classroom teachers will effectively communicate with parents if there is a potential problem situation.

GENERAL POLICY REGARDING BITING

Toddlers thrive on exploration, and using their senses to investigate their world. They will "explore" other children and adults with their senses just as if these people were objects. At times a healthy toddler's exploration of the social world will involve conflicting feelings. They may react impulsively, displaying aggressive feelings and

behaviors. This may include biting. This is all part of typical development. When a child bites it is our policy to follow this procedure:

- The aggressive behavior is stopped with a firm NO!
- The biter is addressed immediately and told that biting is unacceptable, that biting hurts, and that it is not okay to hurt our friends.
- The biter may be given a short time-out, or may be enlisted to help in the care and comfort of the child who was bitten.
- The teacher will wash the bite with soap and water, and give reassurance
- Both children are given more acceptable ways of dealing with the situation. The aggressor is taught to use words to communicate with classmates. The victim is taught that it is okay to say, "No, I don't like that," or to respond in another appropriate way.
- An Injury/Incident Report is completed for both children and the teacher will attempt to make contact with the parents of both children before pick-up time.
- Teachers will evaluate the environment, as well as any patterns that arise with the biting, and make adjustments as needed.

You are one of our very best resources when dealing with your child. We find it is also very important to have consistency between the home and the school on methods of handling these types of behaviors.

- The name of the biter shall remain confidential.
- The parents of the child bitten will always be informed when their child has been bitten.
- If a child has bitten someone on more than one occasion, the parents of the child who has bitten may be called in for a conference.
- If biting becomes a habit at school, after discussion with the parents, the child will be sent home from school when biting incidents occur. In extreme cases the preschool reserves the right to ask the child not to return to school for a predetermined length of time so the child can mature and hopefully reenter the classroom smoothly.

STATEMENT OF APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Williamson's Chapel Preschool encourages parental participation in the classroom throughout the school year for special events, field trips, and substitute teaching. As a Christian preschool, it is extremely important to us that all adults, teachers and parents alike, model Christ-like behavior while participating in any preschool activity, including drop-off and pick-up times.

Preschool children are like sponges and will soak up whatever they are exposed to, especially what they see and hear key adults in their lives do. For this reason, we ask that no negative comments about anybody be made in the presence of others. If you have concerns please contact your child's teacher privately. While this may sound like common sense, it is also important that all adults are treated respectfully at all times as well.

Thank you for your cooperation in this area as we strive to create the most nurturing environment possible for everyone involved in our ministry.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Williamson's Chapel Preschool is committed to the philosophy that including children with differing abilities benefits all the children in our school. We are clear, however, that WCP is not a therapeutic preschool, but an opportunity for children with disabilities and typically developing children to interact, learn, and socialize.

The philosophy of Williamson's Chapel Preschool affirms that there is a range of typical, normal, and acceptable abilities, behaviors, and needs of children. We attempt to accommodate as broad a range as possible in the belief that this diversity strengthens and enriches all children, and the adults who work with them.

It is the policy of Williamson's Chapel Preschool to be as inclusive as possible when enrolling children with disabilities, developmental delays and or chronic illness. We do reserve the right to work with the family in making the most appropriate placement for the child, including but not limited to:

- Choosing the teacher best qualified to handle the child's specific needs
- Separating atypical children so that no one class or team of teachers is overwhelmed by multiple issues
- Assigning children to classes based on their developmental age rather than their chronological age (under no circumstances will a child be moved to a class older than his/her chronological age)
- Redefining educational goals for children with special needs

Whenever possible, WCP will make reasonable adaptations to meet the individual needs of each child. However, the safety and successful functioning of the class always has priority over the individual needs of any given child.

We ask that families of children with special needs be open with the administrative staff as well as their child's teachers and that a dialogue be kept open between parents, teachers, therapists and administrators as appropriate.

Parents whose children have therapists visiting the classroom on a regular basis should give a copy of the schedule to the classroom teacher and the preschool office. Please indicate if the therapist needs dedicated space outside the classroom so room reservations can be made accordingly.

Parents should also contact the preschool office and the child's teacher if someone will be coming to evaluate or observe a child.

KNOWN SPECIAL NEEDS

When a child with an identified special need applies for enrollment in WCP, the Director carefully interviews the parents for information about the child's developmental strengths and weaknesses. Any relevant past and current records and evaluations of the child by professionals are requested. The child and parent will often be invited to join a classroom for a visit, where further observations can take place. If the child is transferring to WCP from another program, the child may also be observed in that setting or those teachers consulted.

Based on this information and consultation with the child's prospective teachers when possible, the Director will give a brief description of the child. The Preschool Board with the Director's information will make a decision to accept the child when the child and WCP will mutually benefit.

WCP does not formally evaluate any child before entrance by means of testing. The above outlined evaluative process before acceptance is intended to provide enough information to indicate a beneficial match between school and child.

After preschool begins the child is observed closely for a period of *three to four weeks*. Teacher, Director, parents, and professionals working with the child are consulted during this time. If, during this adjustment time, the child's needs are determined to put an exceptional stress on the classroom, a third teacher joins the teaching team to provide additional support. It is felt that it is desirable to allow all children this adjustment period except in extreme circumstances. At the end of this period, a determination is again made as to whether the placement is mutually beneficial.

Three possible determinations at this time are:

- The child's presence in the classroom is of mutual benefit;
- WCP is unable to meet the child's needs;
- When professional consultation determines that appropriate intervention will enable the placement as mutually beneficial. Families are responsible for payment of outside services required.

If it is determined by consultation between the teachers and the Director that WCP is unable to meet the child's needs, a conference is set up with the parents, and the parents are asked to seek another placement. Attempts are made to help the parents with placement.

If professional intervention is used, the situation is carefully monitored. The decision to continue the child's enrollment is based on:

- The professional advice;
- The behavior of the child;
- The teacher's opinion;
- Parental input;
- The Director's opinion.

The Director continues to inform the Preschool Board of progress. There are times when a child not identified at admission as having special needs will exhibit such behaviors at some point during the year. At this point, the process outlined above is put into place.

SUSPECTED SPECIAL NEEDS

It is common for preschool teachers to be the first to notice possible developmental delays.

- Teachers are incredibly valuable in the identification of a child's difficulties for multiple reasons.
 - They spend a great deal of time with the child, second only to the parents
 - They have had contact with many other children over time, helping them to establish a basis of 'typical'
 - They have ongoing typical "control" children in the class. They can see which child is different from all the other kids in the same classroom.

*From **Kids in the Syndrome Mix** by Martin Kutscher, MD, pg17-18.*

In the case that a delay is suspected, the teacher will discuss the issue with the Director or Assistant Director who may choose to observe the child or pass information about screening agencies etc.; then the teacher will discuss the concern with the parent. We would not be so bold as to diagnose a child with an illness, delay or disability, but because we see so many preschoolers, it is sometimes easier for us to see subtle differences in development that may be less apparent to family members. The preschool's policy is to work in partnership with the family to provide the best possible care and environment for each child.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Williamson's Chapel Preschool wants to meet the needs of the children enrolled in the program. Knowing that parents may at times have concerns regarding various aspects of the program, the administration, the teaching staff, policies, or operating procedures, a system has been established to provide for this communication to take place.

If a parent has an individual teacher/class-related concern, he or she should seek resolution by contacting:

- First, the teacher
- Second, the Director
- Third, the chairperson of the Preschool Board or the Developer of Grow Ministries, should the Director be unable to satisfactorily address the concern.

If a parent has a concern related to WCP policies, the administration of the program and/or the operating procedures, he or she should seek resolution by contacting:

- First, the Director
- Second, the chairperson of the Weekday School Committee or the Developer of Serving Ministries, should the Director be unable to satisfactorily address the concern.

It is helpful to place all concerns in writing.

SUBSTITUTES

WCP is always in need of substitutes. Substitutes will be paid \$10.00 an hour. If you are interested in being a substitute teacher, please contact the Director for required paperwork and training.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTIES

We welcome the opportunity for your child to celebrate his/her birthday at school. We realize this is a special time for young children. We ask that any parent wishing to do this keep the celebration very simple. Please make these arrangements with your child's teacher. Due to safety concerns, no balloons or candles will be allowed in the classrooms.

In an effort to increase our classroom libraries, you may also donate a new book in honor of your child's birthday. Your child's picture and a book plate with your child's name will be placed inside the book. If you are interested in donating a book for your child's birthday, please contact the Preschool Director.

OTHER PARTY GUIDELINES

We request that birthday party invitations not be sent home from school. The teachers are not allowed to distribute these invitations.

ROOM MOMS

Room moms help support the teacher in planning and gathering items for a variety of activities that may take place throughout the year. Some of the responsibilities include:

Help organize collections; help with holiday parties; serve as a contact person for the class; share information with the parents about upcoming events.

Information regarding room moms will be shared within the first month of the school year.

PARENT PARTICIPATION AND VISITS

Parent participation is invaluable to Williamson's Chapel Preschool. We are able to offer many opportunities to our children because of the support we receive from generous parents.

Please allow us to express our thanks to you now for your willingness to contribute. We welcome you to participate in the following ways:

- Serve as a Room Mom for your child's classroom
- Share a special talent
- Assist with classroom activities and centers
- Serve on any of the following school committees: Fundraising, Teacher Appreciation/Hospitality, Book Fair, School Pictures

COMMUNICATION: THE FAMILY SCHOOL LINK

The staff at Williamson's Chapel Preschool encourages all parents to communicate openly with teachers. It is in each child's best interest for parents and teachers to work as a team, addressing the child's strengths and areas targeted for growth.

- To keep you informed of your child's progress, we will offer conferences once per year.
- Teachers will provide a monthly calendar and weekly newsletters.
- Each classroom will also post a copy of their calendar, daily schedule, pick-up list and other useful information.
- Each child will also be assigned a cubby.
- The director will communicate regularly with parents.
- The preschool will communicate via email as much as possible. Please make sure that the preschool has current email addresses and check your email regularly.

Williamson's Chapel Preschool is a ministry of Williamson's Chapel United Methodist Church and is governed by a Preschool Board of Directors.

