



# **Chevy Chase United Methodist Church Preschool**

## **Parents' Handbook 2017-2018**

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# Welcome to Chevy Chase United Methodist Church Preschool (CCUMCP)

This handbook describes our program and the philosophy that shapes our daily activities. We hope it will be helpful to you in your interactions with the children and the staff, and that your experiences here will be rewarding for both you and your child.

Please note that all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change by the preschool's Advisory Council during the course of the school year. Families will be notified in writing when changes occur.

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## Mission Statement

*As a school community within a Christian community,  
we are committed to nurturing children  
to develop into the fullness of their potential  
and to increasing their awareness of and compassion for  
the world around them.*

## ORGANIZATION

The Chevy Chase United Methodist Church Preschool was established in 1967. It is a non-profit, self-supporting program under the auspices of the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church. Ultimate responsibility for the program is vested in the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church Charge Conference. The Conference oversees the Church Council, which considers proposals from the preschool's Advisory Council and evaluates the state of the Preschool. The preschool's Advisory Council sets policy, establishes all fees and employs the staff, which includes the Director, Administrator, teachers and classroom assistants. The preschool's Advisory Council is made up of members of the Church who have children enrolled in the program, the two administrators, a staff representative, and, possibly, additional preschool parents who are not members of the Church.

Parents play an active role in the school - participating in their child's classroom, driving on field trips, helping with class and school events, working on fundraisers, and serving on the Advisory Council. Monthly Council meetings include a "Parent Forum" where families may bring ideas or concerns to the Council. A parent orientation meeting is held at the beginning of each school year to outline the program and policies, and to familiarize parents with daily classroom routines.

CCUMC Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin or religion in the administration of its educational and/or admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs. This non-discriminatory policy pertains to all applicants and students, and thusly affords them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available within CCUMC Preschool. Moreover, CCUMC Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender or age in the employment or retainment of staff.

CCUMC Preschool operates under a Certificate of Approval from the Maryland State Department of Education. Please read their pamphlet, "[A Parent's Guide to Regulated Care](#)" for more information. Any complaints about CCUMC Preschool that involve any threat to the health, safety or welfare of a child should be immediately registered with your regional Office of Child Care and, in certain circumstances, with the Child Protective Services division of your local department of social services. LOCATE: Child Care Referral Specialists can be reached by telephone at 877-261-0060 and can provide you with the

telephone numbers of the office nearest you.

## **PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES**

The most important thing children should develop in their early years is self-confidence and a belief in the essential goodness of the world around them. Our program strives to reinforce the confidence and trust of children in themselves and the people they meet in an environment away from home. A "healthy self-concept" is an immeasurable and vaguely defined goal, but that does not lessen its importance. Respect for the child as he or she is and for what he or she wishes to become precedes all learning and is intrinsically entwined in it. Warm and loving relationships come first and are the basis for all the learning experiences that the program tries to provide.

We believe each child needs to recognize his or her individuality as valuable and unique. Confidence and trust in this individuality should be reinforced within both the family and the preschool environment. We are committed to helping each child develop a sense of self-worth, a respect for his or her needs and rights as an individual, as well as for the needs and rights of others. In this vein, we work intentionally to promote the development of good manners and positive virtues. The entire school utilizes a virtues curriculum that emphasizes one virtue per month. Teachers help children develop an understanding of these virtues through the use of books, classroom activities, and when appropriate, community service activities.

We seek to expose children to community life through field trips, community service projects and classroom units so that they are able to see themselves in relation to families, communities and all of God's world. By providing them the opportunity to interact with role models (e.g., firefighters, dentists, recycling truck operators) from the larger community, we help them to develop an understanding of the positive impact that an individual can have on the world around him or her. By then giving children hands-on opportunities to partake in community service projects, children develop a sense of their own ability to effect positive change in their community even as a young child.

We provide guidance and encouragement to each child with a healthy, supportive, and accepting atmosphere - one that cultivates enthusiasm and discovery. We try to stimulate within each child the desire to learn, to observe and to explore, in order to gain an understanding of the world. We provide hands-on experiences and activities appropriate to each child's interest and developmental level. We hope to foster positive attitudes toward the school experience and lay an educational foundation that will support learning in primary school and beyond.

We believe children need to explore the world, observing, examining and questioning things previously unknown. Each child is encouraged to develop his or her own interests and explore his or her own ideas in an atmosphere where there is freedom to learn. We encourage meaningful communication and imaginative self-expression. Through storytelling, reading, circle conversation, sharing, dramatic play, and individual conversation with peers, teachers, participating parents and visitors, our program contributes to the child's development of listening and speaking skills, critical and creative thinking, visual and auditory skills and hand-eye coordination. Other language arts objectives are the fostering of an

appreciation of the spoken and written word, of the joys of good literature, and of a rich vocabulary.

Our program attempts to help each child develop the skills and understanding needed for quantitative thinking and to make the transition from perception to problem solving. By the time each child has completed the pre-K program our goals in mathematics are to establish the meaning of number concepts through actual usage; to help each child learn to organize things into groups, count in sequence and recognize the numerals from 1 to 20; and to understand the use of shapes, patterns, measurements and designs in concrete and representational form.

We believe that a child will gain an understanding and knowledge of basic scientific concepts best through observation and exploration. Therefore, we encourage a scientific attitude through questions, discussion, simple investigation and evaluation of information. Occasionally pets are brought into the classroom, encouraging children to observe and help with family pets. Neighborhood walks and field trips to nature centers help the child develop an appreciation and respect for all living things.

Children are also encouraged to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings through the use of art materials. They paint with brushes, sponges, string, marbles, and fingers. They also use crayons, glue, scissors, chalk, clay, and much more. In these activities, a child will explore the use of materials and develop confidence in the creative process. Each child will also learn to recognize colors, shapes, line, form, texture and design, and to develop the fine motor skills needed for writing and drawing.

A special session each week for music and rhythms, taught by a music specialist, provides the children with an opportunity to respond to ideas and feelings expressed through music.

We strive to help each child learn to control and enjoy his/her body, to learn and use safety concepts, develop motor skills and a sense of spatial awareness, balance and coordination. Weekly fitness and sports sessions are included in the program during the winter months by [Jump Bunch](#). Outdoor activity on playgrounds with climbing apparatus, swings and riding toys is scheduled each day.

The pre-K classes rotate between their classrooms once a month to participate in specially prepared activities (e.g. a science experiment, language arts or math activity) beginning in January. In this way, each child benefits from the expertise of each teacher and classroom set-up. Beginning in December with the building of gingerbread houses, the pre-K classes gather together once a month to participate in a joint activity. Activities include making sandwiches for the needy (a monthly community service project), making gingerbread houses in December, and parading for the Chinese New Year.

Teachers work together in teams, meeting monthly to plan curriculum and special events. This helps ensure that each class is exposed to the same concepts and ideas, although the approach in individual classrooms is not identical because of the differences in class dynamics, maturity levels of students and individual teacher preference.

The curriculum prepares students to master the skills that are outlined in the Montgomery County

Public School System's curriculum standards. To view the standards for Montgomery County's kindergarten, please go to <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/integrated/EIC-Framework.pdf> The preschool also uses the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum for developing children's coloring, drawing, counting and handwriting readiness. The method can be viewed at [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com) Individual parent-teacher conferences are held during the year at which time classroom activities and the progress of each child is discussed. At other times throughout the school year, parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with their child's teacher and/or with the Director.

## **SPIRITUALITY**

The United Methodist Church is a Christian church based on biblical faith. It strives to be an inclusive society without regard to ethnic origin, economic condition, gender, age or handicapping conditions. It asserts that all who are baptized are ministers to Jesus Christ and affirms global mission and connection with other denominations in spirit and cooperation. In this ecumenical spirit, the preschool also strives to affirm God's presence in other faith traditions.

We affirm a child's spirituality and believe children should be aware of God's presence in our lives. The children say a blessing together before snack each day, and participate in three brief non-denominational church services in the sanctuary at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARY 2017-2018 School Year**

### **Morning Preschool Classes**

CCUMCP provides a morning preschool program that maintains a certificate of approval from the Maryland State Board of Education. The program includes classes for children from two to five years of age. A range of classes is offered for each age-group, from two to five mornings a week. All morning preschool classes meet for three hours.

#### Classes for Two Year-Olds:

#### ***Hummingbirds (begin in January)***

BD 9/1/15-12/31/15  
Two Days-Tues/Thurs, 9:00am to 12:00pm  
Class size – 10

#### ***Finches & Chickadees*** (2 classes)

BD 9/1/14 – 8/31/15  
Two Days-Tues/Thurs, 9:00am to 12:00pm  
Class size – 10

#### ***Buntings, Sparrows & Starlings*** (3 classes)

BD 9/1/14 – 8/31/15  
Three Days-Mon/Wed/Fri, 9:00am to 12:00pm

Class size – 10

Classes for Three Year-Olds:

***Cardinals & Robins*** (2 classes)

BD 9/1/13 – 8/31/14

Three Days-Mon/Wed/Fri, 9:00am to 12:00pm

Class size – 12

***Blue Jays & Doves*** (2 classes)

BD 9/1/13 – 8/31/14

Five Days-Mon– Fri, 9:00am to 12:00pm

Class size – 12

Pre-K Classes:

***Eagles, Owls & Penguins*** (3 classes)

BD 9/1/12– 8/31/13

Five Days-Mon – Fri, 9:00am to 12:00pm

Class size - 16

**Extended Day Programs**

It is our belief that the extended day programs, with the exception of the Early Bird program, provide enrichment. To participate in afternoon activities children must have celebrated their third birthday and must be potty-trained (no diapers or pull-ups). There is no age requirement or potty training requirement for the Early Bird program.

***Early Bird – 8:30am to 9:00am, Monday - Friday***

In this early morning drop-off program, children begin the day at 8:30am in the *Early Bird* classroom. They are escorted to their regular classroom at 9:00am. The program is available to all children enrolled in the preschool. Advance booking is not required.

***Afternoon Adventure – 12:00pm to 2:30pm, Monday – Friday***

This afternoon enrichment program is available to children enrolled in a three year-old or pre-K class, and to children in the two's program who have celebrated their third birthday. Children are escorted from their morning classroom to the Afternoon Adventure classroom at 12:10pm. A teacher and assistant provide a variety of activities including music, science, art and crafts. A calendar of these activities is sent out from the preschool office at the beginning of each month. The schedule includes lunch on arrival and outdoor play. The program commences the second week of school and continues until the last Thursday of school. *Afternoon Adventure* is not held the day before Christmas break. *Afternoon Adventure* is available on a drop-in basis if there is space available.

***Spanish Immersion – 12:00pm to 2:30pm, Thursday, Friday***

Children remain at school to eat their lunch then participate in a Spanish language immersion program. A teacher and assistant provide a variety of activities in Spanish in order to facilitate the learning of the language, providing multiple opportunities for children to practice the language skills.



The class is available to children enrolled in a three year-old or pre-K class. The program commences the second week of school and continues until the last Thursday of school. Spanish Immersion is not held the Friday before Christmas break. Spanish Immersion is not available on a drop-in basis.

### ***French Immersion – 12:00pm to 2:30pm, Monday***

Children remain at school to eat their lunch then participate in a French language immersion program. A teacher and assistant provide a variety of activities in French in order to facilitate the learning of the language, providing multiple opportunities for children to practice the language skills. The class is available to children who have had their third birthday and are potty trained. The program commences the second week of school and continues until the last Monday of school. French Immersion is not available on a drop-in basis.

### ***Mini-Sessions*** – 12:00pm to 1:30 or 2:30pm, Offered at various times throughout the year

These are special 6-8 week-long classes offered throughout the school year which focus on a particular topic such as cooking, art, music, soccer, gymnastics, and yoga. A schedule of these classes for the school year is available from the preschool office or on the preschool website. Children remain at school to eat their lunch then participate in activities related to the topic of the mini-session. Some of the mini-sessions are stand-alone classes and some are embedded within Afternoon Adventure sessions. Each mini-session is run by a teacher and an assistant teacher. These classes are available to children who have had their third birthday and are potty trained with the exception of the mini-sessions developed specifically for the two year olds who need not be potty trained. Mini-sessions are not available on a drop-in basis.

## **STAFF**

Each class is staffed by a teacher and an assistant. All teachers and assistants hold the credentials required by the Montgomery County Office of Child Care (OCC). In addition, all staff members receive substantial continuing education training in early childhood education each year. All staff members maintain current certificates in First Aid and CPR.

### **Class size and child/staff ratio**

The preschool ensures a high standard of individual attention for each child by maintaining small class sizes with low staff/child ratios. Following are class sizes:

Two year-olds (*Buntings, Chickadees, Finches, Hummingbirds, Sparrows, and Starlings*): ten children

Three year-olds (*Blue Jays, Cardinals, Doves, and Robins*): twelve children

Pre-K (*Eagles, Owls, and Penguins*): sixteen children

*Afternoon Adventure*: sixteen children (Pre-K class) and fourteen (3's class)

*Spanish Immersion*: twelve children

*French Immersion*: twelve children

(Note: On rare occasions class sizes may be increased by one student.)

All morning classes and extended day programs are staffed by a teacher and teacher's assistant. During the morning program, there is parent participation in the classroom scheduled on average approximately

once a week.

## APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

### School Tours

Monthly tours of the preschool for prospective parents begin in November. Parents attend an information session then tour the school, often led by preschool parents, to observe classes in action.

### Registration

Registration for morning preschool classes for the upcoming school year takes place the last week in January. Priority is given to full members of Chevy Chase United Methodist Church (full membership by December 1 of the preceding year), Preschool Advisory Council board members, children currently enrolled in the program and their siblings, and to alumni families. Spaces remaining in the program after the above have been registered are assigned on a lottery basis in early February. Wait lists, assembled by children's birth dates and gender, are maintained for classes that are fully enrolled. These wait lists will be dissolved on February 1, 2018, and spaces will not be filled after that time. Names are not carried over to the following school year.

Registration for the extended day programs ([\*Afternoon Adventure\*](#), [\*Spanish Immersion\*](#) and [\*French Immersion\*](#)) begins in April. Priority advance registration is given to full members of Chevy Chase United Methodist Church until May 1. Remaining spaces are assigned to preschool families on a lottery basis and on a rolling basis thereafter. Priority registration for *Afternoon Adventure*, *Spanish Immersion* and *French Immersion* is given to children enrolled in a pre-K class. Only children who have been enrolled in a morning preschool class whose March tuition deposit has been paid and who are current with fees for the current school year may participate in the registration process.

Children may be registered to attend *Afternoon Adventure* on a regular basis for one to five days a week. Registration is for the entire year and children will remain registered, and fees charged, until the office is notified in writing. Children may attend the programs on a drop-in basis, provided there is space available.

There is no drop-in option for the *Spanish Immersion* and *French Immersion* classes.

### Placement and Progression

Enrollment cut-off dates for the 2017-18 school year are as follows:

Pre-K (*Owls, Eagles & Penguins*): four years by September 1, 2017

Three year-olds (*Robins, Cardinals, Blue Jays and Doves*): three years by September 1, 2017

Two year-olds (*Buntings, Chickadees, Finches, Sparrows, and Starlings*): two years by September 1, 2017

Mid-year two year-olds (*Hummingbirds*): two years between September 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017

Extended Day Programs: Three years and up.

It is not necessary for a child to be toilet-trained to enter the morning preschool program. However, children enrolled in afternoon enrichment programs may not wear diapers or pull-ups.

Class placement is based on the child's birth date and the availability of openings in classes meeting on

the days selected by the parent. A balance of boys and girls is sought in each class. Because we have such a strong team of teachers at CCUMCP, we are confident that each child will thrive in any class in which he/she is placed. We will not, therefore, accept requests for particular teachers. Children will be placed according to their age and gender in order to attain a balanced group. Whenever possible, children are placed with a friend.

Progression of children within the program is based on the child's birth date. Any diversion from age grouping will be on the recommendation of the classroom teacher to the Director after at least six weeks of the child's classroom participation.

### **Withdrawal**

Children are accepted for enrollment at CCUMC Preschool with the expectation that they will adapt to the program. If a child has not settled in after a reasonable period of time, the Director may ask that the child be withdrawn.

A very clearly explained and reiterated framework of behavior is set forth by the teachers so that each child learns that the rights, works and individuality of others are to be respected and, if need be, protected. The Director will ask that a child be withdrawn if, after consultation with the teacher and the child's parents and a three week trial period, the Director decides that the continued participation of the child would be detrimental to the best interests of any or all concerned. Additionally, if parents fail to meet parent participation commitments, scheduled payments, or pay other fees owed (such as late fees), their child can be excluded from the program.

If a child is to be withdrawn from the program, parents must give 30 days written notice to the Administrator. Once the program has begun, payments must be made through that 30-day period, and all scheduled parent participation days must be fulfilled. **No refunds will be issued after April 1, 2018.** For more information on fees in the case of dismissal or withdrawal, see "Fees".

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Health and Safety Requirements for Children**

A [health inventory form](#), provided by the preschool and signed by the parent and the child's physician, must be completed and returned to the preschool office before the child may enter the program each year. The form includes a parental statement on the health status of the child and a physician's report on the child's health based on an examination within one year of the child's first day of school. The child's immunization record must indicate that the child has received all required vaccinations. If there is deviation from the OCC mandated vaccination schedule, parents must provide a letter signed by the child's physician stating the reasons for the deviation. The health inventory also must indicate that the child has had appropriate screening for lead poisoning.

Daily general health rules are those of caution and common sense. Parents are reminded when they are deciding whether their child is well enough to come to school that symptoms of an illness that may be contagious are fever, listlessness or unexplained crying, diarrhea, nausea, rash, sore throat and runny nose. As each child will spend some time outdoors each day, a child who is not well enough to play outside should not attend school. Children with a fever should not return to school until a minimum of 24 hours after the fever has broken.

During the course of the day, if a child becomes ill, he/she will be removed from the classroom and the

parent requested to take the child home. If the parents are unable to be reached by phone, the person whom the parent has designated as an emergency contact will be called.

Parents should inform the office immediately if their child contracts a contagious illness. The office will alert the rest of the class so that parents may watch for symptoms in their child. **In the case of an absence from school of three days or more due to acute illness, a written statement from the parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule is required.** In any case, parents are requested to inform the office if their child will be absent from school.

In the event of an epidemic, the preschool will comply with any decision to close schools by the Maryland Department of Education and/or the Department of Health and Human Services.

Parents should ensure that both the teacher and the administrators are fully informed about any specific allergies their child has. HIPAA law requires that a child's medical information remain confidential. By signing the Handbook Acknowledgement parents agree to allow the preschool to disclose pertinent medical information concerning allergies and health concerns. This disclosure, the health alert notice, shall take the form of a list of children whom have health concerns, including allergies, to be posted in the office and in each classroom. This list will include the child's name, class name, allergen or health concern and medicines prescribed, if applicable. This alert will be visible to allow for any staff members, substitutes or co-oping parents to access the information quickly. If a child suffers from a serious nut allergy and the parent desires that the classroom be made "nut-free", then it shall be made so. Popcorn, peanuts and grapes (unless cut) should not be sent to school, as they are a choking hazard.

If a child is infected with lice, the child must stay home until the condition is treated and all lice and/or nits have been removed from the hair. A child who has been infected with head lice must be checked by the preschool office before returning to the classroom. Routine checks of all children in the child's classroom (whole school if necessary) will be carried out following an outbreak of lice in the school. The school follows procedures for hand washing, diaper changing and otherwise limiting the spread of infection recommended by the Office of Child Care (OCC) of the Maryland Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The preschool staff cannot administer any medication to a child without written consent from the child's parent or guardian. Forms for this purpose are available in the office.

An [emergency contact form](#), provided by the preschool and containing current information on emergency health services, must be completed by the child's parents.

A [permission form](#) authorizing walks beyond the preschool grounds and containing a list of people authorized to pick up the child after school is required. It is necessary to keep it current. Separate permission forms are required for participation in each field trip.

### **Health Requirements for Participating Parents**

Each adult who will be assisting in the classroom must complete a [medical report form](#) provided by the preschool and signed by a physician no earlier than six months before the parent's first participation day.

### **Safe Sanctuaries Policy**

CCUMC Preschool, as an outreach of the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church, is committed to complying with the minimum requirements of the Church's Safe Sanctuaries policy. This includes adherence to the following rules and procedures by parents and/or staff:

1) Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect – Maryland law requires that all school employees, including volunteers and substitutes, report suspected abuse and neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. If parents suspect, through observing a child’s appearance and behavior, that a child may be either abused or neglected, they are required to notify the Director of their suspicion and then report that suspicion directly to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division at 240-777-4417. In an emergency, the local police should be notified.

2) Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire - All employees and parents working with young children are required to complete an annual [sexual misconduct questionnaire](#) provided by the preschool. The questionnaire requires standard contact information and three unrelated references.

3) Release of Information – Staff and paid substitutes are required to complete a Release of Information form that authorizes the OCC of the Maryland State Department of Education to have access to any files or records of child and adult abuse or neglect in the possession of a State or Local Department of Social Services. The form must be notarized.

4) Criminal Background Check – All employees and paid substitutes must submit, prior to commencing work at the preschool, to a federal and state criminal background check. Criminal background checks must be renewed every three years.

Only those parents who have completed the required forms (i.e., release of information form, medical report and sexual misconduct questionnaire) may assist in the classroom. Extended family members, friends and caregivers are welcome to visit, but they may not substitute for parents on scheduled participation days.

## **Discipline Policy**

A clearly explained and reiterated framework of behavior is set forth so that each child learns that the rights, works and individuality of others are to be respected and, if need be, protected. As a general rule, the teacher and her assistant will take responsibility for maintaining discipline in the classroom. Staff will use a positive approach to discipline including logical or natural consequences, emphasizing teaching and guiding the children, rather than punishment.

Techniques used are re-direction, communication in language the child understands, modeling and encouraging appropriate behavior, allowing children to express their feeling and ideas, and, if necessary, allowing children time and space within the classroom to think and gather themselves . Physical punishment may never be used by staff or participating parents for any reason. Verbal abuse (i.e. language that is belittling or demeaning to children) is not permitted. Food or beverage may not be withheld from a child as a form of persuasion or punishment, or used as a reward. Likewise, children may not be forced to eat or drink. Children may not be isolated out of sight or hearing of staff or participating parents. Children must remain under supervision at all times.

## **Screen Time Policy**

Educational and age-appropriate technology including programs, applications, noncommercial television programming, videos, streaming media, and ebooks may be a lively addition to the classroom setting. These forms of technology may be used to augment or support classroom activities, but may not take the place of creative play, physical activity, hands-on exploration, outdoor experiences, social interactions, and other developmentally appropriate learning activities for children. For example, a

teacher may wish to utilize the Scholastic online tools in combination with the hard copy of the Scholastic Weekly Reader used in the classroom. Use of interactive technology will be extremely limited both in duration and frequency.

Non-interactive technology such as videos, television and streaming media will be used seldom or not at all. An example of an appropriate use of non-interactive technology would include allowing students to watch the National Zoo's Panda Cam should they be studying pandas. Should a teacher decide to use non-interactive technology in any manner that would exceed 30 minutes, the teacher will provide parents with written notice as to the nature and duration of the programming viewed and the reason for its use.

No form of technology will be used during snack or lunchtime. No video, television or streaming media may include brand placement or advertising for unhealthy or sugary food or beverages.

### **Confidentiality**

Classroom experiences should be kept confidential. Parents and staff members should not discuss another child's behavior with another parent or in front of other children at school.

### **Health and Safety reminders**

Vehicle Drop-off – Drivers should proceed *slowly and carefully* through the lot. Children should be seated on the left hand side of the car. Drivers should remain in the car while the assistant takes the child out with his/her belongings, and proceed only when signaled to do so.

In the Parking Lot – Drivers entering the lot are cautioned to proceed slowly (maximum 5 mph) and to watch for children at all times. Pedestrians approaching the building should always walk on the *sidewalk, not across the lot*. Adults escorting children should walk on the curb side, keeping the child away from possible danger.

On the Stairs – Children should walk by themselves up and down the stairs. They should not be carried. They should walk on the *right* hand side going up and down, holding on to the stair railing.

On the Playground - The playground is open to the community during daylight hours whenever the preschool program is not in session. Safety rules on the playgrounds are as follows:

- *Slides* – Children should slide down on their bottoms, feet first.
- *Tables* – Tables are for eating and art. Standing on benches and tabletops is not permitted.
- *Playhouse* – Children may not climb on the playhouse.
- *Swings* – Swings should be used in a back and forth motion, not twisting and unwinding. Children should stay out of the swing radius area.
- *Sandbox* – Children should not walk on the sandbox cover.
- *Aggressive play* – While active play in the playground is supported, aggressive play such as hitting, kicking, pushing, tackling, punching, and karate is not permitted.

Parents are requested to ensure that children follow these rules both during and after school hours.

Chevy Chase United Methodist Church and its preschool program assume no responsibility for injuries incurred on this playground other than those covered by insurance and law.

**Hygiene** – All children and participating parents must wash their hands immediately upon entry into the classroom. This practice reduces the introduction of germs into the classroom from outside and will aid in reducing the level of illness within the classroom. In keeping with good hygiene practice, children and participating parents are asked to wash their hands thoroughly before eating, after using the bathroom and after coming into contact with bodily fluids. See CDC guidelines at <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HandWashing/>. Diapers will be changed at least once during each class session. Participating parents are expected to assist with this daily routine.

### **Fitness and Sports Program**

Weekly fitness and sports sessions are included in the program during the winter months by [Jump Bunch](#). Outdoor activity on playgrounds with climbing apparatus, swings and riding toys is scheduled each day. In the case of inclement weather, teachers may take their classes to Phillip's Hall, the large parish hall on the lower level, for exercise and play. Phillip's Hall is stocked with equipment to facilitate gross motor activities.

### **Building Security**

A 24-hour video surveillance system monitors all visitors entering and leaving the education building. The preschool building remains locked between the hours of 8:30am and 2:30pm except on days with special church activities. Preschool families may access the preschool building by utilizing a security code assigned by the preschool office. Other individuals seeking access to the building will gain access by pressing a buzzer answered by someone in the preschool office and may be required to show identification before being granted entrance. Classroom doors are locked when the class is on the playground or elsewhere in the building. Children are escorted to and from the bathrooms and are always under the supervision of an adult. Participating parents are advised not to leave personal belongings unattended in the building.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

The preschool has taken steps to increase the safety and security of students in the event of a terrorist attack or other serious emergency in the vicinity of the school or the Washington area. Preparedness focuses on maintaining a communication plan, a supply of food, water and other essential supplies to meet the needs of the school community for three days, and establishing an evacuation plan, including an alternate site (the [National 4-H Youth Conference Center](#), across the street at 7100 Connecticut Avenue with a phone number of 1-800-368-7432). In the case of an emergency which causes us to seek shelter at our alternate site, a message to that effect will be left on the preschool's voicemail as well as on a note in the entryway, if possible. Families are requested to send in an emergency bag for their child containing overnight clothes and other essential personal items in the event that is necessary to "shelter in place" for an extended period of time.

Evacuation drills are held once a month.

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The preschool facility was initially inspected for asbestos-containing materials in 1991. Subsequent inspections have been made every three years, and regular surveillance is carried out as required by law. The preschool's asbestos management plan is available for review during office hours without cost or

restriction.

### **Insurance**

Children and staff are covered by the general liability insurance policy of the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church. The preschool also participates in an accident insurance plan that provides benefits for injuries that occur going to and from school, during school hours, and on field trips.

Chevy Chase United Methodist Church and its preschool program assume no responsibility for injuries incurred on school property other than those covered by insurance and law.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Parent Education and Resources**

Information on local parenting classes and seminars are posted on the "Parent Education" notice board outside the preschool office. The office also maintains files on services available to families, both public and private. The preschool periodically hosts parent seminars on topics of interest to families.

### **Consultants**

Following consultation with parents, the preschool may engage a consultant to assess a child about whom the teacher has a specific concern. All children in the pre-K classes are routinely screened for vision and hearing each spring. A speech/language pathologist screens those children in the preschool about whom teachers or their parents have concerns in the winter. The preschool staff makes referrals to occupational therapists and child psychologists on an as needed basis.

### **Calendar**

The preschool year begins mid-September. Students and their parents will have an opportunity to come and meet the teachers, visit the classroom and attend a welcome picnic and music concert on the Monday following Labor Day. That evening parents will return alone for the Parent Orientation. School will begin the next day. For children in the two's program, the first day of class will consist of a two-hour class while all other classes will begin with a full, three-hour morning. The preschool program concludes the second week in June. See school calendar for 2017-18.

### **Emergency Closing Policy**

The preschool follows the emergency closing policy of Montgomery County Public Schools. When MCPS close because of inclement weather, unsafe travel conditions or another emergency, the preschool will be closed. When MCPS announce a delayed opening (two hours late), preschool classes will begin one hour late (10:00 am) for all classes. On these mornings *Early Bird* (early morning drop-off) will begin at 10:00am for the first twelve preschool children whose parents contact the Preschool office via email or telephone to reserve a space. *Afternoon Adventure* and *Language Immersion* programs will be held as usual, provided the weather does not deteriorate during the morning. In this case, parents will be called to collect their child at 12:00pm.

A message will be left on the preschool's phone (301-652-7660) by 7:30am on mornings when the preschool is closed or when there is a delayed opening. MCPS' closings are publicized on local radio, television, the internet at [www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/emergency](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/emergency) and on the MCPS emergency



information line (301-279-3673).

In the event of an epidemic, the preschool will comply with any decision to close schools by the Maryland Department of Education and/or the Department of Health and Human Services.

If school is closed because of adverse weather conditions or another emergency, no make-up days will be held and no refunds will be issued.

### **Newsletters**

The preschool office sends home a monthly newsletter, keeping families informed about school news and events. Teachers also send home a daily email and possibly a monthly newsletter about class activities and plans. In keeping with our efforts to be good stewards of the environment, most communication will be sent electronically. Copies of the newsletter are posted on the school website, bulletin boards in the school hallways or sent home by request.

### **Clothing**

Children should dress in comfortable play clothes that can take hard, messy wear. Dress children in shoes that promote safety. Crocs and flip-flops are prohibited while close-toed shoes and sneakers are encouraged. All classes will spend some time each day outside on the playground, except in unfavorable weather. It is important that staff, participating parents, and children are dressed appropriately for this activity. All outerwear must be clearly labeled. Items left at school are kept in a "lost and found" area in the office.

Children who are not fully toilet trained must bring disposable diapers, wipes and a change of clothing in a bag that will be kept in the classroom until needed. If children are in pull-ups, they should be the kind that fasten and unfasten like diapers to facilitate changing them. Children should be in disposable diapers when they come to school and their clothing should facilitate the changing of diapers or toilet training.

### **Snack and Lunch**

The children eat a snack mid-morning. The snack is provided by their parent, packed in a lunchbox. Parents are requested to provide a nutritious snack, including a beverage. Parents are asked not to provide sweets (i.e., cookies, candy). These may be enjoyed at home after school.

Children remaining at school to participate in any of our extended day programs eat lunch at school at 12:00pm. Their lunch is provided by their parent, packed in a separate lunch box or bag from their snack. Parents should ensure that the teacher, other class parents and the office are aware of any food allergies a child may have. Popcorn, peanuts and grapes (unless cut) are choking hazards and should not be sent to school. If a child has a serious allergy to a specific food (e.g. peanut products) parents in that child's classroom may be requested to exclude that food from their child's snack. The school does not provide refrigeration for children's snack or lunch.

### **Photographs**

Class and individual photos are scheduled each year in the early fall. An opportunity for sibling and family photos to be taken is also offered to current and alumni families. Photographs and videos of the children may be taken on various occasions such as birthdays, holidays and special events. Photos may be displayed in promotional materials, in arts and crafts projects, on wall displays within the

school, on the preschool's web site and on photo-sharing web sites (restricted access). Parents are requested to sign a [photo release form](#).

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

### **Transportation**

The preschool does not provide transportation for children attending the program. Parents make their own arrangements for carpooling. If a carpool is formed, parents are requested to provide that information to the child's teacher and the preschool office.

Please note that Shepherd Street becomes one way east from Connecticut Avenue during school hours.

### **Arrival**

All classes begin at 9:00am. The earliest that children should arrive is 8:55am. Children in pre-K classes, who begin each morning on the playground, should be dropped off by parents at the entrance to the large playground. Drivers should enter the driveway west of the parsonage and stop at the drop-off point where an assistant will escort each child from the car to the playground from 8:55am to 9:10am each morning. During September and early October, children in the two's and three's classes (*Blue Jays, Buntings, Cardinals, Chickadees, Doves, Finches, Robins, Sparrows, & Starlings*) are escorted to the classroom by their parents each morning. Vehicle drop-off at the parking lot side entrance is available beginning in mid-October each day between 8:55am and 9:10am. Cars may not block driveway prior to 8:55am waiting for drop off to begin. Assistants are posted in the hallways to supervise children as they make their way to the classroom. On very cold or rainy days, when all classes begin indoors, children in pre-K classes (*Eagles, Owls & Penguins*) may be dropped off at the side entrance from 8:55am to 9:10am. They will begin their day in the all-purpose room or in their classroom.

Each morning at drop-off, the parent or caregiver is required to sign-in their child on the daily sign-in/sign-out sheet as required by the OCC.

### **Dismissal**

All morning classes end at 12:00pm. All children should be picked up from the classroom at the end of the class session, unless otherwise notified by the teacher. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, the teacher must be notified in writing by the parent. Children under the age of 13 years will not be permitted to collect a child from the program.

At dismissal time, parents are requested to wait outside the classroom door until the teacher indicates that the class is ready to be dismissed. The children will be released one at a time, and parents should ensure that the teacher is made aware that the child is leaving by saying goodbye. In order to permit the teachers to tidy up and prepare for the next day's activities, parents are requested not to remain in the classroom after the class is over.

Children should be picked up promptly. Children remaining in the classroom 10 minutes after the class has ended will be taken to the preschool office for pick-up. A fee of \$10 is charged if the parent is more than 15 minutes late.

Parents or caregivers must sign out each child on the daily sign-in/sign-out sheet as required by the OCC.

### **Parking on the Street**

A limited number of legal parking spaces are available on the streets surrounding the school. Parents are requested to observe all local parking restrictions. No parking areas are sign-posted and in most cases indicated by a yellow painted curb.

### **Parking in the Church Lot**

A limited number of off-street parking spaces are available in the lot for parents and caregivers to park their cars while escorting children to class each morning and for pick-up in the afternoon. **Cars should be parked only in spaces not reserved for Church staff, handicapped and the parsonage – these spaces are clearly marked.** Temporary parking in the church lot should be for no more than 15 minutes. Parents scheduled to assist in the classroom should park on the street. Drivers should ensure their car does not block others behind while waiting in the lot for a parking space to open.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parent involvement is an integral part of CCUMCP's philosophy. By assisting in the classroom, on field trips and with special events, parents play a significant role in their child's preschool experience. Under the guidance of the teacher and following the guidelines for participation provided at the beginning of the school year, each parent is encouraged to join in the experiences and activities of the children to the extent to which he or she is comfortable.

### **Scheduling for Participating Parents**

Parent classroom participation is scheduled online via Sign-up Genius. Parents are requested to sign up for at least two days marked PRIORITY, if possible. Parents are also requested to complete half of their required days prior to the end of January. Parents sign up for field trip participation at the orientation meeting.

Only those parents who have completed all required forms (medical report, release of information form and sexual misconduct questionnaire) may assist in the classroom and on field trips. Extended family members, friends and care givers are welcome to visit, but they may not substitute for parents on scheduled participation days.

Parents of children in the mid-year two's class (*Hummingbirds*) are not required to participate in their child's classroom.

Parents of children in a two's class (*Buntings, Chickadees, Finches, Sparrows, & Starlings*) are required to participate in their child's classroom three mornings during the school year. One of these days should be the walking field trip at the end of the year.

Parents of children in a three's class (*Blue Jays, Cardinals, Doves and Robins*) are required to participate four mornings throughout the school year. They will be scheduled to participate in their child's classroom three times, and are required to participate as a driver and/or chaperone on at least one field trip. Some of these days must be to chaperone on field trips.

Parents of children in a pre-K class (*Eagles, Owls, & Penguins*) are required to participate five mornings throughout the school year. Two of these mornings must be to chaperone on field trips.

Families with more than one child enrolled in the program may reduce their classroom participation

by one day for each child.

Parents are responsible for remembering their own participation days. If unable to attend, the parent is responsible for finding a substitute by exchanging days with another class parent. When parents change places on the participation schedule, the classroom teacher and the Preschool office should be notified.

If unable to exchange a participation date, parents should notify the office and re-schedule the date. Provided the office is notified at least 24 hours in advance – that is by 9:00 am the previous day, a rescheduling fee will not be charged. In the case of a last minute emergency (less than 24 hours), parents should notify the office immediately. A new date will be scheduled, and a fee of \$10 will be charged.

### **Participation in the Classroom**

Classroom participation is for the entire class session. Parents assist the teacher in all classroom routines including set-up, supervision of free play, art projects, snack, diaper changing, clean-up, and toy washing. Parents should arrive ten minutes before the class begins to allow time to familiarize themselves with the classroom, the schedule and to discuss the day's plans with the teacher. Prior to entering the classroom, parents should begin by coming into the preschool office to sign in and to get a name badge. Because they arrive early and stay ten minutes after closing to help clean up, it is best not to drive a car pool that day or schedule appointments close to that time. It is essential for the smooth running of the class and for the safety of the children that the parent participates fully during the entire session. Absences from the classroom to make private phone calls are strongly discouraged, as is the use of cell phones in the classroom.

### **Participation on Field Trips**

Parents participate on field trips as drivers and/or chaperones. Parents whose children are riding with another parent on a field trip are responsible for providing their child's car seat and assisting with its installation, if necessary.

### **Siblings**

As only children registered in the program on that particular day may participate in the classroom, parents should leave other children at home. If you are assisting in the classroom, please plan childcare arrangements for other children as you will not be allowed to bring them to class. Siblings may not accompany parents who are driver/chaperones on field trips. Only those siblings who are at least 13 years of age will be permitted to collect a child from school.

### **Parent Participation Opt-Out**

Parents may choose to opt-out of the requirement to participate in their child's classroom. In order to opt-out of the participation requirement parents will sign a form indicating their choice to forgo the requirement and their agreement to pay the following fee structure according to their child's age:

- \$300 for children enrolled in the two-year-old classes
- \$400 for children enrolled in the three-year-old classes
- \$500 for children enrolled in the Pre-K classes

Parent participant opt-out fees will be included in the August invoice and will be paid prior to the first

day of classes.

### **Family Work Assignment**

Each family is required to sign up to work at one of the school's all-school events such as the Book Fair, monthly Scholastic Book Club, spring celebration, fundraising events, or in some other capacity. Sign-up is done via Sign-up Genius online. A \$100 fine will be charged if a family work assignment has not been completed or committed to by April 30, 2018.

### **Room Parents**

Two room parents are assigned to each class. Room parents assist the teacher with class celebrations, arranging drivers for field trips, and other tasks. The role of room parent serves as a family work assignment.

### **Birthdays**

Whenever possible, parents are asked to sign up to participate in their child's class on or near their child's birthday. Children's birthdays are usually celebrated in the classroom with a special snack provided by the parent. Parents are encouraged to provide nutritious birthday food.

### **Field Trips**

All morning classes with the exception of the Hummingbirds class include field trips as part of their curriculum. Examples of field trips include visiting farms, nature centers, children's theater productions and other destinations. Transportation of children is by parents' cars. A schedule of proposed field trips is provided at the September orientation meeting, and parents are required to sign up as driver and /or chaperone. Siblings may not accompany their parent on a field trip. A special permission form is required for each field trip.

## **FEES**

A **non-refundable** fee of \$50 is due at registration. Full payment of fees due for the current school year is required before a child can be registered for the following school year. There are four tuition payments during the year on the following schedule:

March 1, 2017 – Tuition deposit is due. This fee is **non-refundable**. A child registered for the 2017-18 school year will be removed from enrollment lists if this deposit is not paid on time.

August 1, 2017 - Second payment is due.

January 1, 2018 - Third payment is due.

April 1, 2018 - Final payment is due.

Fees for the 2017-18 school year are as follows:

### **Morning Preschool Program:**

5 day class	\$7,572 per year
3 day class	\$4,484 per year

2 day class	\$3,385 per year
Mid-year 2s class	\$2,062 per year

**Early Bird:** \$7.00 per morning. Attendance is recorded daily and parents are invoiced at the end of each month.

**Afternoon Adventure:** Advance registration: **non-refundable** deposit of \$100 per day. Fees are at the rate of \$32 per day (semester basis). Drop-in fee: \$34 per day. Fees are paid on a semester basis (Sept-Dec, Jan-Mar and Apr-June). Fees for regular attendance are billed along with tuition payments due August 1, 2017, January 1, 2018 and April 1, 2018. Drop-in fees may be paid on the day attended or billed quarterly. Children may be registered only for the entire two-and-a-half hour program. If a child goes home before that time, no adjustment in the fee will be made. No substitutions may be made if a child does not attend on a regular day because of illness or other reason. In the case of early withdrawal, families will be responsible for payment of fees for the entire semester. Refunds will be issued only within a two-week grace period from the date the child is registered to start. Children may be withdrawn from the program if their fees payments are not kept current.

**Spanish Immersion and French Immersion:** Advance registration: **non-refundable** deposit of \$100 per day. Fees are at the rate of \$34 per day (semester basis). No drop-in option is available. Fees are paid on a semester basis (Sept-Dec, Jan-Mar and, Apr-June). Fees for regular attendance are billed along with tuition payments due August 1, 2017, January 1, 2018 and April 1, 2018. Children are registered for the entire two hour program. If a child goes home before that time, no adjustment in the fee will be made. No substitutions may be made if a child does not attend on a regular day because of illness or other reason. In the case of early withdrawal, families will be responsible for payment of fees for the entire semester. Refunds will be issued only within a two-week grace period from the date the child is registered to start. Children may be withdrawn from the program if their fees payments are not kept current.

**Mini-Sessions:** Special 6-8 week-long classes will be offered throughout the school year which focus on a particular topic. Examples of mini-sessions include cooking, art, music, soccer, gymnastics and yoga. These classes enroll on a first-come, first-served basis when the class is announced. Fees for these classes must be paid for at the time of registration. A minimum number of students as specified at the time that the class is announced will be required to register so that the class can be held. The times and fees for each mini-session will be announced during the registration period. If any of the mini-session dates are cancelled due to weather or other emergency all efforts will be made to make-up those classes. If a student misses one of the classes, no make-up classes will be available.

**Activities Fees:** Activities fees for field trips and for most special events throughout the year are covered by the tuition payment. An additional amount may be collected for additional class events and for special materials.

**Parent Participation Re-scheduling Fee:** There is a \$10 fee when rescheduling is less than 24 hours from the participation date.

**Participation Late Arrival Fee:** There is a \$10 fee if the participating parent arrives 15 minutes late (after 9:05am). The fee doubles after 30 minutes and increases by \$10 each 15 minutes thereafter.

**Parent Participation No-show Fee:** A \$100 fee will be charged for each day parents have not fulfilled by the last day of class, including their family work assignment.

**Parent Participation Opt-out Fee:** Fees for opting out of parent participation requirements are as follows:

- \$300 for children in the 2s classes
- \$400 for children in the 3s classes
- \$500 for children in the Pre-K classes

**Late Pick-Up Fee:** There is a \$10 per child late fee for every 15 minutes the child is picked up late.

**Late Payment:** A late fee of \$10 will be added to payments received after the due date. A fee of \$25 will be added to payments received after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and an additional \$25 will be charged for every two weeks (1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month) thereafter.

**Returned Check Fee:** There is a \$25 fee for returned checks. After a second check is returned, payment will only be accepted by certified check, money order or cashier's check.

Checks should be made payable to CCUMC Preschool and brought to the Preschool office in person or mailed to CCUMC Preschool, 7001 Connecticut Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

## **Refund Policy**

Parents enroll their child for the entire school year. **In all cases, the deposit paid in March is non-refundable.** Tuition fees are paid regardless of whether the child is absent or school is closed because of inclement weather or other emergency conditions. If a parent withdraws a child from the program before March 1, 2018, a pro-rated refund will be issued for the period following 30 days written notice to the Administrator (see "Dismissal or Withdrawal"). **After April 1, 2018, no refunds will be issued.**

When the Director has asked that a child be withdrawn temporarily or for the remainder of the preschool year, fees paid for the period the child will not be attending will be returned on a pro-rated basis. If a child is withdrawn temporarily by the parents, full payment of fees during that period is required to maintain the child's place in the class.

If a family with multiple children enrolled in CCUMCP withdraws a child prior to the beginning of the school year, then they may request, in writing, to receive a tuition credit for the amount of the initial deposit if the space vacated by the child is able to be filled prior to the beginning of the school year. The tuition credit may only be used by an enrolled sibling for the same school calendar year.

## **Financial Aid**

As a preschool with a Christian philosophy, CCUMCP seeks to open its doors to children who otherwise might not be able to participate in its curriculum. CCUMC Preschool's Scholarship Policy supports that

mission, and families seeking assistance are encouraged to apply for funds. Scholarships should be applied for at the time of registration. After the February deadline, qualifying applications will be considered on a rolling basis subject to the availability of remaining funds. Applicants will be required to submit a completed [financial aid application form](#) accompanied by their most recent Federal Income Tax return and a recent payroll statement. In addition, applicants will be required to write a letter to the Advisory Council explaining the reasons for their scholarship need. The application will be treated with discretion and only made available to the administrators and selected members of the preschool's Advisory Council. Applicants are notified before the deposit is due. Decisions on financial aid are made by the preschool's Advisory Council. The Scholarship Fund is perpetuated by donations, designated fundraisers, and a percentage of a net surplus from the school's operating budget, if a surplus exists.

*We look forward to your family's presence in our program.  
Please ask any questions you may have and know that you are always welcome in the  
office.*