



the
weekday
school AT UPUMC

2017-2018
Parent Handbook

PARENT HANDBOOK

The Weekday School Mission Statement

The purpose of The Weekday School at University Park United Methodist Church is to build a strong, Christian foundation of love and learning in every child through nurturing and challenging them appropriately in all developmental areas.

The Weekday School ("WDS") adheres to the philosophy that children are naturally curious about their environment and active participants in the learning process. The WDS offers a linear developmental program where children are given opportunities to gain age appropriate skill sets. Our learning environments provide a place where this natural curiosity can develop into a practical, on-going knowledge base for the child. The WDS also adheres to developmentally appropriate practices. It is our belief that within the context of developmentally appropriate practice, the child's educational growth is maximized.

Our educational philosophy also extends to the parents and families whom we serve. The WDS believes that parents are the child's first teacher. As such, our program works to establish open communication about the individual, developmental needs of the children we serve. We work together as parents and teachers to meet each child where he is and help her grow. Parents are invited to talk with teachers and administrators at any time.

The Weekday School Core Values

We believe in and are committed to:

- Sharing spiritual life lessons
- Offering developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Providing a caring, safe, nurturing environment designed for children
- Advocating for and supporting children and families of the school
- Fostering the sense of community developed throughout our history

The Weekday School Vision

We seek to create enthusiastic children who experience and exemplify God's love. These children will gain leadership skills and sharing spirits through a cultivated zest for learning, allowing them to become the most of who God created them to be.

Our Board and Administrative leadership is clear, strategic, relevant and sustainable, empowered by a strong relationship between our church and school, modeling Christ and glorifying God. We make sound decisions aligned with our mission and strategies to ensure we regularly achieve well-defined goals.

Our WDS program uses teaching methods that engage children creatively and experientially in hands-on exploration of developmentally appropriate concepts. Children are provided opportunities to learn through interaction with peers and teachers in a variety of settings. Our curriculum is developed and taught by experienced, dedicated teachers.

Hours of Operation

Parents are free to visit or observe the school any time during school operating hours without prior approval. All visitors must sign in at the office. School hours are 9:00 - 12:00 Monday, and 9:00 - 2:00 Tuesday-Friday. The WDS office hours are 8:00 - 3:00, Monday-Friday. If there is any way we can be of assistance to you, please call or come by.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

The WDS is accredited by NAEYC. Our Program ID is 725136. Parents may contact NAEYC by calling 1-800-424-2460. The NAEYC website is:
www.naeyc.org

Texas Child Care Licensing Contact Information

The WDS is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Our license number is 167483. Parents may contact the local Child Care Licensing office located at: 8700 Stemmons, Suite 104, Dallas, Texas 75247, by calling (214) 951-7902. The Child Care Licensing website is:
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care.

Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code

<u>TITLE 40</u>	SOCIAL SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE
<u>PART 19</u>	DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES
<u>CHAPTER 745</u>	LICENSING
<u>SUBCHAPTER K</u>	INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS
<u>DIVISION 1</u>	OVERVIEW OF INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS
<u>RULE §745.8415</u>	What can Licensing inspect and/or investigate?

We may investigate any part of your operation that could affect the health, safety, or well being of children. This includes, but is not limited to, access to all children in care, employees, records, and any area of the building, home or grounds where your operation is located.

Source Note: The provisions of this §745.8415 adopted to be effective March 1, 2002, 27 TexReg 965

Gang-Free Zone

House Bill 2086. This law adds §42.064 of the Human Resource Code and designates certain areas around child care centers as 'gang-free zones'. Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of The Weekday School at UPUMC is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

For detailed information about gang-free zones, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code. Additionally, parents may contact the City of University Park for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

Admissions

The WDS does not discriminate against children on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender or ethnicity in its admission process or with regard to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to children at the school.

The admission process includes:

- Tour of the WDS
- Application for Admission form
- Non-refundable Application fee

Class Options

Ages and Birth Date Ranges	Available Class Days
Infants (9-14 months as of Sept 1)	T, W or F
Toddler I (15-22 months as of Sept 1)	M/W, T/Th, or F
Toddler II (23-30 months as of Sept 1)	M/W, T/Th, or F
2 1/2 Year Olds (2 on or before March 1)	M/W/F or T/Th
3 Year Olds (3 on or before Sept 1)	M/W/F, T/Th or M-F
4 Year Olds (4 on or before Sept 1)	M-F or M/W/F
Kindergarten (5 on or before Sept 1)	M-F

Fees

Note: Payment schedules may be picked up from the school office.

Tuition and fees will be based on the age of the child and the number of days enrolled. Additional fees for late payments, late pick-ups, and returned checks will be charged. A child's placement may be jeopardized, if payment is not received by the specified deadline.

If a child is not picked-up by closing time, a late fee of \$3 per minute will be charged. Each family is given a grace period of 5 minutes before the late fee is enforced.

Please make all checks payable to The Weekday School.

Tuition and Refund Policy

Tuition Policy

Tuition and fees for the upcoming school year are due upon registration. Tuition and fees must be paid in advance of the school year in three installments (per the related schedule). A \$50 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received by the applicable payment date. An additional \$100 late fee will apply if payment is not received within five days of the applicable payment date. If payment is not received within ten days of the applicable payment date, your child will forfeit his/her placement. A \$30 charge will be assessed for all returned checks.

Refund Policy for Infants, Toddlers, 3s, 4s

If you are registering for infants - 4s and should you decide not to have your child attend The Weekday School for the upcoming school year, a 70 percent refund of the first tuition installment will be given (i) if such request is made in writing on or before March 31, and (ii) if The Weekday School is able to meet capacity for that age group by the start of the upcoming school year. However, the registration fee will not be refunded. After March 31, no refunds will be given for any reason.

Refund Policy for Kindergarten

If you are registering for kindergarten and should you decide not to have your child attend The Weekday School for the upcoming school year, **no refunds** will be given at any time for any reason.

Scholarship

Scholarship funds are available. Please contact our Business Administrator for the application if you want to be considered. Fill out the tuition assistance form. Tuition assistance does not impact admissions decisions. The deadline for requests is April 1.

Registration

Once accepted to the WDS you will receive the following:

- Enrollment form
- Emergency form (including Immunization record and signed statement of health by health care professional)

The Enrollment form and payment are due at the time of registration. Failure to turn in the forms listed above and provide payment may result in losing the enrolled spot. Before a child may attend the WDS, his/her Emergency form must be on file in the office. The Emergency form must be filled out, signed by your doctor, and returned to the WDS before school begins. No child is permitted to attend school without a current health statement and updated immunization record. Currently enrolled children, with health statements already on file, must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Current Student Registration

Current student registration for the fall occurs in January. Registration dates and times are listed on the school calendar.

Current student registration is completed online and is on a first come, first served basis. The WDS is a ministry of University Park United Methodist Church (UPUMC). Therefore, members of UPUMC are allowed priority for registration in the WDS. To qualify as a church member, one or both parents of the current student must be a member of UPUMC for at least six consecutive months prior to the date of registration.

Registration will occur in the following order:

1. Currently enrolled students of UPUMC members
2. Currently enrolled students and the WDS staff children not currently enrolled
3. Non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students of UPUMC members
4. Non-enrolled siblings of currently enrolled students
5. Non-enrolled students of UPUMC members
6. Non-enrolled students of new families

Kindergarten Registration

Current student registration for kindergarten is completed in the WDS Office.

Current student registration for kindergarten will occur in the following order:

1. UPUMC members currently enrolled
2. Current students who have been enrolled since Infants/Toddler 1
3. Current students who have been enrolled since Toddler 2/2.5s
4. Current students who have been enrolled since 3s
5. Current students who have been enrolled since 4s

The Director has discretion to consider all issues of registration priority on a case by case basis.

Age Placement

Children will be placed in classes according to their age, based on the age requirement of public schools in the State of Texas. Currently, this is September 1 of the current school year. Exceptions to this rule will be decided through joint conferences with parents, the child's classroom teacher, Early Childhood Education Coordinator (ECE Coordinator), and the Director. Criteria for such a decision should include a developmental assessment at the parents' or guardians' expense, as well as classroom observation by the ECE Coordinator and the Director. Care should be taken to make a thoughtful decision based on objective data along with developmental information such as social, emotional, and physical maturity. We encourage children to proceed in the usual order of succession unless unusual circumstances indicate otherwise. The decision for placement will be made with consideration of current developmental progress and should be reevaluated during the school year.

Class Placement

Class placement is determined carefully and prayerfully by the class placement committee. This committee is comprised of the child's teacher, ECE Coordinator, and the Director. The classroom placement process considers several key factors including the child's learning style, social opportunities, balancing boy/girl ratios, recommendations from teachers, and special needs of each child. Specific parental requests for the upcoming school year placement must be made in writing, address educational needs, and be submitted to the current classroom teacher by May 1. Please note, a parental request is considered but not guaranteed.

Children are assigned to specific teacher(s) for the entire school year. Teacher(s) letters are mailed to children in early August. Class rosters are available for view at Parent Orientation. It is WDS policy not to share class placement and/or class roster information outside of this timeframe.

Attendance

Drop-off

Timely arrival is important to the child and to the class. Classrooms open at 8:55 a. m. If a child arrives after 9:30, the parent/guardian signs in at the school office and gets a name tag.

When children are brought to the school, they must be escorted by an adult (18 years or older) to their classroom, signed in, and left in the presence of the teacher.

Pick-up

If a child needs to leave in the middle of the day, parents/guardians are asked to sign in/out in the school office. Children must be picked up by an adult (18 years or older) by the stated closing time or pay a late fee of \$3 per minute. Each family is given a grace period of 5 minutes before the late fee is enforced.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please call the office, (214) 361-4626, before the beginning of class.

Inclement weather

In the event of a school closing, you will be notified through email and/or text message. ***Please note, if HPISD has delayed opening, the WDS will not open that day.*** No refunds will be given if the WDS is closed due to unavoidable circumstances such as inclement weather or any other circumstances beyond the school's control. Days missed due to closings will not be made up at a later date.

Release of Child

Children will be released only to parent/guardian or a person (18 years or older) designated by the parent's written consent. A driver's license or ID will be checked for anyone picking up children other than a parent.

Building Security

The WDS takes the security of children seriously. Certain exterior doors will be locked at 9:10 - 11:50 on Mondays and 9:10 - 1:50 on Tuesday-Friday. To enter the school during locked hours, please come to the front desk and sign-in.

The WDS staff and teachers do not admit persons through locked doors.

Facilities

The indoor and outdoor facilities of the WDS are the property of UPUMC. Each morning a member of UPUMC's custodial team walks throughout the facility and outdoor play areas to ensure that they are free from trash, glass, sharp or hazardous items, harmful animals, insects, and other pests.

Education

Curriculum

The WDS uses a thematic approach as the basis of its curriculum. The thematic approach is a method of organizing learning materials and activities. The approach supports two key teaching components: 1) information and 2) skill opportunity. Information is comprised of the details about the theme that the teacher shares with the children. A skill opportunity is any activity provided to the children that helps them reach specific developmental goals.

Learning Centers

Learning centers are present in each classroom to provide children with a rich variety of experiences, projects, materials, problems and ideas to explore and investigate. Learning centers include: dramatic play, blocks, science/discovery, writing, library, art music/listening, sensory/water table, age-appropriate access to technology/computers, and math/manipulatives.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of tracking the developmental progress of your child. The WDS uses a variety of instruments and methods to gain insight into your child's social/emotional, cognitive, language and physical development. Our assessment process also addresses areas of self-help and classroom functioning. Assessment information is represented in the child's portfolio and reflects each child's progress over the course of the school year. The child's portfolio includes work samples, anecdotal observations, and age-appropriate developmental information.

The assessment instruments used at our school are both formal and informal in nature. Formal assessment tools are norm-referenced or standardized. The formal assessment tool used by the WDS is the Texas Primary Reading Inventory ("TPRI"). It is only used in the kindergarten classrooms. The TPRI assesses various reading readiness skills and spotlights the strengths and weaknesses in the student's learning experience.

Informal assessment tools are staff generated and paced for use in the classroom. Developmental checklists (Infant/Toddler Programs), progress reports (3/4 Year Old Programs) and the Scope and Sequence (Kindergarten) are the informal assessment tools used in our classrooms. These tools are aligned to our curriculum, which is based on the thematic approach, and completed two times each school year (fall and spring).

The program utilizes data collected through the assessment process in two ways. First, the teachers incorporate it into the development of their lesson plan. Second, the program uses the assessment information to evaluate curriculum and education activities currently in use.

Parents/guardians participate in the assessment process by giving and receiving pertinent developmental information. They provide developmental, especially social/emotional and behavioral, information in the form of the Parental Survey. Throughout the school year, parents/guardians are invited to add notes about interactions and activities they observe during day-to-day interactions with their child.

Parents/guardians may request information, either verbally or in writing, about their child's growth and development at any time. A written report, detailing the child's progress is provided to the child's family in the fall and spring semesters.

Statement of Confidentiality

Your child's confidentiality is maintained throughout the assessment process. Only the child's classroom teacher(s), ECE Coordinator, Director, and the child's parent/guardian have access to the child's assessment information. The classroom teacher(s), ECE Coordinator, and Director have access to the child's assessment information for educational support purposes only. All assessment data are collected and maintained in the child's portfolio folder, which remains in the classroom. If there is a need for outside specialists to review the assessment data, written parental permission is required.

Educational/Developmental Differences

The WDS at UPUMC makes every effort to meet the needs of each child, including those with special needs. Parents are responsible for providing evaluations and testing of children with special needs. If at all possible, teachers will seek to create the best situation for inclusion. These modifications must work within the resources and capabilities of the WDS at UPUMC.

When the WDS teachers and staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner and is provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

Discipline and Guidance

- Discipline must be:
 - (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 - (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.
- There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
 - (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
 - (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 - (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
 - (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance

Challenging Behavior Protocol

The WDS adopts the following definition of challenging behavior: "Challenging behavior is any behavior that (1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play, (2) is harmful to the child, other children or adults, [or] (3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure."

(Kaiser & Rasminsky, *Challenging Behavior in Young Children* (2nd Ed.), Pearson Education Inc., 2007, p.8).

For children demonstrating challenging behaviors, the teachers/staff implement the following:

1. Identify events, activities, interactions, and/or other environmental factors that predict the challenging behavior.
2. Track these behaviors through observations and anecdotal records.
3. By using the above techniques, the teacher(s) formulate a functional behavior assessment (FBA).
4. With this information, teachers/staff and parents work as a team to implement a behavior intervention plan (BIP).
5. As the behavior intervention plan (BIP) is implemented, the ECE Coordinator and Director will act as a resource to teachers and parents.

6. If needed, parents may be asked to provide outside resources to assist with a child's challenging behavior. The WDS office maintains a resource list for parents of the school.

Outside Therapeutic Services

Please contact the WDS office if your child needs to be observed during school hours by a therapeutic professional. A completed Observation Notification Form must be on file in the WDS office prior to the observation.

If your child receives therapeutic services during WDS school hours, a completed Therapeutic Services Notification Form must be completed and on file in the WDS office.

All therapeutic professionals must sign-in at the WDS office prior to being admitted to the child's classroom.

Biting

Biting is a common behavior demonstrated by infants, toddlers, and 2 year olds. Biting behaviors typically resolve as children mature and gain greater self-control and develop better communication and problem-solving skills.

At the WDS, children who are bitten receive appropriate levels of first aid. Parents of the child who was bitten will be notified by the teacher(s) and will receive an Incident Report. Please note, the biting child's name remains confidential. If biting behaviors persist, the Challenging Behavior Protocol will be followed.

Toilet Training

The WDS views toilet training as a developmental process. There is no magic time, nor method, for reaching this goal. Please continue to talk about this process with your children. In case this is an area of concern for your family, we wanted to give you some information about the way the WDS handles toilet training.

- All children, regardless to their mastery, should be sent to school in loose fitting clothing that is easily handled by the child. Please, no belts.
- After using the restroom, children should expect to wipe their own bottoms. The teachers are not able to do this for them.
- Children who have not yet mastered the toilet training process should be sent to school in Pull-Ups. There are no diaper changing facilities in the 3s/4s classrooms. Changes of Pull-Ups can be handled in the class bathroom.
- Please send a couple of changes of clothes. The child will be assisted in a change (wet or dirty) by a member of the office staff if needed.
- If your child is "almost there", please send them in underwear to school. Consistency in training is key. Please send several changes of underwear and shorts/pants.
- Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- The WDS does not utilize potty chairs.

Records of Children

Per licensing requirements, children's records are accessible to the parents/guardians throughout the WDS's hours of operation. Parents/guardians always have the right to access any of their child's records.

Records Request Policy

Records Requested for a Non-Legal Matter

Any request for records (e.g., a child's academic portfolio, account statement, etc.), must be made by the parent or legal guardian of a child in writing (e.g., email) to the Director of the WDS. The request must specify the following information:

- Name of Child
- Name of Requestor
- Relationship of Requestor to Child
- Records Requested
- How Records should be Delivered (e.g., Email, FedEx, Pick-up, etc.)
- Purpose for the Record Request

The Director will respond promptly to any such requests, typically within 3 business days. Should a Court Order or any other legal document exist that would prevent the dissemination of a child's records to that child's parent(s), such order must be provided to the WDS.

Records Requested for a Legal Matter - Pre- or Threatened Litigation

The WDS strives to balance its need to comply with Texas Child Care Licensing Requirements, which allow all parents reasonable access to their child's school records, and the desire to remain neutral in any legal matter (regardless of the stage of such matter) concerning WDS families. As such, any records requested pursuant to a potential (whether pre-litigation or threatened litigation) legal matter must conform to the requesting procedures set forth above and the requesting party must also disclose such records are being requested for legal reasons. Upon receiving such a request, the Director will copy the requested material and return them to the requesting parent within 3 business days. Additionally, the Director will provide a copy of the request and the requested materials to the non-requesting parent and any known legal representatives of the requesting parent and non-requesting parent.

Records Requested for a Legal Matter - Pending Litigation

Any documents requested for a use in a pending litigation matter (including pending divorce or child custody proceedings) must be made pursuant to a subpoena to the WDS. The WDS will then comply with the terms of the subpoena.

Water Activities

Parents will be notified in advance of all water play activities scheduled for their child's class. A consent form is included in the enrollment form. Please note: Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. Children with sores on their hands or feet are not permitted to participate in water activities.

Weather and Outside Play

Our program assesses many factors to determine whether or not an outdoor play experience is healthy for our children. The Child Care Weather Watch chart combines both temperature and humidity to determine the heat index/wind chill factor, and is a primary resource. Additionally, our teachers closely monitor the children while outside for signs of over-heating. Teachers use their professional discretion in determining how long they remain outdoors. Water is provided throughout the day, so that the children are well hydrated.

As part of our daily activities, state standards require us to go outside daily. For children who are in good health and properly dressed, going outside provides an alternative learning environment for stimulating thoughts, ideas, and social interaction. If your child is unable to participate in the classes' daily activities that includes outside time, please have your child stay at home. The WDS does not have adequate staff for supervising children who are unable to play outside.

We ask that you send your child with appropriate outerwear, including close-toed shoes. In the event of inclement weather, excessively hot weather, or poor air quality, the teachers, under the Director's guidance, will use their discretion on the amount of time outside and may choose to keep the children inside. It is helpful to send your child to school with sunscreen already applied. If you wish for your child to wear mosquito repellent, please apply at home.

Animals on the Premises

No animals are to be on the premises without prior arrangement with the classroom teacher and the Director. Licensing requires parents to be notified in writing when animals will be present in the school. Any animal permitted on the school property must first check in with the WDS office. The office must have documentation of the animal's most recent vaccine record, as well as a statement of health from a veterinarian. Dogs are not permitted on the playgrounds.

Rest Periods

For infants and toddlers, nap time is scheduled daily between the hours of 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. Although children are not required to sleep, everyone is required to sit on a mat and rest quietly. The WDS provides cribs/mats and sheets for each infant/toddler. If you would prefer for your child to nap at home, please pick up your child by 12:15 pm. If a child is continually having problems during the rest time, a parent or guardian may be contacted. Please note, per licensing guidelines, children in the Infants, Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 program do not have bottles and/or training cups while in a crib or on a nap mat.

For children participating in the 2.5s, 3s, 4s and K program, a quiet rest time is scheduled daily. Children are given the opportunity to select a book and quietly rest for a brief period of time.

Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Infants 12 months and younger are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, unless otherwise ordered by a physician. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position. Only one infant is placed in a crib for sleep. Cribs are bare except for a tight fitting sheet and mattress protector. Blankets, comforters, quilts, pillows, soft toys, stuffed animals, or bumper pads are not permitted for use in the crib for infants younger than 12 months. Please note, infant sleep positioners (devices intended to keep an infant in a desired position while sleeping) are not permitted for use. Infants' heads, faces and cribs remain uncovered during sleep. Infants are not swaddled for sleep or rest. If an infant needs extra warmth, sleep clothing may be used. Please note, only sleeveless sleep sacks are permitted for use in the classroom. Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, however the pacifier must not be attached to stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism.

If an infant arrives to the program asleep or falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (e.g., bouncy chair, swing, stroller, high chair) the infant will be moved to a crib at the teaching staff's earliest opportunity.

The WDS ensures that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. WDS teachers and staff actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound. Awake infants participate in supervised "tummy time" several times throughout the day.

The WDS is smoke-free. This use of e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers are prohibited.

Transportation/Field Trips

The WDS does not offer transportation services. Field trips are scheduled as part of the school's curriculum for the 4s and Kindergarten classes only. Parents will be notified at least 48 hours in advance of field trip locations, times, and dates. Field trip information will be visibly posted until children have returned from the excursion. To ensure the safety of all children, we comply with the following requirements:

1. Signed permission slips from a parent or guardian (included on enrollment form);
2. Emergency medical consent forms and emergency contact information for each class is carried at all times by each child's teacher;
3. A list of children's names in the class are carried by each teacher and checked frequently to account for all of the children during the excursion;
4. A fire extinguisher approved by the local or state fire marshal is carried in each car transporting children;
5. A first aid kit is in each car transporting children;
6. Each child wears a WDS bracelet listing the name and telephone number of the WDS;
7. All drivers must have a current copy of their driver's license and current copy of their automobile insurance on file in the school office. Additionally, the driver should carry both their driver's license and auto insurance to and from the field trip;
8. Each driver and teacher carries a cell phone to be used in case of an emergency;
9. Each teacher is CPR/First Aid certified.

Safety Seat System Requirements

All children younger than 8 years of age or less than 4 feet 9 inches tall are required by law to be in a child safety seat system. ("Child safety seat system" includes car seats and booster seats, including high-back and backless boosters.)

The law also requires that safety seats be used according to the manufacturer's instructions, including height and weight guidelines.

Classroom Parties

Classroom parties are arranged by each individual class and organized by the room parent. Parents can sign up for party needs at the beginning of the year during the Parent Orientation in August. All parties take place on the WDS campus.

Birthday Parties

Classrooms celebrate each child's birthday. If you plan to celebrate your child's birthday with his/her class, please plan ahead with your child's teacher. If you would like to bring in a special snack, we encourage you to plan a simple and nutritious snack to share with his/her classmates. Please notify your child's teacher ahead of time about any food allergies. Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at school.

Balloons

Balloons are a choking hazard for children under the age of five. Balloons are not permitted in our Infant, Toddler, 2.5, 3 & 4 programs.

Balloons are permitted in the kindergarten program with teacher approval.

Meal Service Practices

The WDS does not provide meals but does provide one snack daily for the classes. Our goal is to provide nutritious snacks and include at least one of the following, which can be included in the child's daily food needs:

1. One serving from the fruit or vegetable group;
2. One serving from the dairy group;
3. One serving from the grain group; or
4. One serving from the meat or meat alternative group.

Children must bring lunch from home. No refrigeration is provided, so food should be sent that will not be damaged at room temperature or is kept cold with an ice pack. Food cannot be heated. A supply of drinking water is always available to each child and is served at every snack and after active play. Please send water to school in your child's lunch. The WDS does not provide cow's milk to any age group.

The WDS does not offer children younger than four years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. This is a NAEYC requirement and is applicable to both food provided by the program, as well as food brought from home.

Infants

Per NAEYC guidelines, formula should be sent in factory sealed containers. Parents may bring solid food prepared at home for use by their child. Teaching staff offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. Bottle feedings do not contain solid food unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions with a medical reason. If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in hot water at no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than 5 minutes. For an infant not yet ready for table food, written feeding instructions signed and dated by the parent must be provided to the infant teachers. This information should be reviewed and updated every 30 days.

Food Allergy Recommendations and Guidelines

The WDS protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food to the best of its ability. However, the WDS is not, nor cannot be, free of food items and non-food items that may lead to any allergic reaction. The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information about that child's food allergy and, if consent is given, then posts that information in the classroom so it is a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the program day. Parents of a child with severe food allergies are encouraged to contact the parents in their child's class to share specific details of their child's allergy.

The WDS will provide snacks that are "safe" for classes that have children with known food allergies.

Children with Epinephrine injectors and/or Benadryl are required to have an *Allergy Action Plan* on file in The WDS office. For more information on policies and procedures related to EpiPens and Benadryl, please see Medications on page 20.

Nursing/Breastfeeding Policy

The WDS supports breastfeeding by complying with the following procedures:

1. The WDS accepts, stores, and serves expressed breast milk for feedings.
2. The WDS only accepts breast milk in ready-to-feed sanitary containers.
3. Breast milk is labeled with the infant's name and date and is stored in a refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours.
4. The WDS will gently mix, not shake, the breast milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in breast milk.
5. The WDS staff will work to coordinate feedings with nursing mothers.
6. Nursing mothers may utilize the Nursing Room located in the infant/toddler wing.

Hand washing

Hand washing is an important method in reducing the spread of disease. WDS teachers and staff follow the NAEYC guidelines for hand washing. Additionally, children participate in hand washing procedures each day. Children are to wash their hands upon arrival to the classroom. Children also wash their hands after diapering or use of the toilet; after blowing their nose; and before lunch and snack.

Health and Safety Information for Children

Any health information disclosed to the WDS teachers and staff must remain confidential. This includes information regarding a child's allergies (per page 20), medications and/or medical diagnosis. Health information and immunization records are maintained in the WDS office. These files are only accessed by the WDS staff.

Parents are requested to update their child's health information (allergies, medications, immunizations, etc.) as regularly as possible. By enrolling their child into the WDS, parents give the WDS staff and his/her child's teacher reasonable access to the child's health information.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled in the WDS must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Services. This requirement applies to all children in care from birth to 14 years of age. All required immunizations for your child's age must be completed by the date of admission. Exemptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services rules 25 TAC §97.62 (relating to Exclusions from Compliance). *The recommended childhood and adolescent Immunization Schedule is found at www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize.*

Immunization schedules are monitored by the WDS. Parents will be reminded to update immunization records throughout the year. Key dates relating to the immunization timeline are found below.

January- overdue immunization records identified and parents contacted via email.

May 1- current immunization record due to the WDS. This record is for the following school year and accompanies the Enrollment form.

August- overdue immunization records identified and parents contacted via email.

Please note, children may not attend school until a current immunization record is on file in the WDS office.

If your child has a delayed immunization schedule or an exemption from immunization requirements on file with the school, he/she will be promptly excluded from school activities if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs at the WDS.

Employees of the WDS work to protect children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Teachers in the Infant and Toddler 1 program must submit current documentation of the Tdap vaccine. The Tdap vaccine prevents the spread of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

The requirements for Vision and Hearing Screening apply each year. Children enrolled in the 4s and kindergarten programs at the WDS must be screened within 120 days of the first day of school. Please see the WDS Enrollment form for details.

When to Keep Your Child At Home

The WDS is concerned about the well being of all children in our care. It is important that everyone take precautions to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses.

Certain symptoms in children may suggest a communicable disease. **Children who have had the following symptoms within 24 hours should be kept home:**

- FEVER - oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher, without fever suppressing medication.
- RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS - difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing...child makes high pitched croupy or whooping sound after they cough...child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough.
- DIARRHEA
- VOMITING
- NASAL DRAINAGE - thick mucus draining from nasal passages.
- PINKEYE - child can return 24 hours after the treatment has begun and there is an absence of drainage.
- SORE THROAT - when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present, your child needs to remain home.
- STREP THROAT - child can return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- RASH - skin rashes affecting the face, hands, abdomen, arms, back, feet or legs.
- INFECTED SORES - sores with crusty, yellow or green drainage which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages
- PERSISTENT ITCHING - or scratching of body or scalp.
- CHICKEN POX - each sore must be crusted over and no fever present for 24 hours before child can return to class.
- APPEARANCE, BEHAVIOR, UNUSUAL COLOR - child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken,
- LICE - child can attend after treatment and when all nits have been removed. Please bring your child to the school office for permission to return to class.
- RINGWORM, SCABIES - child can attend once treatment has begun.

Runny Nose: The WDS is aware that seasonal allergies can occur in young children. However, when the care of this symptom interrupts the daily routine and activities of the classroom, it becomes a hindrance to instruction. If your child presents with an excessively runny nose, which interrupts daily classroom routine and instruction, you will be asked to pick him/her up from school.

Please notify the school office within 24 hours if your child has a communicable or childhood disease, including but not limited to: measles, chicken pox, mumps, strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, scabies, impetigo, pinkeye, or ringworm. Parents or guardians will be notified via email from the WDS office if their child has been exposed to an infectious or communicable disease. The school reserves the right to determine when a child, who has been ill, can return to school. *Confidentiality is important to us. The infected child's name will not be shared in any communications with the classroom.*

Please do not send your child to school if your child cannot play outside or participate in school day routines and activities.

Illness at school

If a child becomes ill at the school, we will remove the child to a quiet, supervised area in the office. Staff will seek to notify the parents first. If they are unavailable, we will contact whoever is indicated on the parent contact list. When you are called and told your child is ill, we require you to make arrangements to pick them up immediately. If you know this is a problem, please make sure your next two emergency contacts will be available to pick up your child.

Medications

The WDS consults with local health professionals to review our policies and procedures regarding distribution of medications. School office staff and teachers have passed current CPR and standard first aid courses and will administer to cuts, scratches, bruises, etc. with first aid kit materials and supplies.

Medicine administered to children at the WDS requires the following:

- All medication must be checked into the WDS office;
- Parents/guardians must give written permission for staff to administer prescription or over the counter medication (Medical Authorization Form),
- Medication must be labeled with the child's first and last names,
- Medication must include the following information: 1) the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's health care provider to begin the medication, 2) the name of the licensed health care provider, 3) the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, 4) the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication; and 5) instructions on how to administer and store it.
- Medication is kept in the WDS office in a locked closet.

Please note, teachers cannot accept medication.

Allergy Action Plans

Children with Epinephrine injectors and/or Benadryl are required to have an *Allergy Action Plan* on file in the WDS office. EpiPens are a medication and must be checked in through the office. Once the EpiPen and the appropriate paperwork have been received by the WDS office, it will be stored in the classroom Emergency Bag. Expired EpiPens will be returned to the family by the WDS.

Non-prescription preventatives

Over the counter diaper cream, lotion and lip balm are not considered medication. However, use in the classroom requires written parental/guardian consent. This consent should be given to the classroom teacher.

Sunscreen, sun block, and insect repellent are not administered by our teachers and staff. Please administer these items, if needed, prior to sending your child to school.

Accidents and Injuries

Safety of the children in our care is of utmost importance at all times. Any accident concerning a child must be reported to the Director. Parents will be notified of the accident. An Incident Report will be completed by the teacher and signed by the Director.

If an accident results in an injury that requires your child to receive treatment by a health care professional, please report it to the office. The WDS is required to contact licensing in this situation. Licensing will conduct an investigation of the accident to ensure that correct protocols and procedures were followed by the WDS.

Emergency Care for your Child

If your child should become seriously injured you will be notified immediately. By signing the Emergency form you have granted permission for the staff to take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical and dental care if warranted.

If the WDS cannot contact a parent/guardian, we will do any or all of the following. Expenses incurred will be borne by the child's family:

- 911 will be called.
- Give the child first aid or CPR if needed.
- The child will be accompanied by a WDS staff to an emergency room.

If the emergency is such that a child's life is determined to be in danger, 911 will be contacted first before attempting to contact a parent/guardian.

Emergency Preparedness Plans

Should an emergency arise, the WDS will implement the WDS Emergency Preparedness Protocols. Details of these protocols are located in the Emergency Bag found in each classroom.

Evacuation

Children, teachers and staff leave the WDS and evacuate to a designated safe area away from the school.

Preschool wing: Exit the WDS toward Caruth Blvd. and evacuate to Smith Park. During monthly fire drills, this wing practices by evacuating the building and sitting along the sidewalk of Caruth Blvd.

Infant/Toddler wing: Exit the WDS toward Colgate Ave. and evacuate to the Colgate sidewalk (closest to Colgate Ave./ Pickwick Ln.). During monthly fire drills, this wing practices by evacuating the WDS and sitting along the sidewalk of Colgate Ave.

Relocation

Children, teachers and staff leave the WDS and relocate to a designated, alternate shelter. This designated shelter is: Hyer Elementary School, 3920 Caruth Blvd., Dallas, TX 75225.

Sheltering/Lockdown

Children, teachers and staff remain in the WDS.

Sheltering- children, teachers and staff relocate to the UPUMC gym located in the basement.

Lockdown- children, teachers and staff relocate to an area of the classroom or office that is out of the line of sight of windows. During lockdown drills, classrooms practice by quietly moving to a location that is out of the line of sight of windows, including the window in the classroom door.

Communications

WDS teachers and staff should have their personal cell phones with them during any evacuation, relocation or sheltering/lock-down event. As soon as the children, teachers and staff have been safely evacuated or relocated, families will be contacted by WDS staff. Additionally, WDS administrative staff will contact the appropriate local authority (fire, police, EMS and/or health department) and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

In the event of severe weather, families will be notified that the WDS is sheltering in the gym.

Essential Documentation

The class sign-in book and WDS Emergency Bag must remain with the children during any evacuation, relocation or sheltering event.

Release of Children

In the case of an evacuation/relocation event where children, teachers and staff are unable to return to the WDS, children will be reunited with parents at a designated safe area. This designated safe area (Hyer Elementary, Smith Park, etc) will be communicated to families via text/email. In the case of a shelter-in-place/lockdown event, children will be reunited with families at the WDS.

Personal Belongings and Dress

Each child should have a complete change of clothing to keep in the cubby or locker in case of accidents. Items should include shirt, pants, socks, underwear and disposable diapers when needed. Each season presents its own challenge for parents and teachers regarding clothing. We encourage you to label all clothing as well as lunch boxes, school bags, diaper bags, and especially those items which can easily be misplaced or forgotten.

Children should be dressed to play when coming to school. Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. Since we go outside whenever possible, dress children accordingly. Select closed toed shoes that give support and allow freedom of movement.

Children will participate in "messy" activities, such as painting. Although we do take precautions to prevent clothes from getting damaged, accidents do happen. We recommend clothing that will not present a problem to you or your child. The WDS is not responsible for stained or ruined clothing.

Our classrooms and playgrounds are equipped with adequate, age-appropriate toys. Please do not allow your child to bring personal toys or possessions to school. We cannot accept responsibility for lost or broken personal items.

WDS School Bags

Children enrolled in the 2.5s, 3s, and 4s classes will receive a bag from the school. This bag should be kept year to year. Children enrolled in kindergarten may bring their own backpack. Children enrolled in the infant and toddler classes may bring their own backpack and/or diaper bag.

Naptime Comfort Items

For children in our infant and toddler classes, you are welcome to provide a blanket and one special "love" item from home for nap time. The WDS does not provide these items.

For infants younger than twelve months, blankets, comforters, quilts, pillows, soft toys, stuffed animals, or bumper pads are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment. Additionally, cribs are bare except for a tight fitting sheet and mattress protector. Infant sleep positioners (devices intended to keep an infant in a desired position while sleeping) are not permitted for use. Infants' heads are uncovered during sleep. Infants are not swaddled for sleep or rest and only sleeveless sleep sacks are permitted for use in the classroom. Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, however the pacifier must not be attached to stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord or other attaching mechanism.

Diapers

Only disposable diapers are permitted at the WDS; please do not send your child in cloth diapers. Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

The WDS does not provide the following items: formula, disposable diapers, and diaper rash ointments. If your child needs any of these items, please bring them from home labeled with your child's name.

Parent Notifications

Please make sure the school has your correct contact information, including email address. All families will be notified in writing of any changes made to WDS operational policies and admissions agreement. The WDS's licensing inspection report and other required postings are located in the WDS office.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Communication is an important part of the relationship between your family and the WDS. Scheduled conferences between parents and teachers of children enrolled in kindergarten classes occur twice (fall & spring) during the school year. Conferences for children enrolled in the 3s and 4s classes occur once each school year.

If you need to talk with your child's teacher, please arrange for a mutually convenient time to talk by phone or in person.

Parent Participation

Parents' Association

Every parent is a member of the WDS Parents' Association and is invited and encouraged to attend Parents' Association monthly Board meetings, as listed on the school calendar. The purpose of the Parents' Association is to give parents an opportunity to be actively involved in events and mission opportunities at the school and to develop a sense of community among educators, children, and their parents. The list of the Parents' Association's Board members and Committee Chairs is located in the school directory. For more information regarding the Parents' Association, please contact our Parents' Association President whose contact information is located in the WDS Directory.

Families in Need

If you know of a situation in which a family is in need please contact the WDS office. You may also contact the Parents' Association Sunshine Committee Chair listed in your school directory.

Dismissal

If the WDS program cannot adequately meet the needs of the child, or if stated policies are abused, the child may be dismissed from the program. The WDS has sole discretion to dismiss any child from the WDS program.

Questions and/or Concerns

If you have questions or concerns, please call the WDS and discuss your situation. Communication through listening and talking is extremely important. We are taking this journey together and want to collaborate with you.

If your questions or concerns are not satisfactorily resolved, please feel free to contact the WDS Board Chair for a scheduled appointment. The WDS Board Chair's contact information is located in the WDS Directory.

Preventing and Responding to Abuse and Neglect of Children

If you suspect a child is being abused, it's critical to get them the help he or she needs.

To report abuse, neglect, or exploitation please call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or file an on-line report at the TDFPS website, <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

All employees of the WDS are required to receive Ministry Safe training. This training is offered through our North Texas Methodist Conference. Trainings which address abuse, neglect, or exploitation issues are provided yearly during the WDS in-service. Information regarding reporting of child sexual abuse is posted in the school office.

Abuse assistance and intervention

You may contact the following agencies to obtain assistance and intervention for cases of abuse:

Child and Family Guidance Center 972-351-3490

Children First Counseling Center 972-264-0604

Galaxy Counseling Center (Anger Management Program)/Sexual Abuse Treatment/General Counseling 972-272-4429

Jewish Family Services of Greater Dallas 972-437-9950

Victims Outreach 214-358-5173

Youth and Family Counseling 972-724-2005