



**-a Ministry of Red Mountain
United Methodist Church**

Parent Handbook 2010-2011

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Welcome

Welcome to The Preschool a Ministry of Red Mountain United Methodist Church. We have a wonderful staff and are very proud of our school. At The Preschool, we have a developmental program that emphasizes age-appropriate hands-on activities for the children. Our teachers guide the students as we seek to help them expand their imaginations and learn the joys of exploration. Our staff is dedicated to the WHOLE child who is entrusted to our care. A Christian emphasis is apparent throughout the day. We, at The Preschool, are dedicated to meeting your child's social, emotional, physical, mental and spiritual needs.

Copies of the State's Facility Inspection Reports are available in the preschool office upon request. They're also available at the Department of Health Services Office of Child Care Licensing at 150 North 18th Avenue, Suite 400 in Phoenix. The telephone number is 602-364-2539.

Our Mission Statement

The Preschool is a Ministry of Red Mountain United Methodist Church where children are welcome to bloom and grow. Our mission is to guide and nurture the whole child in a loving Christian environment. We value the uniqueness of each child and family in a setting where children will know they are loved by God and special to Him.

Our Philosophy

The Preschool provides a nurturing Christ-centered environment where the child is encouraged to grow developmentally. Our curriculum is based on the Word of God and designed to enhance the child spiritually, emotionally, cognitively, physically and socially. Our qualified Christian teachers provide a complete age and developmentally appropriate curriculum and include opportunities for spiritual growth through chapel, Bible stories and prayers. They encourage your child to learn through play in classrooms with low student-teacher ratios.

Affiliation

The Arizona Department of Health Services licenses The Preschool. The Preschool admits children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to be made available to children of The Preschool. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies and admission policies.

Our Purpose and Objectives

- √ Provide an environment where a child can grow in God's world under the guidance of Christian teachers.
- √ Recognize the uniqueness of each child and encourage self-esteem and individuality.
- √ Provide a strong developmentally appropriate foundation for each child, helping to ensure future success.
- √ Encourage each child to be concerned for others, to cooperate in work and play, and to develop a spirit of sharing.
- √ Be an outreach ministry to our community.
- √ Provide Christian love and understanding and promote spiritual development.
- √ Provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment.
- √ Encourage each child to increase his/her language and communication skills.
- √ Provide specific cognitive learning experience designed to enhance each child's social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Parent's Role

You can help foster the growth and development of your child by engaging your child in meaningful conversations, reading to your child every day and giving the firsthand experiences within their community that help expand their vocabulary and understanding of the world in which they live.

Parents are required to:

- √ Provide staff with all appropriate forms with current emergency information.
- √ Advise staff if your child will not be attending for the day.
- √ Share your concerns with staff members, if your child's needs are not being met.
- √ Listen to concerns staff members have about your child's behavior, and work through an agreeable solution to any problem.
- √ Notify Director, as early as possible, when another authorized person is picking up a child.
- √ Inform the Director immediately if your child had been exposed to a contagious illness.
- √ Notify staff of planned vacations and other extended absences in advance when possible.
- √ Pick up your child on time.

Teacher's Role

At The Preschool, teachers are considered to be in a partnership with parents, who function as the children's primary teacher. The staff understands that a child's growth and development function along a continuum. It is our responsibility to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive setting for children. We are committed to supporting children's development, respecting individual differences, helping children learn to live, play and work cooperatively. Each teacher will:

- √ Ensure that the curriculum for the preschool is based on current knowledge of child development and early childhood education.
- √ Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- √ Maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- √ Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- √ Continue to learn, grow and contribute as a professional.

Upon employment teachers are required to do the following:

- √ Be fingerprinted
- √ Submit Criminal History Affidavit yearly
- √ Submit Current CPR and First Aid certifications
- √ Provide doctor's statement of health
- √ Provide negative TB test results
- √ Minimum of 12 in-service hours – every year

The Preschool requires the following additional requirements:

- √ CPR Training for children – every two years
- √ First aid training – every two years

Preschool Student Goals

3 Year Olds

- Identify basic shapes, colors and sizes
- Match colors and shapes
- Solve simple puzzles
- Introduction to the Alphabet
- Recall names of teachers and classmates
- Recognize his/her name
- Count by rote
- Follow simple directions
- Sitting in circle time
- Problem solving
- Develop age appropriate social skills
- Sharing
- Waiting their turn

4 and 5 Year Olds

- Identify and match shapes, colors and sizes
- Introduction and exploration of alphabet and letter sounds
- Read and write own name
- Count by rote
- Follow simple directions
- Manipulate with scissors
- One to one correspondence
- Learn days of the week and months
- Write letters and numbers
- Develop age appropriate social skills
- Develop fine motor skills

Young Learners Program

Language Skills

- Demonstrates story comprehension
- Hears and discriminates sound (phonemic awareness)
- Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
- Uses beginning phonetic skills
- Uses beginning reading skills to understand print
- Listens and contributes to group discussions and conversations
- Writes letters of alphabet
- Writes own name
- Demonstrates comprehension of informational text

Math Skills

- Counts by rote
- Orders and compares numerals
- Constructs sets of objects
- Matches numeral sets
- Writes numerals
- Compares, sorts and classifies objects
- Collects, organizes and uses simple data
- Creates, describes and extends patterns
- Identifies geometric shapes

Social and Emotional Development

- Takes responsibility for self
- Follows classroom and school rules and routines
- Works and plays well with other children
- Shares and respects the rights of others
- Uses thinking skills to resolve conflicts
- Demonstrates appropriate work habits
- Understands and follows directions

Registration and Tuition

A non-refundable registration fee of \$75 is charged and collected at the time of registration. The registration fee for additional sibling(s) is \$50.

The monthly tuition is:

Three's Class that meets Tues/Thurs: \$145/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May.

Three's Class that meets Mon/Wed/Fri: \$170/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May.

Three's Class that meets Mon-Fri: \$215/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May.

Four/Five's Class that meets Mon/Wed/Fri: \$170/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May.

Four/Five's Class meets Mon-Fri: \$215/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May.

Young Learners Program meets Mon-Fri: \$290/month, due the 1st of each month, August through May

Stay 'n Play (for lunch): your choice of days: due the 1st of each month, September through May.
Tues/Thurs: \$60/month
Mon/Wed/Fri: \$75/month
Mon-Fri: \$100/month
Pay per day: \$6/day

There will be an additional discount of 5% off the second sibling's monthly tuition.

There will be no refunds for time out of school due to vacations (family or school calendar) or illness.

Our tuition is based on a one year enrollment and broken down into 10 monthly installments. All tuition payments are due on the first school day of the month. A late fee of \$25 will be charged to accounts not paid by the 7th of the month. If tuition and late fees are not paid by the end of the month, the student's spot will be forfeited and will be given to the next student on the waiting list if other arrangements have not been made. Re-admittance upon payment of past dues is contingent on the availability of class space.

When a check is returned for insufficient funds, tuition must be resubmitted by cash, money order or cashier's check within seven (7) days of notification. A \$35 service charge is assessed.

Payment Options

Tuition payments can be made by depositing payment in a completed payment envelope in the collection box in the preschool office. Payments can also be made electronically by directing your financial institution to send payment each month, or by automatic deduction. Automatic payments can be set up by completing an auto deduction enrollment form and submitting it to the church office. Forms are available in the preschool and church offices.

Terminate Enrollment Procedure

Should you need to terminate enrollment, the parent or guardian needs to complete a termination form to notify The Preschool office of the last day of school. Forms are available in the preschool office. We require one months notice before date of termination. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to ask your child's teacher or the director regarding terminating enrollment. It is as important for your child to say good-bye to friends and teachers as it was to say hello. We want it to be as positive as possible for your child.

Financial Aid/Scholarships

Financial aid forms are available from the Director in the preschool office. Financial aid and scholarships will be awarded at the discretion of the preschool committee and availability of funds.

Classes and Times

Three's Class

- Must be toilet trained.
- It is our goal for the student to staff ratio to remain low.
- Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- Mon/Wed/Fri 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Four/Five's Class:

- It is our goal for the student to staff ratio to remain low.
- Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.
- Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Young Learners Program

- Class is designed for children who miss the Kindergarten age cut-off date of September 1
- Children who may need an extra year to mature
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Stay 'n Play Class:

- It is our goal for the student to staff ratio to remain low, although, in this setting, ages 3-5 may be grouped together.
- This class is meant to extend the day for children enrolled in one of our classes. Children bring a sack lunch and share in outdoor play, and/or creative movement and a craft.
- This Class meets -12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Arrival and Dismissal

Children may arrive for their class between 8:55 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Parents, caregivers or guardians must accompany the child to the appropriate classroom door into the care of the teacher. We also ask that you do not linger in sight of your child after saying goodbye to them.

Parents are expected to pick up their children on time. If you are unable to do so, please notify the school immediately so we can reassure your child. It is important that they know who is picking him/her up.

If you wish your child to be picked up by anyone other than yourself or the authorized caregiver, you must provide written or phone permission. We reserve the right to request a picture I.D. in the event we do not recognize the individual.

Pets are not to accompany students and parents during arrival and dismissal. Leashed or carried pets are not an option. Pets are welcome on a preplanned basis by teacher request and parent notification.

Authorization to Pick Up Child

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent for pick up. Red Mountain United Methodist Preschool must have written or verbal authorization for changes in this information. Anyone not recognized will need to have photo identification in order to pick up a child.

Parents or guardians have an affirmative obligation to immediately inform the school administrators and lead teacher of any changes by virtue of court processes or agreements of those individuals who are authorized to pick up the child. Upon request, a copy of the appropriate documentation will be furnished to the school.

Absences

Parents or guardians will notify The Preschool if their child is absent. A child will be considered withdrawn when (s)he has been absent for two weeks, without notification. Upon notification of an absence, a child's space will be held in the classroom.

Holidays

The Preschool follows the Mesa Public Schools Elementary Calendar, except for the start and ending dates. Any other exceptions to this calendar will be noted in our own school calendar.

Parent Orientation

This event is held at the beginning of each school year. This special evening gives you a chance to meet the preschool staff, preschool committee, and church pastors. Information will be shared regarding our program and how you can be involved in your child's preschool experience. You will have the opportunity to see your child's learning environment and meet your child's teachers. The evening is designed with adults in mind and we encourage all parents to attend. We regret that child care is not available.

Meet the Teacher

A two hour event held a few days before school begins. This is an opportunity for the parents and or caregivers and their child to

- Meet their teacher
- See their classroom
- Find their cubby
- See the bathroom
- Meet other children and those children's families
- For children who enroll after this event, your child's teacher will set up a meeting with you to discuss the program, answer questions and learn information about your child

The First Three Weeks

The first three weeks of school are dedicated to establishing trust and comfort for each child at the preschool. During this time the children will be taught how to use the classroom materials and how to be safe within their classroom environment. We encourage parents to stay as needed while working cooperatively with staff in helping establish good-bye routines for children. Please remember, the longer it takes the parent to separate, the longer it will take the child to adjust and trust the preschool setting.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will be scheduled twice during the school year. A parent may request a conference at any time. An opportunity will be provided at the end of the school year for parental evaluation of our program.

Child Guidance Policy

The preschool's discipline policy is one of loving concern and a positive approach to discipline. We will be following "G.O.D." rules in our classrooms.

Give the teacher your attention

Only Use kind words

Do respect other's space

A child will be encouraged to redirect negative actions to constructive activities.

Steps that will be followed

1. Adults will set clear, consistent limits and patiently remind children of them.
2. Adults will encourage children to use words instead of physical aggression, listening when children talk about their feelings and helping them to express their feelings.
3. Staff will recognize when children are losing interest or becoming over stimulated and will change the activity accordingly.
4. Staff will guide children to resolve conflicts and model skills that help children to resolve their own problems.
5. The child will be given the opportunity away from the group to reestablish appropriate behavior, facilitated and supported through adult interaction.
6. The child will be encouraged to redirect his/her negative actions to constructive activities.
7. Parents and guardians will be included in an on going dialogue as part of the process of problem solving.
8. Any recurring concerns resulting in physical or mental injury, as determined by the teacher, which is threatening or detrimental to the class, will be documented and presented to the Director and parents involved by the end of the day.
9. When the above procedures and all efforts of problem solving seem to have failed and the other students learning environment is being compromised, the child may be removed from preschool.
10. At no time will disciplinary methods be detrimental to the health or emotional needs of the child.
11. Corporal punishment will not be permitted.

General Policies

Snacks

Parents will be notified of the snack menu at the beginning of each month. Parents provide a majority of our snacks. This accomplishes two things; first, it strengthens the home/school connection and children feel a great sense of pride when they contribute. Second, the parent support in this area enables us to maintain affordable tuition rates. Any shared food, under state compliance, must be commercially prepared and packaged. Parents will ensure that The Preschool stays in compliance with all State regulations by bringing the assigned snack item and amount. Although The Preschool will try to accommodate all the students needs it is understood that if the snack on the menu does not meet your child's needs it will be the parent's responsibility to bring an alternate snack.

Backpacks

Children will need a backpack that is large enough to hold 9x12 papers. The student's name should be on the backpack.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special occasions for children. We will celebrate each child's special day, including those with summer birthdays! You may provide a birthday treat for your child's classroom, which will be shared at snack time. However, we ask that you DO NOT send cupcakes. We suggest plain cookies, muffins or plain donuts are favorites. Remember, tummies are small, so please limit the quantity of the treat. All treats must be bought commercially. The State mandates that no homemade treats are allowed. If you are planning a private birthday party for your child and you wish to distribute invitations at school, this is only allowed if every child in a class is invited. PARENTS must pass out invitations to the parents of the invited child at drop off or pick up times. The staff will not be involved in this process. Otherwise, we ask that you mail invitations.

Clothing

It is essential that every child be able to take care of their personal needs. Clothing should be comfortable and easy for the student to manage on his/her own. Girls may enjoy wearing shorts or pants so that they are comfortable when climbing or sitting on the floor in group time. For safety purposes, children should wear athletic shoes and socks. For accident purposes, include one change of clothing in the backpack each day.

Potty Training

All children attending The Preschool at Red Mountain United Methodist Church **MUST** be completely potty trained. We are regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services and we are **NOT** licensed to “diaper.” The definition of “diapering” according to the Arizona Department of Health Services clearly states that we are not to help a child with toileting which includes wiping bottoms, changing underwear after an accidental bowel movement etc. We can help with belts, snaps and zippers if needed. If your child has an “accident” at school that involves urine, we will change them. Accidents do happen. However, if your child has an “accident” involving a bowel movement, we will call you and you will need to come to the school, clean them up, change their clothes and remove the soiled clothes from the premises. If “accidents” are occurring on a regular basis, we will ask you to disenroll your child. “Pullups” are considered “diapers” and will not be allowed.

Handwriting

When encouraging children to write their name please give them a model that includes both capital/upper case and lower case letters.

Volunteering

Parents are encouraged to volunteer. Please contact the classroom teacher and/or director for details. Parents may also make unannounced visits to their child’s classroom at any time during the school day, to assist with an activity or just to observe.

Donated items

Classrooms are always in need of products, such as tissues and picture band aids. Please contact the classroom teacher about other consumable products or the director for a list of larger items for the preschool. You can also see our website for more ideas. Click on *Parent Involvement*.

Field Trips

The Preschool does not provide field trips, off campus, at this time. Guest speakers and extracurricular activities will be provided when developmentally appropriate and with the guidelines of the curriculum. The Preschool does not take responsibility for the entire contents of the program.

Photographs

The Preschool may take photographs of the children within the school day. These photographs will be used in daily activities or for promotional activities for The Preschool during the school year. The Preschool will provide an opportunity for professional class pictures. Families will be notified in writing about these pictures and will have the opportunity to purchase the photographs.

School Safety

The Preschool will teach safety rules to all children for both inside and outside of the classroom. Children will be shown how to appropriately use all materials introduced to them during the school day.

Sick Policy

If your child is not feeling well, we ask that you keep them home. If they have had any of the following in the past 24 hours they are required to stay home.

- A fever over 99 degrees
- A rash
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

If we see the following:

- Cold-like symptoms (green or clear discharge from nose, consistently wiping nose, sneezing, or coughing)
- If they appear to be lethargic (not wanting to participate, sleepy, glassy-eyed)
- Open or oozing sores
- A communicable disease is present such as: Conjunctivitis, Fifth disease, Flu, Head lice, Impetigo, Ringworm, Roseola or Strep
- If your child does contract one of the above communicable diseases you must advise the school so proper notifications can be made

We will ask you to keep take them home or call you to pick them up. They must be on medication or antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

The teacher's have the authority to do a "well check" as your child is coming into the classroom. If they feel the child should not be at school, they will notify the Director and they will assess the child. At that time you may be asked to take your child home. If you are **UNSURE** whether your child is sick, please keep them home even if they say, "But, I want to go to school." We ask you to be considerate of the health of **ALL** the children in the class as well as the teachers. We have families with infants as well as classmates or family members with compromised immune systems.

Toys

Toys should only be brought from home on show and tell days. If a toy is brought in, the child will be asked to keep it in his/her cubby during activities.

Weapon type toys and violent play are not permitted. Children will be given the message through words and actions that this is a safe place for each child. A major emphasis will be placed on redirection of violent play.

Hand washing

The Preschool requires all children to wash their hands with antibacterial soap and water prior to making or eating any food, and after toileting. Baby wipes may be used on occasion.

Sun Safety

The Preschool does not provide sunscreen, since sunscreen/sun block is considered a medication. If you would like your child to use sunscreen please apply it before bringing your child to Preschool.

Health Forms and Immunizations

A verifiable immunization record or waiver must be provided at the time of registration. If the immunization record is not complete or current, the child may not be allowed to attend class until immunizations are updated as required by State regulations. The Preschool will be notified of any food or air borne allergies that may affect your child.

Fire Drills

There will be monthly fire drills conducted for children during preschool hours as required by State regulations.

Medication

- √ Must be in original container
- √ Doctor's note
- √ A designated staff person will administer medication(s)
- √ The Preschool will keep records on medications and when administered
- √ The Preschool will not administer medications such as cough medicine and ibuprofen.

Transportation

The Preschool does not provide transportation for students.

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency, a first-aid qualified staff member will administer first aid to the child, as appropriate to the injury. Depending on the severity, parents will be notified prior to/at the end of the school day. Upon a life threatening situation, 911 will be called and parents will be notified immediately.

During a community crisis situation, the RMUMC personnel, The Preschool Director, or the Mesa Police/Fire Department will contact parents/guardians about the situation in a timely manner.

Insurance

The Preschool has liability insurance to cover the children during preschool hours.

Child Abuse Policy

The Preschool has a very strict policy regarding child abuse and neglect. All school staff will be held accountable to comply with our policies and procedure according to the State Law of Arizona.

The Parent Connection

The Preschool will facilitate a Parent Group. Parents meet monthly to discuss parenting issues, and plan activities and fundraisers at The Preschool. Watch for meeting dates and times in the newsletter and on our website.

Monthly Newsletter

The monthly newsletter is distributed at the beginning of each month. It highlights important announcements and upcoming school events, policy and procedure changes, and information on parent and family nights held at The Preschool. It also recaps the previous month's highlights. You can also view this newsletter on our website.

Family Nights/Programs

We will schedule several events during the school year such as ice cream socials, a Christmas program and End-of-the-Year Celebration Program for the whole family. Watch the newsletter and our website for dates and times.

Notes: