

# 2023-2024 Parent Handbook



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Welcome to St. John's UMC Weekday Early Education School. Thank you for sharing your child with us. We hope that you and your child will have a rewarding experience.

This handbook contains important information about our program. We ask that you read it carefully and refer to it throughout the year.

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## **Our Mission**

St. John's UMC W.E.E. School will provide a nurturing Christian environment in order to provide an atmosphere in which children can learn through play. Our goal is for each child to grow to his/her fullest potential by laying a solid foundation that will foster a lifelong love of learning, respect for oneself and others and the knowledge that he/she is a valuable child of God.

## **Curriculum Statement**

St. John's W.E.E. School uses a theme based curriculum. We emphasize Christianity through Bible stories and weekly Chapel time. We will celebrate the holidays that are highlighted in that month as well as other events that also might occur. (example ~ October is fire safety month.)

## **Enrollment and Hours of Operation**

**9:00AM-12:00PM**

2 year olds: MWF or T/Th

3 year olds: Monday-Thursday, MWF or T/Th

4 year olds: Monday-Friday or Monday-Thursday

Drop off: 9:00am-9:10am

Pick up: 12:00pm-12:10pm

**\*\*All children must be program age by 9/1/23 and 3 and 4 year olds must be potty trained.**

## **Lunch Bunch**

We offer Lunch Bunch as an extended day for children in the 3 or 4 year old classes starting in September. Lunch Bunch will be offered to our 2 year old, potty trained friends beginning November 1st. For an additional fee, children can stay until 1:00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and/or Thursday. The cost for Lunch Bunch is \$20 for each day per month enrolled regardless of the number of days each month and is due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior with tuition. (September Lunch Bunch fee is due on August 15)

Please remember **NO PEANUTS/TREE NUTS, PEANUT/TREE NUT PRODUCTS OR PEANUT BUTTER, ALMOND BUTTER OR NUTELLA** in

lunches. If you send Sunflower Butter or similar product, please put a note in your child's lunchbox so our lunch bunch teachers are aware. Otherwise we will not allow your child to have it. All children **MUST** be potty trained to attend Lunch Bunch. There will not be refunds or make ups for days missed.

### **Dropping off**

Drop off will take place at the double glass doors on the parking lot side of the building across from the fire department. The doors will open at 9:00am. Should you arrive after 9:10am, you will need to enter through the door with the burgundy awning and follow the security guidelines listed below.

If you know you are going to be late please notify the preschool office (803)548-6557. **If late arrival becomes habitual, more than 3 times per month, you will be charged \$5 for every 10 minutes past 9:10am as this is a disruption for our church office as well as your child's classroom. These charges will be added to tuition if necessary.**

It will be helpful if you approach each day with a positive attitude. When you arrive please say good-bye at the door and we will walk the children to class. Long good-byes are hard on your child, the other children in the class as well as the staff. Tears usually dry up by the time you get back to your car. **Please refrain from cell phone use during drop off.**

### **Picking up**

Pick up will take place at the double glass doors on the parking lot side of the building across from the fire department beginning at 12:00 noon and ending at 12:10pm. We ask that you not be late in picking up your child. It is often upsetting to children when they do not see their parent and all their friends have been picked up. **A late charge of \$5 for every 10 minutes late will be assessed. These charges will be added to tuition if necessary.** Please inform us of emergencies. One of our security measures is your dismissal numbers. Each child is issued a number and dismissal cards. You must **show** your dismissal number in order to pick up. If you choose to have someone else pick up your child, they must show the dismissal card in order for us to release your child.

**Please refrain from cell phone use during pick up.**

## **Safety and Security**

With the world in which we live in today we cannot be too careful with the safety and security of our children and staff at St. John's UMC W.E. E. School.

All church doors remain locked at all times. If you need to enter the building for any reason, please come to the door with burgundy awning and press the buzzer to the right of the door. The church secretary will ask to see your child's dismissal number via the camera as well as ask you for your name and reason for visit. If you do not provide this information then you will be denied access to the building. Upon entering the building you will need to stop by the small table by the church office to sign in. The church administrative assistant or the preschool director will walk your child to class. We appreciate your cooperation to ensure your child's safety.

**~ For the safety of our children, parents, staff and your pets, please refrain from bringing your pets to the door during drop off and pick up.**

## **Dress**

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes. We will be playing outside, painting, playing with play dough, and other various craft projects that may cause stains, so please do not send them in anything that *cannot* get messed up. We also highly suggest that your child wear strap on or tie on shoes. Sandals and flip flops can be dangerous on the playground. Please label coats, sweaters and bags. Also, please pack a change of clothes in the labeled zip-loc bag provided at meet the teacher, just in case. These items will remain in your child's backpack and should be switched out with the change of the seasons.

Please send your child with a backpack every day. We ask that the back packs be big enough to hold their folder. When choosing a back pack for your child make sure it does not have strings as they are a choking hazard. Also, please do not send rolling back packs.

## **Snacks**

We provide a mid-morning snack that includes water and crackers or pretzels. We are always aware of food allergies and prepare accordingly. Cooking will occasionally be used in the lesson. On those occasions, we will have what we make for snack.

## **Allergies**

We are aware of the seriousness of food allergies among our children today. We strive to keep the preschool environment safe. If your child requires allergy related medication, such as an EpiPen or Benadryl you will be asked to complete a form that allows us to administer the medication if needed. We will not administer medication that has passed its expiration date. If they expire during the year, we will send them home to be replaced.

## **Immunizations**

A current immunization record is required by the first day of preschool. An updated copy will be required each school year.

## **Special Health Conditions**

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school upon enrollment, or at other appropriate times, of any health conditions, special needs, developmental delays, and/or allergies, etc. so that we can provide appropriate care.

## **Illness Policy**

A child may not attend preschool if he/she has:

- a green or yellow runny nose
- fever - anything above 99.9 degrees (within the last 24 hours)
- vomiting (within the last 24 hours)
- diarrhea (within the last 24 hours)
- any contagious disease
- spreading rash
- excessive coughing
- red sore throat

Please be considerate of other children as well as our staff and **do not send your child to W.E.E. School if he/she is sick.** We request that your child

be symptom free (fever, vomiting, diarrhea) and without medication to control symptoms, for 24 hours prior to returning to school. (Some may require a medical note upon return.)

The teachers use disinfectants on a daily basis and do the very best to keep your children well and the environment as germ free as possible. However, parents and teachers working together are the key to keeping our school a healthy place!

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will notify you for immediate pick-up.

Depending upon the illness, a doctor's note may be required stating your child is not contagious and may return to preschool.

### **Birthday and Holiday parties**

We love birthdays! If you would like to send in a snack to celebrate your child's special day, speak with your child's teacher to check on the best day and to determine if there are any allergies in the class. Please do not send any goodies with **PEANUTS OR TREE NUT PRODUCTS!** We also request *no balloons*, inflated or deflated, as they are a choking hazard. **We will not give out or allow children to give out party invitations, presents or any other correspondence at school.** We are happy to give a class list with contact information.

Your child's teacher will reach out to the parents regarding holiday parties and will guide the parents in the needs for those parties.

### **Toys/Show and Tell**

We ask that children not bring things from home unless they are for Show and Tell. Teachers will direct the children with a theme for Show and Tell. Items should never be weapons or violent in nature. Show and Tell items should fit in your child's backpack.

## **Holidays/Inclement Weather/Extended Closures**

Attached on the last page of this book you will find a calendar for the W.E.E. School. If inclement weather arises, we will follow the lead of Fort Mill School District 4. If they are closed due to inclement weather, we will be closed. If they are on a 1 (one) hour delay, we will open as normal. If they are on a 2 (two) hour delay, we will be open from **10:30am-1:00pm**. All children must bring a lunch from home that day. Please remember **NO PEANUTS/TREE NUTS, PEANUT/TREE NUT PRODUCTS OR PEANUT BUTTER, ALMOND BUTTER OR NUTELLA** in lunches. There will be no Lunch Bunch if on a 2 hour delay.

**We will notify you via email of preschool delays or closure.**

If inclement weather arises after the school day begins, we will again follow the lead of FMSD 4.

In the event an emergency should arise during preschool hours, we will dismiss early only if the situation is stabilized enough to do so. We will keep the children safe in our basement or wherever is the most secure place.

Due to the nature of our schedule, days missed due to weather will not be made up or refunded.

## **Student Assessments**

All children will have 2 assessments during the school year. The first will be in September to give your child's teacher a base line on what your child knows as they enter W.E.E School and the second will be in early January before parent/teacher conferences. At that point we will compare the initial assessment from September with the assessment in January so that your child's teacher can show you what your child has learned since September and what areas need attention.

2, 3 and 4 year olds will have the option to repeat our program based on their assessments, teacher recommendations and the W.E.E. School Director's discretion.

## **Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held in January.

Pick-up and drop-off times are **not** the time for conferences.

Both parents and teachers may schedule a parent/teacher conference at any time during the school year. That gives everyone involved an opportunity to share information about all positives and also express any concerns.

## **Discipline**

The preschool DOES NOT use any form of corporal or physical punishment, humiliation, verbal abuse, or leaving of any child unattended without supervision as a form of discipline. WE DO incorporate a positive management system which involves redirection, positive reinforcement, problem solving, intervention, behavior modification, anticipation of problems, removal of a child from the group, and supervised "time out/thinking chair" if needed. Each teacher will also establish goals for the classroom. If the previously mentioned methods are not working, the following procedures will be implemented:

- A conference will be called to exchange information between home and school to formulate a plan
- Parent and Teacher will implement the plan

If a child is still not responding in the classroom a second conference will be called at which time, either:

- A professional consultation may be suggested, or
- Another preschool may be considered

In some instances, if all behavior modifications have not resulted in a positive change of behavior, a child may be asked to be removed from the preschool program at the discretion of the Director.

## **Enrollment Termination**

There may be times when our school may not meet the needs of a particular child. When this occurs, the parents will be notified and given a notice to find other arrangements for their child. If the child is posing a danger to him/herself or others, immediate dismissal may be necessary.



## Social Media

Please refrain from using social media (Facebook) to contact/message your child's teacher regarding W.E.E. School business. If you have questions or concerns please contact your child's teacher using the class email provided at the beginning of the year.

## Payment and Fees

Tuition payments are due **by the 15<sup>th</sup>** of the month for the next month. (September tuition is due August 15<sup>th</sup>). Tuition payments are to be kept current. If tuition is unpaid, your child will not be allowed to come to school until tuition is paid in full. **A late charge of \$25 will be added for each week that tuition remains unpaid.** Tuition must be paid in full, even if the child has been absent from school.

- We accept cash and checks made payable to **St. John's UMC**. The best way to submit payment is in your child's folder. All payments should be placed in an envelope with your child's name on it.
- You may pay online via our website, [www.sjumcweeschool.org](http://www.sjumcweeschool.org). Due to the service fees, we are not able to accept payments with sibling discounts
- If you would like to use online banking, send payment to:  
St. John's UMC  
PO Box 1298  
Fort Mill, SC 29716.

If you choose online banking, make sure to account for the time it takes your bank to mail the check to us (usually about 5 to 8 days).

We offer a sibling discount of \$10 off the lowest tuition.

Checks returned to the church for non-sufficient funds will be assessed a \$20 fee to cover bank fees.

If you need Tax Forms please let the WEE School office know. We are also happy to sign Dependent Child Care Forms.

Non-refundable registration fees of \$150 for non-members and \$125 for members are to be paid upon registration. *Thirty days' notice* in writing is required should you remove your child from the program.

### **Harris Teeter**

St. John's UMC WEE School has a Harris Teeter number. We request that you link your card with St. John's. A portion of your regular purchases will go to the WEE School. They also ask that we "re-link" every year. So please re-link. Our number is 6893 for Harris Teeter. Please note that you can be linked to more than one school.

Thank you for sharing your child with St. John's UMC WEE School. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.