

Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play IS serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.

- Fred Rogers

Borrowed from The World According to Mister Rogers

A note from the director...

Hello families and welcome to Lewisville United Methodist Church
Preschool for the 2024-2025 school year.

We are excited to have you as part of our preschool family. Our goal is to provide a place where your child/children can come to play, feel safe, loved, and excited about school and learning!

Each year at the beginning of school, we provide families with a copy of the parent handbook. Please take a few minutes to read through it carefully...important information is included regarding tuition, policies, procedures, and guidelines. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

I look forward to getting to know you and your child!
Sarah Vernon
Preschool Director

Our Preschool's Educational Approach and Philosophy

It is our belief that the family is the primary caregiver of the child, and that our preschool is to be in a partnership that provides optimal development of the individual child.

Our preschool follows a child-centered approach to learning, with the teacher as the scene-setter and guide. The teacher provides opportunities appropriate for the age group and for helping each child discover and learn at their own pace. Under the leadership of qualified teachers, the classes include art, music, outdoor play, conversation, story time, dramatic play and group activities. Three year olds and older participate in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) and Fitness specials. All children participate in music classes.

The philosophy of Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool (LUMCP) is based on the recognition that early childhood educational experiences should occur in an environment of love and support. As an outreach program of the church, our preschool provides such an environment, and our hope is we teach children and their families in a way that reflects God's love and place an emphasis on the development of the whole child.

Our preschool is housed within the facilities of Lewisville United Methodist Church. We celebrate a beautiful partnership between the preschool and the church. As part of this partnership, children attend bi-weekly chapel services in the church's sanctuary, led by the church's Pastors. LUMCP welcomes families of all faiths, creeds and ethnic origins to its program.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND DAILY SCHEDULE

Our school year begins in late August and ends in mid May. The preschool follows a *similar but not identical* calendar to that of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System.

ProCare

We ask that at least one parent from each family signs up for ProCare and has the app. We use this as our primary means of communication for events and payments. Parents can access their account through ProCare. We encourage you to take the time to familiarize yourself with the program.

Communication

Our forms of communication are monthly newsletters, calendars, ProCare App, Facebook page (Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool), website www.lumcpreschool.com, email, and/or text. Information that is a hard copy will be sent home through your child's bag.

Admission Procedures

Preschool Registration is held every February. Returning students, Lewisville United Methodist Church members and After School Care families will be allowed to register first. Then registration will be open to the public. A non-refundable registration fee will be required at the time of registration in order to secure one's spot.

Authorized Pick Up

Parents are assigned a unique code through ProCare. You will be asked at pick up for the code to identify you as the person allowed to pick up. If someone other than the parent will pick up your child, you need to notify the teacher. If you have someone picking up your child on a regular basis, you can add them in ProCare as an authorized person and they will receive a unique code. (Parents should not add their names as authorized pick up people. If the parents are in the system, they are already authorized to pick up.)

Drop off Policy

The school day is from 9:00am until 12:00pm. Doors to the classrooms will open at 8:55am. Families who arrive early can wait under the portico. Each child must wash their hands upon entering their classroom. Parents are to drop off children

at the classroom door. If you need to speak with a teacher regarding an extensive matter, please let them know and they will make arrangements to meet. You may not drop off your child early unless arrangements have been made in advance with the teacher/s and they have agreed for you to do so. This must be an unusual circumstance or an emergency.

Pick Up Policy

Children should be picked up from the preschool by 12:05pm and no later than 12:15pm when unusual circumstances delay pick up. When children are not picked up by 12:15pm, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged and added to your monthly bill. We realize traffic tie-ups, mechanical problems with cars, and family emergencies can cause unforeseen problems in getting to the preschool on any given day. In the event that you are going to be late, please notify the office. You will receive two late days of "grace" during an entire school year, without being fined. However, the third time you are late, you will be fined for each minute after 12:15. You are late as determined by the preschool office clock. If you have not arrived by 12:15, your child will be taken to lunch bunch and given a small snack, until you arrive. (Children two and younger will be taken to the director.)

Policy for Sign-in/Sign-out

If you arrive after the preschool doors are closed and locked or depart before 11:45am, you must sign in and out at the preschool office.

Bad Weather Policy

When WS/FC schools close for bad weather, the preschool will be closed also. If the schools are on a one-hour or two-hour delay then the preschool will open at 10:00am.

The director can make the decision to close the preschool if safety is questionable due to bad weather. School closings will be announced on our Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool Facebook page, and on the ProCare App. Days missed due to bad weather will not be rescheduled or reimbursed.

Tuition Payments

Your first non-refundable tuition payment is due by May 1st. Your second tuition payment is due September 1st. Tuition payments are due on the first of each month thereafter through the month of April. A late fee of \$15.00 will be applied

for payments made after the 15th of the month. Returned checks will carry a \$25.00 fee. Make checks payable to "Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool" or "LUMCP" and mark the month and the child's name (ex. "March tuition, Susie Smith"). Checks can be mailed to: LUMC Preschool at 6290 Shallowford Rd, Lewisville, NC 27023, dropped off in our blue locked mailbox outside or placed in the tuition box in the window of the preschool office during the school day. Please fill out the payment information on the clipboard. Please do not put cash in the office window box, make sure to give that to someone in the office. If you would like a receipt for the cash payment, please ask. Do not send payment to your child's classroom. Once the payment has been entered, an emailed receipt will be sent.

We will accept electronic payments through the ProCare System. A link to sign up for ProCare will be emailed to the parent once enrolled. If you have not received the setup email, please notify the office. Once you have joined our system with the email address you provided during registration, you will be able to make electronic payments via the app or website: schools.procareconnect.com. After you sign up, our system defaults to Auto Pay. If you do not want Auto Pay each month, you will be able to disable this when signing up. ***If you disable auto-pay, you will need to initiate the payment every billing cycle. Please Note: If you choose to make payments with a credit card, there will be a 3% fee added to the charge.***

If you have 2 or more children enrolled, you will receive a total discount of \$30 a month.

Tuition amounts are based on the costs of operating the preschool for the entire school year. The total tuition is then divided into nine equal payments to keep financing simpler for you and for our bookkeeping. Though your child may attend classes more in one month than another, you pay the same amount each month.

Our budget is based on anticipated tuition for the whole year. Once your child is enrolled in our preschool, we expect you to honor your enrollment for the year unless you move from the city, or due to some unusual circumstance that you must withdraw your child. Four weeks advance, written notice to the director is required when withdrawing a child. If four weeks advance notice is not given, you will pay four weeks from the time notice is given to the director.

If unusual circumstances develop which will result in your paying tuition late, make arrangements with the director for the late payment. If accounts are 45 days overdue with no agreed upon payment plan, your child will no longer be considered enrolled at the preschool.

**Tuition is not reimbursed should a child have to be out of school for a length of time due to any illness or vacation.*

HEALTH

Health Policies

Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool follows the kindergarten immunization policy of the Winston-Salem Forsyth County School System. For complete information, please visit www.immunizenc.com.

No child should come to the preschool visibly ill. If your child has a contagious illness (such as Pink Eye, Hand, Foot and Mouth, Flu, COVID, etc.) fever, diarrhea or vomiting 24 hours before the start of preschool, **the child should not return to preschool until 24 hours after the last incident.** Apply the "Golden Rule" when in doubt. Do not bring your child with symptoms you would not want your family exposed to.

If your child has a potential contagious illness (such as Pink Eye, Hand, Foot and Mouth, Flu, COVID, etc.) diarrhea or vomiting and/or has a fever of 100.4 degrees or above during the preschool hours, parents will be called for pick up and the **child must not return to preschool for 24 hours fever free after the last incident (without fever reducing medicine).**

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, we will try to contact you. If we cannot contact you, the child will be isolated and cared for until you come at the regular time. If there is an emergency situation, we will contact the person you have provided on the Emergency Information Card and, if necessary, we will utilize the emergency medical release you signed.

Please notify the preschool by phone when your child has a contagious condition or disease. We can then notify parents of other children who have been exposed to the disease.

We will make every effort to observe good health practices at school by assisting children with hand washing, providing nutritious snacks, and including outdoor playtime each day.

Information about substances to which your child is allergic needs to be in writing on the information form in our files. Please report any changes or new information in writing as it develops during the year.

If your child needs to be excused from any normal activity, we must have the information in writing. All children will be taken outdoors with their classes each day, weather permitting. *Separate staff supervision cannot be provided for children whose parents request they stay indoors.* Children with fading cold symptoms, ear infections, etc. are considered by the preschool to be capable of outdoor play when dressed appropriately for weather conditions.

Bathroom independence

In the 4 year old and Transition classes, teachers will do their best to assist a child with pottyng. If they have an accident the teacher will help them. Independence will be encouraged during bathrooms times. The 4 year old classrooms and the Birds bathroom are not equipped with changing areas.

No Nit Policy

Lewisville UMC Preschool has a No Nit Policy regarding head lice. Parents of children having nits (lice eggs or shells) will be asked to remain out of class until the nits are not visible.

Having the No Nit Policy standard in place makes head lice management more realistic and less subjective. As an administrative policy, it helps parents understand and assume their responsibility for head lice control. Families are encouraged to respond by carrying out the most effective prevention measures at all times and the safest most thorough control measures possible. The reward is an environment of mutual assurance that the child enters a group setting that supports a head lice control program.

Administering Medications

In general, we feel that a child on medication needs to be home. However, we recognize that there may be times that some medications must be given at school.

Parents may request under these circumstances that the child be given medication while at preschool.

No medications, vitamins, or special diets are administered unless instructions to administer such items are written, signed and dated by a licensed physician and are prescribed for that child. This applies to over-the-counter meds (for example: Benadryl and Tylenol) as well as prescription medicines (for example: epi-pens).

There are special forms that must be completed by the parent and staff who administer the medication. Please see the Preschool Director for this form. No medicine, vitamins, or special diet can be administered without this completed form.

If you wish for your child to have sunscreen or bug spray on during preschool hours, you must apply that on them before coming to preschool.

SAFETY

Emergency Plans are in place according to the church's Safe Sanctuary Policy, such as lock down, fire drill, tornado drill, etc.

Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Preschooler

Parents should plan to drop off and pick up their child at the classroom door each class day. The preschool should have on file a list of person(s), other than yourself, who are authorized to take your child home. Send a note to the office or inform your child's teacher on special occasions when your child will be going home with a classmate. Teachers cannot accept verbal messages from the children. All persons must know their unique code provided through ProCare to pick up their child.

All persons, with the exception of the parents, must sign the "Pick up Sheet" located outside each classroom when picking up the child.

Children staying for lunch bunch can be picked up from their assigned lunch bunch classrooms. A list of the assigned classrooms will be posted in the lobby.

Please refrain from being on your cell phone when dropping off and picking up your child.

Authorized Pick Up

Parents are assigned a unique code through ProCare. You will be asked at pick up for the code to identify you as the person allowed to pick up. If someone other than the parent will pick up your child, you need to notify the teacher. If you have someone picking up your child on a regular basis, you can add them in ProCare as an authorized person and they will receive a unique code. (Parents should not add their names as authorized pick-up people. If the parents are in the system, they are already authorized to pick up.)

Parking

Parking is available in the parking lot off Conrad Circle. Please do not park under the shelter or in the spaces marked "Handicapped Parking." (Unless needed). Follow the driving path as the parking lot has arrows painted in the correct direction of traffic flow.

Please do not attempt to have conversations with friends in the parking lot. Instead, take your child directly to the building and to their classroom. The safety of your child in the parking lot is jeopardized if you are distracted for even a few seconds due to the large number of cars arriving and departing.

Likewise, once you have picked up your child at the classroom door, you are responsible for their safety. Do not permit children to roam freely through the building.

**** Please DO NOT drive through the portico or park under the portico during drop off and pick up times. This is a safety issue as families are walking with small children through that space. (Please be sure and let anyone who will be dropping off or picking up your child know this policy.)**

Clothing and Possessions

Mark any removable clothing (sweaters, coats, hats, etc.), books, toys, or other items with your child's name. Please do not allow your child to bring "special" items to the preschool, which could be easily damaged while at the preschool.

Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. Clothing should also be manageable by children who are capable of using the bathroom alone. Choose fabrics that are easily laundered if stained by art materials or snack foods.

We go outside almost every day and you should dress children according to weather predictions. All children need warm hats or hoods and mittens on cold winter mornings. Select shoes, which give support and traction and allow freedom of movement. Loose sandals, cowboy boots and shoes that slip off easily inhibit activity and are not appropriate for climbing on equipment on the playground.

In addition, each child should bring a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag in case of a need for changed clothing. Your child's bag should be clearly labeled with their name.

Children attending as toddlers should bring with them each day, a change of clothing, diapers and water bottles or sippy cups. All items should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Guns, ropes, knives and other toys that encourage rough and violent play are to be left at home.

Your child's teacher will inform you of the classes "show and tell/personal items" policies.

Comfort toys - bears, blankets, etc.- may be brought if needed. Be sure that your child's name is attached. If your child uses a pacifier, be sure they bring it. Children are learning to deal with separation from parents while at preschool. Do not expect them to successfully deal with separation from comfort objects at the same time.

Snacks and Birthdays

Mid-morning snacks are provided for all children. Older children are encouraged to help in preparing the snacks and frequently have cooking activities, which result in special snacks. We try to encourage healthy eating by the nutritious foods we offer. Please do not send any food, gum, candy, or drinks unless the teacher has agreed.

Examples of snacks that we routinely use on a rotating schedule include cheese, goldfish, saltine crackers, Ritz crackers with cream cheese, dry cereal mix and cinnamon toast. Water is provided as a drink.

Snack foods are served in small portions and do not serve as a substitute for breakfast. Be sure your child has a filling, nutritious breakfast before coming to preschool.

We will do our best to accommodate snacks for children with allergies. We purchase snacks that are not processed in nuts. If you have a preference for what your child should eat for snack, you may be asked to provide that specific snack for your child. For budget reasons, we buy snacks in bulk.

If you would like to send in a special snack for the class, please discuss this with the teacher first. Due to allergies, only store-bought snacks will be allowed. The teacher will let you know what allergies you need to be aware of.

Birthdays are special and we celebrate them. Please consult with your child's teacher before bringing a special birthday snack. This is to ensure classroom allergies are being recognized. *Do not send favors or gifts, as we do not have the time to treat this as a birthday party.* Children with summer birthdays can be honored during a different school day, please consult with your child's teacher. If you would like to send party invitations home through the classroom, you may if all the children in the classroom are included. Otherwise, invitations need to be sent by mail.

Lunch Bunch

The preschool will offer a "Lunch Bunch" hour Monday through Thursday from 12:00pm until 1:00pm for children who are 3-years-old and older. During this hour, children will eat lunch and have free playtime in one of the classrooms with teachers supervising. On good weather days, the children will play on the playground following lunch; other days, they will remain indoors.

On all Lunch Bunch days, parents or caregivers will need to come into the preschool to pick up their children at 1:00pm. You are considered late after 1:10pm and will automatically be charged \$1 per minute after 1:10pm.

Children cannot be dismissed from the playground. If your child needs to leave early, come into the building and ask the director to get the child for you from the playground.

Lunch Bunch is an optional program at a cost of \$5.00 per child for the extra hour of childcare. No sign up or reservation is required. Have your child bring a **lunchbox labeled with their name**, place it at their designated lunch box spot in the hallway. That is how we will know your child is staying for lunch bunch that day. A record of payment for lunch bunch will be sent to you each month. The preschool will provide water for the children to drink. All foods requiring refrigeration should be brought in appropriate lunch boxes providing sufficient insulation (place a cold pack in lunchbox) since all lunches are stored in the hallway until the lunch bunch hour.

***Lunches will not be accepted after 10a.m.**

CURRICULUM

The curriculum design of our preschool is based on teaching units or topics that are common to very young children. Our monthly newsletter and class calendars will let you know which topics are being explored each month. The activities and materials which the individual teachers use to develop these unit themes are aimed at helping each child progress in six areas of skill development: 1- fine motor 2- gross motor 3- social/emotional 4- self help 5-language 6- cognitive.

Our long-term goals for children who attend our preschool until they are ready for kindergarten are that each child will:

- Develop an ability to communicate effectively with teachers and classmates and to understand and follow simple instructions.
- Develop a growing concept of the relationship of numbers, time, space, and form
- Have opportunities for observing and understanding the basic phenomena of weather and seasonal changes
- Be introduced to the growth cycle of plants and animals
- Develop an awareness of music, an appreciation of sound and rhythm and an ability to participate in some form of musical expression
- Learn more about self and others through informal play
- Grow in assuming personal responsibility for self and others

- Have opportunities for using art and craft materials and develop an increasing appreciation of form, color, and texture
- Have opportunities for using large muscles in developing skills in running, jumping, balancing; and for using small muscles in developing fine motor skills for writing, painting, cutting, and similar activities.
- We are a play-based preschool. This means that the children are learning through play. Providing daily play opportunities for children is essential and meaningful!

Field Trips

A permission slip for field trips will be sent home prior to any scheduled field trips. This must be completed and on file before your child can participate. Field trips will be announced in advance. These trips serve as a means for each child to better explore their world and learn from firsthand experiences. Parents may be needed to serve as chaperones for walking field trips. The "Parent Volunteer" form includes a space for parents to indicate their ability and desire to assist with such activities. Field trips are determined by the needs, interests and opportunities available for each individual class. They will vary even within the same age level.

Preschool Student Guests

We are sometimes asked if preschool aged out-of-town guests can attend the preschool while visiting an enrolled preschooler. Our policy is to allow only registered preschoolers to participate in the preschool program.

Our Discipline Policy

Our staff uses positive approaches to help children behave constructively.

Guidance methods may include:

- Redirection - directing child's attention to a new activity
- Planning ahead to prevent problems
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement for appropriate behavior
- Consistent, clear rules explained to children

The staff never uses physical punishment or other negative discipline methods that hurt, frighten, or humiliate children. Special time will be used when a child needs to "cool down" before rejoining a group.

If a child becomes unmanageable, the child will be removed from the classroom by a staff member until the child is able to calm themselves down. If a child becomes so difficult to manage during a morning that a teacher feels the welfare of the classmates are being jeopardized, the director will be called to assume responsibility for the one unmanageable child until their behavior has modified. The parent may be called to pick the child up if every effort has been made to help calm the child but the child continues to be unmanageable or aggressive as this can be a safety issue for the other children and teachers in the classroom.

Discharge Policy

Lewisville United Methodist Church Preschool reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-Payment or excessive late payments of fees
- Not observing the rules of the preschool as outlined in the parent agreement
- Child has special needs which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child

PRESCHOOL PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As volunteer workers, parents can enrich our preschool program in several ways:

- Parents can share their expertise, talents and hobbies with the classes. Check the monthly newsletter to find out what study units are being followed.
- Parents can help develop and carry out fundraising activities
- Parents volunteer with Fall and Spring Clothing Exchange (the preschool's largest fundraiser events)
- Parents can serve on the Preschool Board
- Parents can help provide special foods when requested for special holiday celebrations.

Enrollment forms include a volunteer checklist form that outlines specific roles for volunteers.

Visitation and Conferences

You are always welcome to visit the classrooms. Since the teacher's first responsibility is to the children, they will not be able to talk with you about your child during a casual visit. Conferences can be arranged between teachers and parents at any mutually convenient time during the year. Contact your child's

teacher if you would like to set up a time to meet. Routinely, we schedule Parent/Teacher Conferences during our conference days in February.

Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at school. Please share with your child's teacher any information that will make them more sensitive to your child's needs.

Complaint Procedures

Your personal concerns regarding the operation of the preschool or its policies can be valuable information to the preschool. We ask that all concerns be communicated to the preschool director. If you feel you need to speak with a member of the board, please feel free to do so. Preschool board members are listed, along with all of their contact information, in the Preschool Handbook/Directory that is published at the beginning of each school year.

Preschool Parent Program

The preschool sponsors Preschool Parent Programs during the year with emphasis on parenting education and fellowship for our preschool families. Dates, times and topics are announced in advance in the preschool newsletter. Childcare may be provided at a minimal cost by reservation when meetings are held on weekday mornings and/or evenings. The preschool classes are held as usual during these morning meetings.

Newsletter

A newsletter will be sent home with your child near the beginning of each month. It will typically include news of special activities scheduled for the month, classroom news, follow up reports on past events, birthdays, announcements, and information on upcoming Preschool Parent Programs.