

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER**



**PARENT  
HANDBOOK**

## *Working With Parents For Children*

Welcome to **First United Methodist Child Development Center**. Your child's happiness and health, growth and safety are our primary concerns. We strive to offer a program that meets your child's developing needs in a loving and safe environment.

In the following pages, **First United Methodist Child Development Center** outlines its duties and responsibilities to you. We will also outline your obligations and responsibilities as parents of a child attending the center.

We offer your child a planned, developmentally appropriate curriculum in an atmosphere of "gentle loving care." We encourage your comments, suggestions, and participation in achieving our goals for your child.

Sincerely,

Janice L. Price  
Director

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## **OVERVIEW**

We are a 5 Star licensed child development center that:

- Offers full time child care for infants through five-year olds
- Serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack as part of the Child Care Feeding Program
- Provides a schedule that is:
  - structured and unstructured
  - informative and creative
  - active and quiet
  - indoor and outdoor
  - observing and participating
- Stimulates the child's innate desire and ability to learn

- Develops a positive self-image
- Recognizes individual differences in each child
- Promotes social development
- Encourages your child to reach his/her greatest personal growth and potential

## **PURPOSE**

***First United Methodist Child Development Center*** is an outreach ministry of the church, serving the children of working parents in the community. The Center provides a full day, developmentally appropriate program for children ages six weeks through entrance to public school kindergarten.

The Center is governed by a Board of Directors composed of church members and a parent representative. The Board meets monthly, along with the Director and Parent Board Representative, to discuss programming and budgetary issues as they arise. They also serve as the liaison between the church and the Child Development Center and offer much needed support of the ongoing ministry of this programming.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the center at any time.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

We believe in the philosophy of “the whole child”. Each child is a unique individual and must be allowed to grow at his/her own rate of development. The Center provides many important opportunities for your child, including:

### **Opportunities for your child to develop SOCIALLY**

Playing, sharing, relating to others, learning from peers and teachers, visitors and resource persons, learning through basic life principles of getting along, of respecting others and their rights, of “thank you” and “your turn next”, assuming responsibilities, being treated as a person of worth, participating in groups and sharing.

### **Opportunities for your child to develop EMOTIONALLY**

Building a positive self-image, viewing himself/herself as a unique individual, developing confidence in his/her abilities, practicing independence and self-reliance, developing confidence and trust in others, practicing persistence, experiencing success, expressing emotions in a

constructive manner, relating to the feelings and emotions of peers and adults.

### Opportunities for your child to develop **PHYSICALLY**

Learning muscular control in large motor activities (running, climbing, throwing), small motor activities such as painting, gluing, cutting, establishing desirable health habits, developing a desirable attitude toward healthy foods, learning wholesome attitudes towards the body and bodily functions, practicing safe play.

### Opportunities for your child to develop **INTELLECTUALLY**

Unstructured, informal teaching to relate facts and to teach skills, valid learning experiences in pre-math, science, geography, appreciation of the printed word, art, music, physical education, in verbalizing, thought and ideas, in linking knowledge already learned with present learning, in trips related to themes being emphasized in the classroom

### Opportunities for your child to develop **SPIRITUALLY**

Through the loving guidance of caring adults modeling appropriate behaviors, through the use of the “teachable moment”, through the use of multi-cultural and anti-bias curriculum.

## **CENTER SCHEDULE OF OPERATION**

The Center is open from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We observe the following holiday schedule: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

When the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed the proceeding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed the following Monday.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

Children attending the Center must be at least six (6) weeks old. A birth certificate may be required to verify the date of birth of your child.

All children are considered full time. We do not have part time spaces or part time tuition fees.

Parents must complete the following forms and return them to the Center prior to the first day of care:

1. Application form
2. Health Appraisal information (including immunization record)
3. Emergency Information cards
4. Outside activity permission

5. Parent agreement form
6. Infant Feeding Schedule (infants through 14 months only)
7. CACFP information form (infants under 12 months only)

The health appraisal form **MUST** be signed by a licensed physician and be on file at the Center on the first day of care.

## **TUITION POLICIES**

The Center charges a registration fee to secure your child's place in a class, and an ongoing tuition fee. The registration fee is due once your child is assured a space. The first week's tuition fee is due on the first day of care. These fees are, of necessity, subject to change. Parents will be notified at least thirty days in advance of any changes in the fee schedule.

Tuition is due each Monday by 5:30 p.m. You are asked to place the tuition payments in the tuition box located on the wall outside of the Director's office. All tuition checks should be made payable to First United Methodist Child Development Center (FUMCDC). Cash payments must be exact change. Cash payments must be placed in an envelope provided by the paying parent. Tuition payments, of ANY kind, should **NOT** be given to your child's classroom teacher. Payments must be placed in the tuition box.

**A late payment fee of \$15 will be assessed to all sponsors for weekly tuition not paid by the Friday of the week for which the tuition is due. The late fee will be charged each week there are overdue amounts.**

**A late payment fee of \$15 will be assessed to all CCRI co-sponsors for any monthly co-pay amounts not paid by the end of the month due.**

**Termination of student privileges will occur if weekly accounts are four (4) weeks in arrears or monthly accounts are two (2) months in arrears, unless approved by the Director after Board consultation.**

Monthly receipts will be provided at the parent's request. The Center does not provide year-end statements, however, information regarding tuition payment will be provided upon request.

A \$25.00 fee is charged for each returned check. After the second returned check, payment must be made by money order only.

Full tuition is due for each week your child is enrolled, whether the child attends the center or not. The fixed costs of operation do not change because a child does not attend. Furthermore, the space is set aside and reserved for your child as long as the child is enrolled in the Center. Full tuition is due for weeks containing holidays. Full tuition is also due should the Center have to close due to snow, inclement weather, blackouts, or other such events.

## **WITHDRAWAL POLICIES**

PRIOR TO WITHDRAWING A CHILD FROM THE CENTER, PARENTS MUST GIVE THE DIRECTOR A MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS WRITTEN NOTICE. If no notice or inadequate notice is given, regular tuition for the two-week period is due. Children who are absent from the Center without notice for five consecutive days shall be discharged from care. The two weeks tuition for failure to give adequate notice shall be due in such cases.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

Children are expected to be in the Center no later than 9:00 a.m. Because our teachers and staff care about your child, their absence or tardiness may cause concern. Hence, we appreciate the courtesy of a phone call if your child will be late or will not be in attendance on a regularly scheduled day.

Failure to notify the Center of absences for five consecutive days will result in termination of care. The two-week withdrawal notice applies in this type of termination, and the two weeks tuition shall be due. (See withdrawal Policies).

Parents or another responsible adult must escort each child into the Center and to their appropriate classroom. A sign-in sheet is located in the main hall. Parents or the responsible adult MUST sign each child in and out daily. State law prohibits minor children from fulfilling this duty. The Center will not assume responsibility for children not signed in.

## **LATE PICK-UP**

The Center closes at 5:30 p.m. There will be a charge of two dollars (\$2.00) per child for each five (5) minutes or fraction thereof a child remains in the Center after 5:30 p.m. This fee shall be paid directly to the caregiver on the day of late pick up. ALWAYS call the Center if you know that you are going to be late.

## **PARKING**

The Church provides a small drop off/pick up parking lot directly behind our facility on Church Street. Spaces are limited and traffic is heaviest during rush hour times, typically 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Please be aware that there are time limits to your stay in these spaces and you should give yourself no longer than 10 minutes in the space coming and going. Being considerate of other parents in the same situation as yourself, will help us tremendously in traffic control! If you do need to spend a longer amount of time, or may have a parent/teacher conference scheduled around these times, alternate parking is available. Please see the Director or Administrative Assistant for further information.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If the weather should cause the Center to close, for any reason, we will go by the following schedule: For the first day of bad weather, we will follow the same opening/closing schedule as Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. We will publicize information about our opening and closing schedule on several of the local television stations. Please watch WSOC, Channel 9, WBTV, Channel 3, WCNC, Channel 6 or News 14 for the latest information about our schedule. We will be listed as **First United Methodist CDC**. Any change from our normal operating hours will also be available on our answering machine at 704-333-4882.

## **SAFETY**

Children will be released ONLY to parents and those listed on your child's emergency information card. If someone other than those listed on the card is to pick up your child, the Center must be informed. If there is a question as to the authenticity of the person picking up the child, the Center reserves the right to protect the child and the Center by notifying the Police Department.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The Center sets definite limits for the safety and well being of the children. Limits help a child know which behavior is acceptable and which is not. Children are encouraged to verbalize their feelings and work out their problems to the extent of their ability. A teacher is always nearby to assist when necessary. Children are not allowed to strike each other or a staff member. If a child has a problem with a particular situation, they will first be redirected to another activity to pull them away from the situation at hand. If a child continually displays a disregard for the limits, then they will be placed in "time out" to think about the inappropriate behavior. If the time out option does not have the desired effect, the child will be pulled away from the situation entirely and will have a seat in the Director's Office for a while.

The staff will not use hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, or corporal punishment as a form of discipline. If a child represents a constant discipline problem while at the Center, a parental conference will be held. All attempts to help the child will be pursued. If the staff and Director feel that the needs of a child cannot be met by the Center or that the child is displaying developmental problems that may cause harm to him/herself, other children or the staff, then the child will be dismissed from enrollment.

## **MEDICATION AND ILL CHILDREN**

The Center administers medication only with prior written permission from the parent. Medication slips are available in each classroom. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER,

**WHETHER PRESCRIPTION OR NONPRESCRIPTION MEDICATION.** Medicine slips are valid for a one-week period only and should be taken home at the end of each week. There are certain medications, such as diaper rash crèmes, that you may sign a 6-month permission for administering. Please see your child's classroom teacher for instructions for properly completing this form.

Parents are responsible for placing medication needing refrigeration in the locked box in the refrigerator. Never leave medication, of any sort, in your child's cubby, tote bag or on them!

Nonprescription medication will be administered **ONLY** if the proper dosage is listed on the label. Lack of age appropriate dosage will require a physician's note.

Sick children will **NOT** be taken into care. Children who show any signs of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, discharge from the eyes or nose, any undiagnosed rash or contagious rash, such as poison ivy or impetigo, should be kept at home. Should your child become ill while at the Center, you will be called to come and pick them up as soon as possible. Your child must be free of illness for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please make the Center aware when your child has been exposed to any communicable disease. Whenever possible, the Center will inform you if your child may have been exposed to a communicable disease, when changes occur in your child's health, or any accidents which may happen.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Though we take extreme caution in the care and safekeeping of your child, accidents can happen. Our staff is trained in infant/child/adult CPR and in standard First Aid. We are also fortunate to have fully skilled and qualified paramedics across the street from our facility at Fire Station No. 4. It is important that you complete your child's emergency information card and that all information is up to date and accurate at all times. If information should change, at any time, please notify your child's classroom teacher and the Director so that these changes can be made.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

The Center participates in the state Child Care Feeding Program. We provide well-balanced breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks. We have a full time cook as a part of our staff, whose responsibility is to plan for and prepare the meals furnished daily. A menu is posted weekly on a bulletin board located on the wall as you enter the main hallway of the Child Development Center. The menu is updated each Friday afternoon so that you will know the food items that will be prepared for the following week. You are welcome to bring a bagged lunch for your child if there are allergies, etc. that would prohibit them from eating what is being prepared. It is equally important that we know if your child has any food allergies. These will be posted in your child's classroom to assure that they do not receive any food that might make them become ill.

## **BRINGING THINGS FROM HOME**

Toys, books, records, tapes, and other personal items come into the Center at the parent's own risk. The Center will not assume responsibility for items brought from home which may be damaged here.

Items such as balloons, suckers, ropes, toy guns, money, gum, etc., will not be allowed. These items may present a potential danger to you child and the other children in the Center.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Various trips of special interest are scheduled throughout the year, especially for the three, four year old and TK classrooms. The church vans will be used for transportation whenever possible. Parental assistance during these occasions is welcome and appreciated! You will be notified well in advance in the case of such an event to assure that you leave your child's safety seat for us to assure safe transport to our field trip destination. A permission slip must be signed by the parent prior to any field trip activities. This will become a part of each child's permanent file.

## **DRESS**

Please dress your child in everyday play clothes that they can manage **ON THEIR OWN!** Children should be dressed according to the weather conditions, as they will be taken outside each day, weather permitting.

Please do **NOT** allow your child to wear sandals or “jelly shoes” to school. They do not afford a child’s feet the support needed for such activities as running, jumping, climbing nor do they offer protection from being stepped on or stubbing toes. Rubber soled shoes with socks – are the safest. The Toddlers through Transitional Kindergarten participate in a weekly gymnastics class and it is a requirement that they wear socks for this activity.

Each child should have an extra set of clothing at the Center in case of an accident. These clothes should be left in your child’s cubby or in their book bag at all times. If your child is sent home in clothes belonging to the Center, please launder and return them promptly. Extra change of clothes left for your child should be seasonal and need to be changed periodically due to changes in the weather.

## **REST TIME**

Your child will have a daily rest time on a cot used only by him/her, and will be provided a clean sheet and blanket. We are fortunate to have a washer and dryer on site and launder these items on a weekly basis. Your child may bring a blanket, pillow or other items from home to assist them with security during this quiet time, if needed.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Children’s birthdays may be celebrated at the parent’s request. Parents who wish to do so, may bring a simple snack. Any food that comes into the Center must be commercially prepared. Proper notification to your child’s classroom teacher is necessary for meal/snack preparation during these events.

## **INFANT/TODDLER INFORMATION**

Until such a time that your child is eating food that the Center prepares, you must follow state guidelines as far as labeling your child's foods. Formulas must be labeled AND prepared by the parent. Small bottles are best since all milk not consumed at a feeding must be discarded. Bottles must be marked with your child's name and the current day's date.

Baby food must also be furnished by the parent. Parents must keep a supply of baby food on hand. Your child's name should be marked on all food containers.

Diapers must also be furnished by the parent. You are asked to keep a supply on hand. Your child's caregiver will remind you several days ahead of time if the supply is low on any of these items.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We communicate with you through letters, notes, bulletin board notices and information located on the boards outside of your child's classroom. PLEASE READ THEM!!!! No excuses if your child misses out because you did not do your homework.

Parents of children in the Center have formed a Parent's Association. The Parent's Association meets monthly and serves as a support group to each other and the staff of the Child Development Center! The Parent's Association plans and supports many of the "extra" activities throughout the year as far as fund-raising and teacher appreciation events. Once your child is actively enrolled and attending the Child Development Center, you will be contacted by a member of the Parent's Association to welcome you to our family and to invite you to their next scheduled meeting. We encourage all parents to become involved in our Parent's Association.

Most importantly, remember that we have an "open door policy" for you while your child is enrolled here. You are welcome to come and go as you please throughout the day. We encourage you to visit your child as much and as often as you feel you need to. We also hope that you will be sensitive to your child and their feelings during these visits and will

understand if staying away would be more beneficial to your child's well-being than stopping by.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

North Carolina law requires caregivers to report suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect to the Protective Services unit of the Department of Social Services. Our staff is trained and sensitive to these situations and is committed to the safety and well being of your child in any circumstance. We will continue to be watchful for these situations as they may occur.

## **STAFF**

First United Methodist Child Development Center has a staff of twenty-three trained, educated, committed teachers as a part of our team. In our recruitment process, it is important that we locate those individuals who show these qualities and strengths during their interview process with us. With the exception of our Infant I classroom, all classrooms have at least 2 full time teaching staff assigned to them. Due to the classroom number size and the age of the children, the Infant I room has a third full time caregiver assigned to them. Our Toddler and Two-year-old rooms have an additional part time person assigned to assist during peak times of the day.

All of our staff are educated with Early Childhood backgrounds. They are required from year to year to complete workshop training hours based on the age group they are assigned. They are certified in infant/child/adult CPR and standard First Aid. These certifications are renewed yearly, as a group, to assure that their knowledge and skills remain current.

Our full time staff works two shifts throughout the day, to maintain consistency in our classrooms. The Center opens at 7:00 A.M. and is staffed at that time by the Educational Coordinator and one preschool staff person and one infant classroom caregiver. By 7:30 A.M. a teacher from each classroom arrives so that each classroom is then officially opened for the day. The second teacher arrives at 8:30 A. M. We also employ three full time floaters who fill in for teachers who are sick, on vacation leave, etc. These individuals have the same qualifications that the regular teaching staff is required to possess. Our full time staff work a 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

shift or an 8:30 – 5:30 P.M. shift. The Director will close the center at the end of the day.

#### STAFF-CHILD RATIOS

0 to 12 months - 1:4  
12 to 18 months - 1:5  
18 to 24 months - 1:6  
2 years old - 1:8  
3 years old - 1:9  
4 year old - 1:10  
5 year old - 1:13