

PARENT HANDBOOK



SFUM
PRESCHOOL

HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE PRESCHOOL

Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool (SFUMP) was established in 1980 as an outreach program of Spanish Fort United Methodist Church. SFUMP strives to meet the educational and social needs of early childhood in a Christian atmosphere, and to expand the world of the child to include friends in the community, as well as in the home and church. Through a curriculum that is developmentally age appropriate, each child will have the opportunity to experience a wide range of readiness activities.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

ADMISSION

A registration form is necessary for each child's file and is required to be completed by the parents/guardian prior to the first day of school. New forms will be filled out each year. All children must have a current immunization record on file and must be kept up to date throughout the school year.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

School begins at 9:00 a.m. with doors opening at 8:55 a.m.

****It is imperative that you drive very slowly, and with extreme care through the parking lot. ****

COVID-19 update for 2020-2021

Our arrival and departure procedures will be different for the 2020-2021 school year due to COVID-19.

We will be using a car line drop off/pick up procedure this year. Following CDC recommendations, we will be implementing the following changes:

1. Children will be dropped off outside of school and a staff member will escort them inside.
2. The temperature of each child will be taken before the child is escorted into the school building. If the child has a temperature of 100.4 or above the child will not be allowed to attend school.
3. Children will be given hand sanitizer upon entering the facility or required to wash their hands immediately upon arrival.
4. Every family will be issued a "car number" at the beginning of the school year. You must have this number with you, displayed in your window in order to pick your child up from school. Your child will be escorted to your car by a staff member.

COMMUNICATION

We feel that open communication between parents and teachers is of the utmost importance to your child.

To accomplish this, we will:

1. Provide a Communication Folder on the first day of school. In order to reduce the possibility of cross contamination, folders will be sent home at the end of the week instead of daily as we have done in the past. Please check the folder, remove the contents and return it to school the following Monday.
2. Provide individual class and school communication through Class Dojo.
3. Provide Facebook notifications through SFUM Preschool page.
4. Make telephone calls or send notes to share with you if we feel there is a need.
5. Hold Parent/Teacher Conferences when requested.
6. If the school needs to be closed due to inclement weather, we will follow Baldwin County Public Schools decisions.

Communication - The Two-Way Street

1. Please **label** lunch boxes, jackets, school bags, etc. with permanent marker. As the seasons and clothes change, please remember to label everything that comes to school.
2. Parents of Toddlers/ 2-year-olds please bring at least three diapers and put any special instructions in the folder. Toddlers/ 2-year-olds should bring a lunch box snack and a sippy cup for their drink.
3. If your child is to be picked up by any person other than you, (or will be picked up early), please notify the director and teacher.
4. If you will not be home during the school hours, please leave an emergency phone number where you may be reached in the daily folder.
5. If your child will be absent due to travel or illness, please notify the director or teacher. We worry about our children when they are absent. If the absence is unexpected, please call after 9:15 a.m.
6. All children have a permanent file with the child's doctor's name, phone number and other emergency information. **Please contact the director if there are any changes to be made.**

CLOTHING

1. Please send your child dressed for play. We like to do a variety of things that might get your child messy.
2. Closed toed shoes are required. **Please no Flip Flops or Crocs.** These types of shoes do not securely attach to the foot and can prove dangerous when climbing on playground equipment.
3. Every child in the school should always have a seasonally appropriate set of clothes in their backpack. Accidents happen.
4. When the weather gets cooler please send appropriate coats, jackets, or sweaters.

SNACK

1. Please do not send peanut products.
2. Your child's teacher may advise of additional food restrictions due to allergies.
3. Please note snack time is meant to last for approximately 15 minutes. Please limit the number of choices in your child's lunchbox.
4. Please send juice boxes/bags or thermos containers that have a straw. No twist top bottles.

TOILET TRAINING

We know that toilet training is a process, but we require our three-year-old and four-year-old students to be completely potty trained, no pull ups. A child is potty trained when he or she initiates going to the bathroom and can independently adjust clothing necessary to urinate or have a bowel movement.

Each teacher sets regular breaks during the day to allow children ample opportunity to go to the bathroom.

Accidents are expected from time to time and will be treated as such. It will not be considered an accident if the child has an accident each day he/she is in school. Should your child have a bowel movement accident at school they will be changed as a courtesy the first time. Accidents will be documented, and notifications will be sent home if they occur frequently. Accidents will be handled on a case by case basis, if a pattern arises or if the child does not appear to be fully potty trained, we will require that he/she to be kept home until the child is confident in their bathroom skills. Tuition will continue to be paid and the child's spot will be held until they can return to school.

If by the first day of school, a child **is not fully potty trained** and needs additional time, they will need to remain at home until the child is confident in their bathroom skills. Tuition will continue to be paid and the child's class spot will be held until they can attend school.

BIRTHDAYS

If your child would like to celebrate his/her birthday at school, please notify your child's teacher. We are happy for your child to bring a special snack to share with the class. Suggested snacks include popsicles, cookies, or doughnuts. Please check with your child's teacher to see if allergies need to be considered so the treat can be enjoyed by all.

FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ALL

1. If your child does not feel well (sore throat, cough, nausea, earache, diarrhea, etc.) please keep your child home. A parent may be called to pick up a child for the protection of others if the teacher feels it is necessary.
2. If your child contracts a contagious illness (chicken pox, etc.), please contact the school at once. The director will notify other parents.
3. If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
4. No medications will be administered at school under any circumstances with the exception of life saving medication including but not limited to EpiPen, Auvi-Q, or rescue inhaler.
5. Children entering the 3 and 4-year-old program must be potty trained. Please refer to Toilet Training section of the handbook.
6. Children need to be 24 hours free of symptoms before returning to school following an illness. There will be additional requirements in regards to fevers and COVID-19.
7. If your child becomes ill while at school, the Director will contact the parent/guardian immediately to pick up your child. If you are unavailable your emergency contacts will be called. Your child will be separated from the other children while they wait for you to pick them up.

SCHOOL CLOSING

We follow the Baldwin County School Calendar; therefore, we will close for the same holidays that the school system closes. When severe weather is threatening our area, if Baldwin County schools close, then Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool will be closed. In the unfortunate event that a sizeable funeral is to be held at the church, school could be cancelled due to the Preschool's proximity to the facilities used to accommodate the services. The school's closing will be at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and will be to ensure the safety of the children.

In the event of the school closing due to unforeseen circumstances such as a natural disaster (i.e. hurricane) or a national emergency (i.e. COVID-19) SFUMP will follow local, state, and national guidelines. Tuition for that month will not be prorated or refunded. This will ensure your child's spot will be held until school is able to re-open.

TUITION AND FEES

<u>Class:</u>	<u>Days:</u>	<u>Tuition:</u>	<u>Registration:</u>
2-Year Old	Tue./Thu.	\$135/month	\$135/year
	Mon./Weds./Fri.	\$155/month	\$155/year
3-Year Old	Mon./Weds./Fri.	\$155/month	\$155/year
	Mon. - Fri.	\$175/month	\$175/year
4-Year Old	Mon. - Fri	\$175/month	\$175/year

Second child enrolled receives a 10% discount on tuition.

TUITION PAYMENT

1. All fees will be due on your child's first school day of each month. If you cannot come to preschool that day, you may mail your check to:
SFUM Preschool
6530 Spanish Fort Blvd., Suite D
Spanish Fort, AL 36527
2. A grace period extends to the tenth (10th) of the month. **If payment is received after the 10th of the month, the current month's tuition will be due and pre-payment of the following month will be required to be paid at that time as well.** If there is a pattern of late payment for a period of three continuous months, enrollment will be forfeited. In the event of an unexpected financial hardship on the family, please see the director.
3. **A \$20.00 fee will be assessed for a check returned, marked "Insufficient Funds".**
4. The budget for the school is based on the number of children registering. If your child must be withdrawn from the preschool before the end of the school year for any reason, a written 30-day notice and tuition payment will be required. This notice will allow us to place a child from our waiting list.
5. The first full monthly payment will be due September 1. The total tuition will be divided into nine monthly payments. The last one will be due May 1.

EXTENDED DAY

Extended Day is an optional extension of your child's preschool day. Children in the 3-year-old and Pre-K classes may be enrolled in this program at the beginning of the year for Sept. - Dec. Parents will be able to register students for Jan.-May beginning in December. There will not be a drop-in program. This program requires preregistration.

To "enroll," please write a note to the director asking to be "enrolled". Please note this is necessary to assure adequate staffing for the program. The cost for the program will be paid at the beginning of each month. Prices below include both regular tuition and extended day rates.

3 Days/week = \$205/month

5 Days/week = \$225/month

1. Please send lunch separate from snack.
2. Send a lunch that your child can handle independently. The teachers are there to assist, but your child should be able to open most items.
3. No peanut butter, please keep in mind that peanuts are included in a variety of products. If you substitute with sunflower butter or a similar product, please indicate this on the packaging.
4. If sending lunchables, please send the cheese, meat, and cracker variety. We ask that you not send the lunchables that require assembly or lots of little pieces. i.e. pizza, nachos etc.
5. Please send juice boxes/bags or thermos containers that have a straw. No twist top bottles.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Classroom activities will vary based on the age of the children. Circle time, center time, story time, snack time, outside/activity time, art, music, Bible story and motor skills are all included on a regular basis. The 3's and 4's usually have some morning table time activities.

Please try to have your child here on time. The early morning time helps the children wake up, warm up, socialize, and prepare to fully participate in the busy day.

LEARNING CENTERS

Children of all ages love to play. Whether your child is five months or five years old, play is the best tool for fostering learning. As your child plays he is building a foundation for academic skills, learning to get along with others, and developing pride in his accomplishments. At the preschool, the teachers set up several learning centers each day to provide a variety of experiences.

Art is a time to create freely. Because a preschooler isn't always able to translate what he feels into words, art takes on great importance. A child can express his thoughts and feelings and expand his creative powers through color, shape, texture, and design. Creative play can be messy work, so please have your child dress in play clothes.

Blocks provide opportunities for creative problem solving. Whether building the tallest tower in the world or miniature networks of cities, a child is learning about weight, balance, space, dimension. The addition of cars, planes, or animals creates play scenarios, and invites discussion.

Christian Education will include chapel service, during this time the children will sing songs, learn a short lesson and pray together and Godly Play, which is a curriculum of spiritual practice exploring the mystery of God's presence in our lives. The Godly Play approach helps children to explore their faith through story, to gain religious language and to enhance their spiritual experience through wonder and play.

Housekeeping (Dramatic Play) is one of the best-loved centers. Children have the chance to dress up, "cook" in a kitchen, work with "tools", and play-act roles. Children freely try on new roles of family life (and wild life), and let their imaginations run free.

Library (Language Arts) is a place to go to relax, think, get lost in a book, play with a puppet, or share a story with a friend. Through books children find new information, deal with important feelings and changes in their lives, and let their imaginations run free.

Manipulatives such as puzzles, lacing cards and legos help strengthen the small muscles and develop coordination. They also provide a great deal of experience with problem solving and concentration. Manipulatives, such as small blocks and sets of bears and dinosaurs, are also the best math tool available for early childhood education. Children learn similarities and differences as they count, sort, and classify.

Science at a preschool level can be simply a table or box with objects for a child to see, touch, smell, ask questions about, and compare. Science can also be experiments that begin - and sometimes end - with questions, and that opens worlds of wonder.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS

Disruptive behaviors of a student shall be behaviors which generally disrupt the classroom, which are disobedient in nature or which are disrespectful to teachers or the director, and shall include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to obey instructions
- Talking when inappropriate
- Talking back to a teacher or the director
- Failing to remain seated, etc.

With respect to disruptive behavior, when such behavior becomes a significant enough concern to a teacher or to the director, then within the judgment of the director and the teacher, a parent/teacher/director conference may be called at which the parent or parents are required to attend. Should the behavior of the child not improve sufficiently within the judgment of the director, then the child may be suspended from the preschool for one week. Should the behavior continue after the one-week suspension, then the director has the authority to extend the suspension.

AGGRESSIVE AND/OR UNSAFE BEHAVIOR

Aggressive and/or unsafe behavior shall be defined as behavior in which inappropriate aggression is exhibited, or the child engages in unsafe, dangerous or violent behavior.

This behavior shall include, but is not limited to:

- Kicking a student, teacher or property in the room
- Hitting a student, teacher or property with a hand or other item
- Throwing items in such a way that it places a person or property at risk
- Biting.

DISCIPLINE CONTROL POLICY

If an incident of aggressive and/or unsafe behavior occurs, this incident will be reported to the director and parents within three hours of the incident and shall be noted on the appropriate form and filed in the student's records.

- The first incident of aggressive and/or unsafe behavior shall involve a notification to the parents of the child engaging in such behavior within three hours.
- A second incident of such behavior by a child will cause the parents of the child to be called immediately and will require that the child be picked up from the school immediately.
- The third incident of such behavior by a child within a thirty (30) day period will result in a parent / teacher / director conference and can result in the student being suspended from the preschool for one week.

Additional incidents will result in a second parent/teacher/director conference and the child may be subject to an additional week suspension from preschool. Should incidents continue after such suspensions are complete, an additional week of suspension will occur, and the preschool board being notified, with the board determining what further action, if any, should be taken.

In the case of a facial bite, severe bite or broken skin caused by one child's behavior as regarding another, a parent of both children will be called immediately, and a decision will be made by the director and the teacher about what action should be taken immediately.

This policy is written for the safety and well being of the child engaging in such behavior, other children in the classroom, and the teacher. These are general guidelines intended to aid the teachers, director and preschool board in determining the most appropriate action for discipline situations.

DISMISSAL FROM PRESCHOOL

Notwithstanding any portion of this Discipline Control Policy, the Senior Pastor or the Associate Pastor of Spanish Fort United Methodist Church has the discretion to determine whether the behavior of a child or the action of a parent of a child enrolled in the preschool warrants immediate dismissal from the preschool. This pertains to all matters relating to the operation of the preschool, including the Discipline Control Policy.

CONFLICTS INVOLVING PARENTS

If any parent has an issue with a teacher or director regarding treatment of their child or operation of the preschool, then that parent must request a parent/teacher/director conference. This must be done by calling the preschool office and making an appointment with the teacher and director. Under no circumstances should a conflict involving behavior of a child or the operation of the preschool be discussed or dealt with during drop off or pick up times relating to the children, or during the operation hours of the preschool, unless a parent/teacher/director conference has been scheduled. The teachers and the director need the time of the drop off and/or pickup times and hours of operation to educate and interact with the children, and to either safely bring the children into the building and classrooms or to dismiss them to their parent or caregiver.

This is not intended to prevent general discussions between parents or teachers as to how the child's day has gone, or to confirm information necessary to the operation of the school including dates, times, or necessary school supplies, but is to provide for the orderly operation of the school and to prevent attempts to resolve conflicts in front of the children.

WEAPONS AND ALCOHOL/DRUG

The Senior Pastor of Spanish Fort United Methodist Church and the director of the preschool are authorized to have removed from church property any person bringing weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs onto the church property. Any person so removed may be readmitted to the property when the Senior Pastor and/or the director of the preschool determine that such person no longer presents a danger to the safety or security of the children and/or staff. Law enforcement officials may be notified if any person is found in the possession of or in the act of using weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs on church property. Additionally, should it be in the judgment of the Senior Pastor and/or the director of the preschool that any person is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, then the Senior Pastor and/or the director of the preschool have the additional discretion to have that person removed from church property.

With respect to law enforcement officers, should an officer be on duty, he should follow the guidelines of his agency or employer as it relates to firearms. If the formal guidelines of such agency or employer require such law enforcement officer to be armed, then such officer may remain on church property. Should the formal guidelines or rules of the agency or employer of such officer not require officers to remain armed, then no such weapons should be brought onto the church property or in the preschool. Whether uniformed, plain clothed or undercover, law enforcement officers should take extra precautions to not to display firearms in front of children.

STUDENT/EMPLOYEE HARASSMENT POLICY

All students and staff are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect, which is free from all forms of intimidation, bullying, exploitation and harassment, including sexual harassment. Anyone who violates this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination or expulsion. Any violations are required to be reported to the preschool director. A complete policy is available in the preschool office.

SECURITY

In our ongoing effort to keep your children safe as possible, SFUMP has a security system in place. The front doors are open starting at 8:55 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. for school drop off. They will also be open 15 minutes prior to school dismissal. All other times the doors will remain locked. If you arrive after the doors have been locked, you will need to ring the doorbell to gain admission into the school. If it is a person who is not recognized as a child's parent, they must be prepared to show picture identification to enter the school or pick up a child.

In the event that someone from your Emergency Contact List is picking up your child, he/she will need to be prepared to show picture identification. Please call or email the preschool office in advance to inform us of the change in pick-up. Your child will not be released to any person not on your Emergency Contact List.

PRESCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND EVENTS

Please remember, except for the start and end of school, SFUMP will follow the Baldwin County School Calendar. SFUMP will cancel classes if Baldwin County cancels classes.

HOLIDAYS - NO SCHOOL

Labor Day - Monday, September 7

Fall Break - Friday, Oct. 9, Monday, Oct. 12, and Tuesday, Oct. 13

Veteran's Day - Wednesday, November 11

Thanksgiving Break - November 23 - November 27

Christmas Break - December 18 - January 4

MLK Jr. Day - Monday, January 18

Mardi Gras Holiday - February 15 - 17

Spring Break - April 2- 9

First Day of Summer - May 17

SPECIAL EVENTS

Most preschool events will happen on two dates to include all classes. We will send out links to Signup Genius for each event informing you of the date of your child's class party/special snack and what you can sign up for your child to bring. Due to CDC recommendations for COVID-19, parents will not be able to attend the parties for the 20 - 21 school year.

Harvest Special Snack

Thanksgiving Celebration

Christmas Party

Valentine's Day Special Snack

Easter Party

Parent Photo Consent Form

Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool would love to include your child's picture in newspaper articles, Facebook posts and other children's magazine publications. If you wish to grant permission or if you do not wish your child to be included fill out the appropriate box below and return.

2020-2021

I _____ give permission to Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool to include my child _____ in all publications such as newspaper articles, magazines and Facebook posts. If at any time I wish for my child to no longer be included I will let the Director know in writing.

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

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Parent Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Receipt of Orientation Handbook for Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool

You have received a copy of the Orientation Handbook in your folders. Please take time to review the handbook. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at the preschool office. This signature page receipt regarding the Orientation Handbook must be signed and returned within seven (7) days of the beginning of the preschool year, unless enrolling after the beginning of the year. In that event, this signature page should be signed and returned within seven (7) days of enrollment. The return of this signed receipt page of the Orientation Handbook shall be a representation that such handbook has been read and understood by the signor, and that the signor agrees to abide by the rules of the Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool. This signature page must be signed by all persons who regularly engage in contact with the Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool, including parents, stepparents, guardians, grandparents, etc., to the reasonable satisfaction of the director of the preschool.

Child's Name _____

I have reviewed the Orientation Handbook for Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool, and represent that I understand its policies and agree to abide by the rules of Spanish Fort United Methodist Preschool.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Print: _____