



The Methodist Preschool of Chagrin Falls

20 S. Franklin Street
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022
methodistpreschooldirector@gmail.com
440-247-0940
<https://themethodistpreschool.com>

PARENT HANDBOOK OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Parents are required to read this Policies and Procedures document and become familiar with its contents. You are required by our state licensing agency to sign off on your child's Enrollment Form that you have been provided, read and agree with the policies outlined in this document.

The Methodist Preschool began as a vision of Helen Terpenning, Director of Christian Education, in 1963. Mrs. Terpenning's vision was for the United Methodist Church of Chagrin Falls to be used throughout the week in ministry to the community. Out of that vision was born a non-denominational preschool program that continues more than 60 years later to serve 3, 4 and 5 year-old children throughout the Chagrin Valley and beyond. The Methodist Preschool is an Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licensed child care center and a non profit organization that provides a loving, enriching early childhood experience resulting in kindergarten preparedness. Our license is posted in the main hallway of the preschool, where you may also view our licensing compliance inspection report.

The Methodist Preschool is overseen by the Early Learning Board (ELB) of the United Methodist Church of Chagrin Falls. The ELB is comprised of members of the church and the Preschool and PMO Directors, who are committed to the growth and development of our preschoolers as well as the mission of the preschool itself.

Mission Statement:

The Methodist Preschool offers excellence in kindergarten preparatory early childhood education by meeting each child's physical, social, emotional and educational needs in a safe, nurturing environment.

Program Philosophy:

We respect the power of play and exploration during this important developmental stage. Free play periods are infused with a variety of centers, structured activities and choices which allow growth in skills and knowledge acquisition through exploration and practice. We believe that children learn best when excited by range of options that encourage creative and unlimited imaginative play.

Additional program goals:

- * learn to separate smoothly from parent/caretaker
- * cooperate, share and be empathetic toward those around them
- * grow in independence and self-confidence

- * follow directions, demonstrate self control and assume responsibilities
- * abide by basic safety rules and good health practices
- * master transitioning through the daily schedule
- * develop problem solving and conflict resolution strategies
- * grow in gross and fine motor skills
- * develop a positive attitude toward school and learning
- * achieve/surpass kindergarten readiness as defined by the State of Ohio Standards by the end of each child's time with us

Days and hours of operation:

Main programs:

3's - Mon/Tue	9:00am-12:00pm
3's - Wed/Thur	9:00am-12:00pm
4's - MTW	9:00am-12:00pm
5's - MTWR	9:00am-12:55pm

A la Cartes:

Lunch Bunch MTWR	12:00-1:00pm
Ark - Mon/Wed	1:00-1:30pm
STEAM - Wed/Thurs	1:00-2:00pm
Enrichment Thurs (4's)	9:00am-12:00pm
Fun Friday	9:00am-12:00pm

Scheduled Closings/Annual Calendar:

A school year calendar will be provided at Parent Orientation and is also available on the preschool website. The calendar outlines scheduled closings and special events from August thru May.

Unscheduled/Weather Closure/Delay:

Unplanned closures or delays due to severe weather, power/water outage, contagious disease or any other reason will be communicated via email/text to parents, listed on Fox 8 News School Closings, iAlert (3News, WVIZ, PBS Ideastream, WCRF 103.3 FM, WCLV 104.9 FM and wkyc.com). Preschool follows Chagrin Falls Exempted Schools for weather related closings.

Daily Schedule:

Each classroom has their own specific daily schedule posted and is similar to:

9:00-9:35	Arrival/Free Play
9:35-9:50	Bathroom Break
9:50-10:05	Circle Time
10:05-10:30	Art/Free Play
10:30-10:50	Bike Room
10:50-11:05	Bathroom Break
11:05-11:25	Snack
11:25-11:35	Clean Up
11:35-11:50	Circle Time/Music
11:50-12:00	Dismissal

Staff to student ratios and class sizes:

3's - 1 staff:12 children - 24 children maximum per class

4's - 1 staff:14 children - 28 children maximum per class

5's - 1 staff:14 children - 28 children maximum per class

Staff:child ratio is determined by the youngest child in the group.

Eligibility:

3's Program - 3 years old by September 30 of that school year

4's Program - 4 years old by September 30 of that school year

5's Program - 5's years old by September 30 of that school year

Enrollment application process:

Following a conversation and information intake with the Director, a tour may be scheduled. An Enrollment Form (JFS 01234) and deposit secure the child's enrollment. The Enrollment Form is to be reviewed, updated and initialed by a parent and the Director annually. A completed Medical Statement (JFS 01305) is due by the first day of September and expires one year from the exam date listed in that document.

Immunizations:

Immunized children: Section A and B of the medical statement must be complete and a copy of most recent immunization list attached.

Un-immunized children: Section A and C of the medical statement must be completed, including signature and date. Un-immunized children will wash hands frequently and be isolated from other children during any suspected contagious outbreaks

Per licensing, children without a valid Medical Statement are required to discontinue attending until a valid Medical Statement is on file.

Special Education & other services:

If your child has any diagnosis, an IEP or participates in any type of therapy (speech, OT...) please provide us with a copy of the related document and any information that will help us be prepared to work with your child.

Potty Training:

All children attending Methodist Preschool must be potty trained per state licensing requirements. Our licensing prohibits changing of diapers, pull ups, or soiled clothing by staff. In the event of a potty accident, a parent or caregiver will be called to come and change the child, at which time they may return to their classroom activity. If your child is in the process of potty training as the start of the school year approaches, please contact the Director to discuss.

Deposit and Tuition:

A deposit is due at the time of enrollment. Tuition is due according to the annual payment schedule set by the Director but may be paid in full at any time. The annual tuition schedule of payments due will be provided at Parent Orientation in the fall and is also located on the preschool website. There is a 7% sibling discount for the younger child's main program when more than one child per family is enrolled. Payments may be made via the online ProCare Tuition portal, cash or check (made out to: "UMC of CF"). Cash and checks should be submitted to the Director. Tuition paid later than the 10 day grace period may incur a late fee of \$25.

Parent Participation program:

Methodist Preschool is a parent participation program in the 3's and 4's classrooms, called Helping Parents. These dates coordinate with our child's Helping Child dates. In each class, a parent or other special adult attends with the child to participate and assist throughout the day's activities. The Helping Child/Parent of the day provides the class snack, chosen from the current year's Approved Snack list. The Helping Child Schedule is included in the Parent Folder provided at Parent Orientation.

Parents are also invited to participate in special programs, performances and as chaperones for field trips as needed.

Parent Orientation:

Typically held in early September. You will receive an email from the Director in August providing details about Parent Orientation as well as the start of the school year. Parent Orientation is for adults only.

Supplies:

Each child will receive a book bag with their name on it the first week of preschool for transporting papers, personal belongings and lunch, as needed. That book bag should be brought to preschool each day. The book bag will have a large pin attached that we use for pinning newsletter, updates, notes, permission slips... If you have tuition payments or a note for your child's teacher, please pin it to the outside of their book bag and it will be collected/delivered after arrival.

Arrival/Dismissal:**Arrival procedure:**

- A.** Walk up - parent/caregiver may park in the church parking spots along curb, in the large lot across from police department or in any legal spots in the vicinity and walk the child into the building to the arrival stairs, remaining with the child until a staff member has acknowledged the child. Children should never be dropped off outside of the building or left in the stairwell or a bathroom without a staff person present. Once staff takes over responsibility for the child, they will be kept in sight from staff person to staff person as they move thru the building and until they have arrived in their classroom and their teacher takes over responsibility.
- B.** Curb Drop off - parent/caregiver may pull up the curb at the preschool alley and stop at one of three orange cones. If all three cones have a car waiting, new arrivals should circle the block until a cone becomes available. The child's seat buckles should be undone and then a staff member will assist them in exiting out the passenger side of the vehicle. The driver should remain inside the car and the child should *never* exit from the street side. Staff member will escort the child into the building and keep them in sight until the next staff members aware of their arrival.

Dismissal procedure:

Walk up - parent/caregiver may walk up to the outside door of preschool and wait in the mouth of the alley. Each class will proceed down the stairs and a staff member will dismiss child by child to the person picking them up. Parents/caregivers are asked to arrive on time for pickup. Any children not picked up by ten minutes past dismissal time will return upstairs to their classroom until their adult arrives.

Late pick ups: if a child is repeatedly picked up late (at least three instances of more than 5 minutes past dismissal time), there will be a \$10 late fee added to the tuition account for each late pickup.

Releasing to non-parent: Parents will complete a Permission to Release Form at the start of the year to keep on file with their Lead Teacher. If someone is to pick up who is not on that form, the parents must submit permission in writing. Staff will check the license/ID of anyone picking up that they do not know.

Releasing according to custody agreement: The child will be released only to the parent having custody unless the custodial parent indicates otherwise. If a custody agreement, restraining order or protection order exists, a copy must be submitted to be kept in the student's file.

Absence:

Planned absences: Parents will notify the Lead Teacher or Director in writing and in advance of any planned absences (for appointments, travel...)

Unplanned absences: Parent will call the main preschool phone number (440-247-0950) and notify staff of the absence and reason for (illness, last minute conflict...)

Illness/Communicable Disease:

Our staff observes students throughout the day for any signs/symptoms of illness. Should a child exhibit signs/symptoms of illness while in our care, we remove the child from their group while we evaluate/call parent for pickup, if needed. Parents must keep contact information current by updating the enrollment form when phone numbers or email addresses change.

The JFS 08087 "Ohio Communicable Disease Chart" (rev. 10/2025) is posted in the main preschool hallway and available to parents and staff at all times.

There is a minimum of one staff member on site during all open hours and on field trips who holds current certification in management of contagious disease

The following symptoms shall result in a child being sent home:

- * Temperature of 99.5 degrees or higher
- * Diarrhea
- * Severe or persistent coughing
- * Difficult or rapid breathing.
- * Yellowish skin or eyes.
- * Redness of the eye or eyelid, discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- * Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- * Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
- * Stiff neck with an elevated temperature.
- * Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.
- * Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- * Vomiting

Methodist Preschool promptly notifies parents of every child that has been in contact with a child who is diagnosed with a contagious disease including the name of the illness, symptoms and date of last contact.

Parents are to notify the director right away via email or phone call when their child is diagnosed with a contagious disease. These include, but are not limited to: Chicken Pox, Covid 19, Croup, Fifth Disease (Slap Face), Flu, Hands Foot & Mouth, Impetigo, Lice, Measles, Meningitis, Molluscum, Mono, Pin Worms, Pink Eye, RSV, Ringworm, Scabies, Strep Throat, Thrush, Whooping Cough.

Return to Preschool:

Following minor illness (such as cough, cold) students may return to preschool once symptoms have resolved and the child feels well enough to return to normal preschool activity. Fevers must be gone for a minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Following contagious/serious illness (such as RSV, strep) students may return to preschool as advised by the child's doctor.

Incident/Accident Reporting: Parents will be notified if their child has an accident/incident at preschool which required our staff to administer first aid. If the circumstances are emergent, 911 will be called and parents contacted immediately.

If the child requires medical attention at a hospital, the Director or Lead Teacher will accompany the child and remain with him/her until a parent arrives.

A JFS 1299 Incident Report will be completed immediately when a child requires first aid at preschool or emergency transport to a hospital. A parent will sign the Incident Report, a copy will be offered to parents and the original form will be filed in the student file. Serious incident, injury or illness includes and situation that requires emergency medical treatment, professional consultation or transportation for emergency treatment will be reported as a Serious Incident to our state licensing agency.

Classroom Management/Guidance:

Every child at Methodist Preschool is a valued and integral part of the class. It is our priority to preserve each child's dignity and self-esteem while providing a safe atmosphere where each child feels secure. We do not use any type of verbal or physical tactics that hurt, frighten or humiliate a child.

Should a child exhibit inappropriate behavior, staff involved will:

- * Attempt to involve the child in problem-solving and offer choices.
- * Encourage the child to be in touch with his/her own feelings and help them find an appropriate way to manage those feelings.
- * Separate the child from the class if necessary/beneficial.
- * Involve a parent if necessary.

Safety and Supervision of children:

- * A teacher in charge of a child or group of children is responsible for their safety. No child is left alone or unsupervised for any amount of time. Children shall be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- * A staff person trained in First Aid/CPR/AED, management of Communicable Disease and Child Abuse & Neglect is present and available during all hours of scheduled programming.
- * A working telephone is available at all times.
- * Each child's enrollment forms, along with emergency transportation authorization are current and on file at all times - student files are kept in the storage closet in the main hallway.

- * Plans for medical, dental, general emergencies, fire and weather alerts are posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway.
- * In the event that we must evacuate our building, our “safe zone” is at the cannon in front of the Police Dept. Once all school is assembled there and attendance taken, our students and staff would be moved inside the fire/police department building until cleared to return to our building or parents arrive to pick up their child.
- * If you arrive after 9:20am, walk your child to the top of the arrival stairs, ring the doorbell and wait for staff to assume supervision of your child before leaving the building as the main door is closed and locked at 9:20.
- * Teachers take attendance upon each arrival and departure.
- * Children are escorted by their teachers to dismissal and remain with them until each parent arrives.
- * Spray aerosols will not be used when children are on site.
- * As a safety and health policy we are required under State of Ohio Licensing Laws to only allow prospective students (accompanied by an adult) as child visitors in the classroom.
- * We are committed to keeping your child safe and secure while at preschool. Our security doors are closed/locked after arrival at 9:20am and they remain closed and locked until dismissal.
- * Parents and visitors will ring the bell to have identity verified before being admitted to visit.

Suspension/Expulsion:

Children demonstrating excessive disruptive or harmful behavior which prevents themselves or others from benefitting from our program and/or those requiring inordinate attention/supervision from our staff, may be required to discontinue attending for a period of time or be dismissed from our program. Examples of such behavior include but not limited to biting, kicking, other aggression toward staff or other students, attempts to flee, refusal to follow directions and damaging property. Prior to dismissal the following review procedure may be followed:

- * Contact between parent and teacher/director including notification of the circumstances; one or more meetings to develop an appropriate plan for resolution of the problem; and parent observation in the classroom.
- * at a meeting of staff and parents, discuss the possible use of outside resources. We request that any outside resources working with a preschool family observe the child in our setting.
- * Following efforts to resolve the problem, if the issues persist, the child will be dismissed upon the recommendation of the teacher and director.
- * Safety is above all else. If the director determines that we are unable to keep a child, or those around him/her, safe because of behaviors or circumstances that are beyond our ability to control, then the procedure listed above will be waived and dismissal may be immediate.

Emergency Drills & Preparedness:

Fire, tornado and shelter-in-place drills are practiced and documented in accordance with the Department of Commerce document COM 5130 and the Chagrin Falls Fire Marshal and Police Department. Our staff is ALICE trained by the Chagrin Falls Police Department. We have a Disaster/Emergency Plan in place, updated and reviewed annually by the Chagrin Falls Police Department.

Child Abuse Reporting & Prevention:

Our staff maintains certification in Child Abuse Recognition & Prevention. The staff will, as required by Ohio law, report any suspected child abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline at 855-OH KIDS (855-642-4453)

Snack and Packed Lunches:

Our program is completely nut free. Daily snack in our 3's and 4's classrooms are provided by the Helping Family of the day and chosen from the Approved Snack List. You will receive an Approved Snack List at Parent orientation. No peanuts, ground nuts, tree nuts (almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cashews, pecans, Brazil nuts) peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, nut oils, or products that contain these items (such as granola bars, breakfast bars, cereals...) Please read labels carefully and do not choose foods with ingredients listed above, or with inadequate labeling. Packaging may be bulk or individual sized, but all should be sealed and in the original package with full ingredient list. Please cut into bite-sized pieces any food that could be difficult to chew/cause choking - carrots, all cherry tomatoes and grapes and larger blackberries.

The Approved Snack List may be altered by classroom in the event of specific and potentially life threatening allergies. Parents may provide back-up snacks to be kept in the classroom in the event they may not be able to consume the daily snack.

If your child is unable to consume anything on the Approved Snack List due to a diagnosed food allergy or chosen food preference or avoidance, please contact the Director.

Packed lunches are to contain no foods with tree nuts.

Teachers periodically do units involving food. Teachers will provide parents with a list of food units in the curriculum, with ingredients available upon request.

Allergies/Medical Care:

If you answer "yes" for your child to any of the following questions, a Medical Care Plan may be required by licensing:

- * Does your child have any food, medication or environmental allergies? If yes, does your child allergy require staff monitor your child for symptoms to take action if a reaction occurs, or give emergency medication to your child?
- * Does your child have a developmental delay or special medical health condition? If yes, does the special health or medical condition require staff to perform a procedure, or perform child specific care such as monitor your child for symptoms or administer medication while at preschool?
- * Is your child taking regular medication or medical food? If yes, does this medication or medical food need to be administered during preschool hours?
- * Does your child have any dietary restrictions, including those for medical, religious or cultural reasons?

If you answer "yes" for your child to any of the above, please consult the Director.

All medications, creams and health care products must be addressed in a medical care plan and stored in the classroom with that plan. Students may never carry their own medication, creams or health care products.

Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Methodist Preschool complies with ADA/State of Ohio Licensing rules to develop and follow Medical Care Plans to administer medications, medical foods or care procedures to children with disabilities or medical diagnosis/food allergies.

Conferences:

A parent/teacher conference is scheduled for parents of 4's and 5's students in February to discuss progress and kindergarten readiness. In lieu of a sit down conference, parents of 3's students will receive a "skills package" from their child's teacher at conference time.

Other Parent Communication:

Our staff strives to maintain excellent communication with parents throughout the year. Daily contact is made at drop-off and pickup times. Class newsletters are sent at a minimum of one per month but may be sent more often. Additional updates and notifications will be sent as needed. In families with divorced/separated parents, each parent will have the opportunity to participate in emails.

Lead teachers are available to parents ongoing to discuss questions, concerns or to request an update on their child's progress at preschool. While pickup and drop-off are a great time for basic communication and sharing of necessary information, we ask that parents not engage teachers in more lengthy, detailed or concerned conversations while teachers are still supervising students/other parents are within earshot as there is a lack of necessary privacy during this time. More lengthy, detailed or conversations about concerns will be handled after hours in a private setting. We find that strong and effective communication practices are essential to a successful preschool experience for all!

Confidentiality:

Preschool staff will uphold each child and family's privacy. Parents are asked to do the same. Please do not repeat or post on social media anything that you may have seen, heard, etc. at preschool out of respect for the privacy of all enrolled families. Any questions or concerns should be taken to the Director.

Program Evaluation:

An annual Program Evaluation is distributed each spring in order for each family to have the opportunity to provide suggestions and feedback on all areas of the program. The Director is also available ongoing to discuss problems, concerns or suggestions as they arise.

School Pictures:

Professional individual pictures will be taken each October. Details about date/ordering will be sent to all parents in advance of pictures being taken. Class pictures are also taken in the fall and given to students by their teachers for Valentine's Day.

Clothing:

Please dress children in clothing that is comfortable for all parts of the preschool day. Preschool is messy (paint, play-doh, food...) so please send them in clothing appropriate for those activities. Clothing should also be easy for children to manage in the potty - please avoid jumpers, overalls, long dresses/skirts or pants that are difficult for children to button/zip. Footwear should be bike room appropriate (no crocs, slides, flip flops, dress up shoes...) Our preschool spaces can be warm at various times of year, so please dress your child in layers that can be added/removed to keep them comfortable.

3's students will be asked to provide a change of clothes (top, bottom, underwear, socks) in a large ziplock bag clearly marked with their name in the event a change of clothes is necessary during the school day.

Party Invitations:

We are happy to help distribute invitations if the entire class is included. If you plan to invite less than the whole class, please take care of distributing invitations outside of preschool so as not to hurt feelings of children who were not invited.

Transportation:

Preschool does not provide transportation in any situation. Walking field trips will begin and end at Preschool. If a parent refuses consent to transport in a medical emergency, the Early Learning Board will be consulted and enrollment may be declined.

Preschool does not participate in swimming/water activities.

Preschool does not provide programming for infants or toddlers, all students enrolled are 3, 4 or 5 years old by September 30 of the current school year. Due to the length of our school day, we do not do sleeping/napping/resting.

Preschool does not provide evening or overnight programming.

Preschool does not conduct formal screenings or assessments.

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Center Parent Information
Required by Ohio Administrative Code

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the ODJFS. Inspections are also online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search for a specific program and sign up to be notified when the program's latest inspection is posted online.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODJFS. HHS and ODJFS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or Call:

HHS

Region V, Office of Civil Rights

233 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 240

Chicago, IL 60601

(312) 886-2359 (voice)

(312) 353-5693 (TDD)

(312) 886-1807 (fax)

Write or Call:

ODJFS

Bureau of Civil Rights

30 E Broad St, 37th Floor

Columbus, OH 43215-3414

(614) 644-2703 (voice)

1-866-277-6353 (toll free)

(614) 752-6381 (fax)

1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.

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