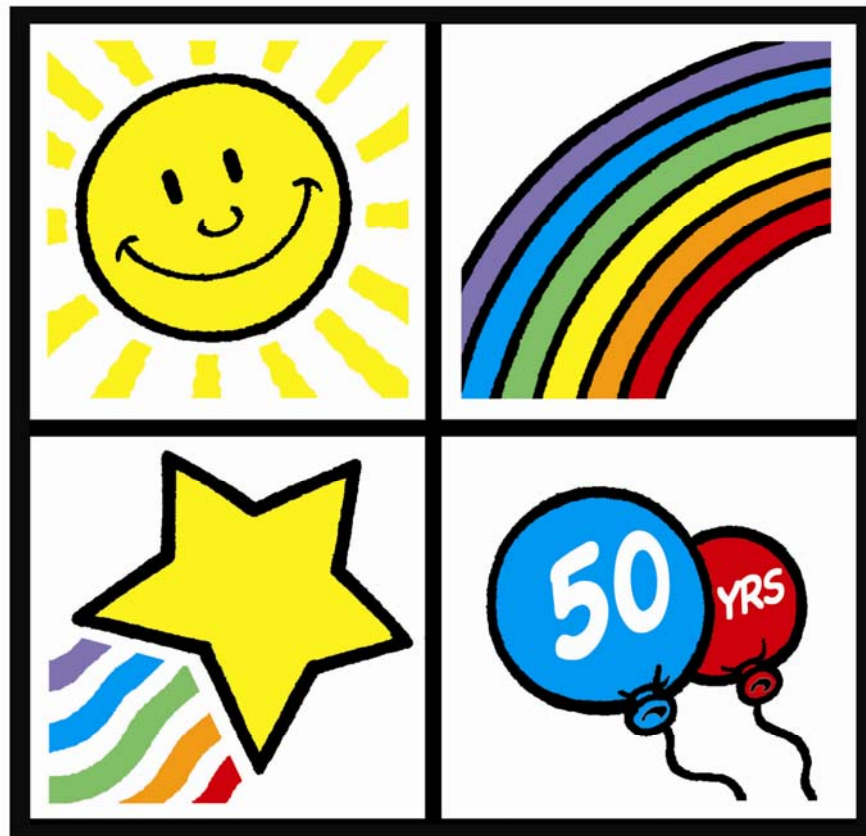


# UUM Preschool Parent Handbook



**UUM PRESCHOOL**

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## **A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR**

**UUM Preschool has a longstanding reputation for offering a quality early childhood program. As parents you should feel secure that your child's experience at UUM will be positive, safe and challenging.**

**The staff and I strive to develop a strong relationship between school and home. Through this relationship we are best able to meet the needs of your child.**

**The information in this handbook is a beginning. Please take time to read through it in order to acquaint yourself with policies, procedures and ways you can be involved in your child's education.**

**Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.**

**Sincerely,**

**Pam Schmidt  
Preschool Director**

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**UUM Preschool is a secular, non-profit, developmental preschool serving University City and surrounding areas since 1960. Enrollment is open to all people in the community regardless of race, nationality or creed.**

**Our emphasis is on social and emotional growth and the development of good language skills. Competence in these areas lay the foundation for academic success. The program is designed to give each child an opportunity to be successful through challenging and varied activities that help develop a good sense of self.**

## **LICENSE EXEMPT GUIDELINES**

**UUM is considered a church sponsored program and therefore exempt from state licensing regulations. To insure safety and quality in preschool programs, The Department of Health has mandated specific guidelines for exempt programs. There are three annual inspections required by the Departments of Health and Safety, Sanitation, and Fire Safety. The resulting certificates of compliance are on file in the preschool office.**

## **STAFF**

**The teachers meet or exceed the qualification guidelines set by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In general, teachers hold a Bachelor of Arts degree and/or have extensive early childhood teaching experience.**

**Professional development is an ongoing process at UUM. The school provides each teacher with professional membership in AEYC (The Association for the Education of Young Children) and pays fees for workshops and conferences during the year. In addition, there are two on site teacher in-service days and monthly staff meetings. All staff members are certified in CPR.**

## **CURRICULUM**

The preschool curriculum is developmentally appropriate for each age group with an emphasis on the development of good social and language skills which are critical to academic success in later years. This includes critical thinking skills and the ability of each child to not only to be an advocate for him or herself but to be successful in social settings. The curriculum in each classroom is organized around a theme that teachers select or that children have “suggested” through their interests. Teacher-student ratio allows for one on one time as well as small and large group activities. Components of the program are creative process art experiences, science, music, movement, fine and gross motor opportunities, number and reading readiness activities, and good children’s literature. Preschool children have their most important learning experience during play interacting with peers. It is through all of these experiences that children acquire the skills needed to move on to kindergarten and beyond.

### **REGULAR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS**

The UUM Preschool curriculum is designed to meet the specific and individual needs of different age groups.

**Classes meet from 9:00-11:30 AM**

#### **2 AND 3 YEAR OLD PROGRAM**

**BALLOON ROOM (begins in September)**

**Child must be 2 by April 1**

**Choice of 2 day (T-TH) or 3 day (M-W-F) programs**

**Toilet training is NOT required**

**Student/Teacher ratio is 7:1**

## **TINY 2S (begins in January)**

**Child must be 2 by Oct. of the previous year  
Meets on Tuesday and Thursday  
Toilet training is NOT required  
Student/Teacher ratio is 7:1**

## **3 AND 4 YEAR OLD PROGRAM**

**RAINBOW ROOM 3DAYS M-W-F  
SUNSHINE ROOM 5 DAYS M-F**

**Child must be 3 years old by July 1  
Child MUST be toilet trained  
Student/Teacher ratio is 8:1**

## **4 AND 5 YEAR OLD PROGRAM**

**SUPER STAR ROOM**

**Child must be 4 by August 1  
5 Day program  
Student/Teacher ratio 10:1**

## **LUNCH BUNCH 11:30-1:30**

**This optional program begins immediately after dismissal from the morning class and is available Monday through Friday. Lunch Bunch is a less structured multi-age program that brings children from different classes together. The Balloon Room children do not begin lunch bunch until November 1 and only if they are completely independently toileting. This means that he or she can go to the bathroom, deal with clothes and wipe themselves without a teacher's help. This program is not available to children in the Tiny 2s.**

**The fees for this program are based on the number of days per week your child stays for lunch. There will be drop in spots on the days that are not full with regulars.**

Parents send a lunch and drink for their child. Over the last several years we have had quite a few children with serious nut allergies. Because of the risk to them, parents must send a lunch that does not contain any nut products.

Parents need to come in to pick up children from lunch bunch. If the weather is nice, they will be playing in the play yard. On other days, parents should go to the red door on the Trinity side of the building and ring the doorbell.

On time pick up is imperative. Teachers have other commitments and can not be expected to stay later. We realize that occasionally traffic or other unexpected events will make you arrive late. There is a 5 minute grace period and after that fines will be assessed as follows: \$10 until 1:45 and \$10 for every 5 minutes after that. This money will be given to the teacher who was made to stay late. People who are chronically late may be asked not to use the program.

## **ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP**

### **ARRIVAL TIME 8:50-9:00**

The classrooms will not be open before 8:50 as teachers need time to prepare for the day. If you arrive before this, please wait in the hall by the director's office.

Children **MUST** be walked to his or her classroom by an adult. Please make sure that your child's teacher knows that he or she has arrived. Please stay for a few minutes to see that your child is settled and to chat with the teachers. If your child is having difficulty separating from you, please discuss strategy with the classroom teachers. Our experience has taught us that staying longer makes the ultimate separation worse for the child. Typically, after a good bye hug and kiss, the teacher will comfort the child and usually he/she recovers within a few minutes and is ready to begin the preschool day.

**Please do not use the classroom as a gathering place to visit with other parents and it is always your responsibility to make sure that younger siblings are supervised in the classroom.**

**At 9:00 the day begins in the classroom, often with circle time or important information about activities that day. Children who arrive late often feel left out and uncertain for the remainder of the morning. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL ON TIME.**

### **PICK-UP AND CARPOOLS 11:30**

**Everyone needs a carpool number even if you will not be carpooling or will be walking until we get to know you and your car. If you are forming a carpool, all members will need the same number. Please pick one up on the first day of school and display it in your windshield when in the carpool line. Please make sure your caregivers, dads, grandparents, or others that will be picking up have a copy and understand the procedure.**

**Children will be brought by classes out to the curb at 11:25. Cars should turn south from Delmar on to Trinity and pull to the curb. PLEASE DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR CAR! The teachers or the director will bring your child to your car, help with getting in and will buckle the car seat if he or she cannot do it themselves. Please have your child's car seat on the passenger side of the car. If you need to have your child's seat on the driver's side or if you have several children in your carpool that need buckling up, please pull around on to Washington so as not to slow down the carpool line. If you choose to park and walk over to get your child, please park on Washington. DO NOT PARK ON TRINITY AND WALK ACROSS THE TRAFFIC. With the carpool line and other cars pulling around the line it is just not safe.**

**If you or your caregivers will be walking, please wait on the sidewalk on Washington or the sidewalk on Trinity north of the stairs closest to the church. Please do not wheel strollers through the waiting children. Someone will bring your child to you.**

If your child will be picked up by someone besides a parent or a member of your carpool, you must send a note to the teacher or director with that person's name and phone number. **WE WILL NOT RELEASE A CHILD WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION** and identification may be checked. Please make the times and procedures clear to anyone new picking up your child.

## **RAINY DAYS**

When it is raining we will gather the children in the hallway in front of the preschool office. Teachers will take children back and forth to cars with an umbrella. We try to access cars on Trinity at the steps closed to the church. If you don't want to wait on these days, you can park on Washington and come up to the front door to get your child.

## **LUNCH BUNCH PICK UP**

Arrival is **NO LATER THAN 1:30**. This is the end of the work day for the staff. Parents arriving after 1:30 will be reminded that late arrival is unacceptable. Parents will be held accountable for chronic tardiness with fines and ultimately having their child dropped from the lunch program.

## **HOLIDAYS AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

### **BIRTHDAYS**

We want your child to celebrate his/her birthday at school in an appropriate low key way. We welcome you to speak to your child's teacher about bringing a special treat for that day. Acceptable treats: rice krispie treats, cookies, fun fruits, marshmallows, teddy grahams, or donut holes (not whole donuts). Please do not send cupcakes, hats, napkins or party favors. The teachers will make the child a crown and provide a drink and lead the class in singing Happy Birthday. If your child has a summer birthday, you may choose to celebrate a half birthday or celebrate early sometime in May. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher.

## **HOLIDAYS**

**UUM Preschool has no religious affiliation and is part of the diverse University City Community. Many families from different religious and cultural backgrounds attend the program. Because of this, we do not celebrate any religious holidays. However, the teachers may touch briefly on Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanza in December with a focus on families, shared meals and giving. We embrace differences as well as celebrate the common threads that bind us. UUM welcomes and encourages families to share their holiday and cultural traditions in the classrooms.**

**Halloween and Valentine's Day are recognized at the discretion of each classroom. A typical celebration might include a special treat and a story including the holiday. Halloween costumes are NEVER a part of our celebration.**

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

**The preschool will be closed on the following days:**

- \*Thanksgiving Holiday(Wed.-Fri.)**
- \*Winter Break**
- \*Martin Luther King Day**
- \*Presidents Day**
- \*Good Friday (Church prepares building for Easter)**
- \*Spring Break**
- \*2 Teacher In-service Days**

**Please check your calendar for exact dates.**

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**In the case of inclement weather, heavy ice, snow, extreme cold or building emergencies, you will be called by 8:00 A.M. One of your teachers will personally notify you of any school closing or schedule change. UUM Preschool does not announce closings on the radio or television. All closings are at the discretion of the director and no refund will be given for those missed days.**

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**A SCHOOL PICNIC is held on a weeknight usually during the second week of school. This is a wonderful opportunity for new families to get acquainted with returning families. Everyone gathers at a park with a playground bringing their own drinks and food. This can be as elaborate as homemade fried chicken with all the trimmings or as simple as McDonalds', pizza or a just a snack and a drink. Please do not burden yourself with preparations-just come for the fun!**

**OPEN HOUSE/FAMILY FUN NIGHT is scheduled for each age group and is listed on the calendar. This is an open invitation to parents, siblings, grandparents and friends to visit your child's school. After 30 minutes visiting the classroom, everyone gathers for a group activity in one of the larger spaces.**

**THE FUN FAIR is scheduled in February and is held in the dining room. Parents volunteer for this event which includes games, food, a bake sale, face painting and other activities for families.**

**FUND RASING efforts vary from year to year and are run by parents to benefit our scholarship fund or to help defray the cost of a big ticket item that the school needs but can't afford. Participation is always completely voluntary.**

## HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

**VISITING DAY** is usually the day after Labor Day and gives your child an opportunity to visit his or her classroom and meet the teachers and other classmates. This visit usually lasts less than an hour and is a good opportunity to discuss any special problems or concerns you may have with your child's teachers. Children should be reminded that you will be staying with him or her on this day but on the first full day of school you will not be staying.

**PHONE CALLS** are made at the end of September and sometimes in January, if needed, by classroom teachers to discuss your child's adjustment to the program. If you feel that you need to speak to the teachers or the director at other times, our phone numbers are in the buzz book and you may call us at home.

**INFORMAL PARENT/STAFF COMMUNICATION** is ongoing throughout the year. Newsletters give you information on current themes, activities and upcoming events. Brief informal chats as you arrive in the morning keep us up-to-date with your family's life and activities. This supports a very important link between home and school.

**PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES** are scheduled twice a year in November and April. Conferences are held during the school morning with each teacher assigned a specific day over a 2 week period. Please look for the sign-up sheet outside your child's classroom a week or two before your conferences begin. During these meetings, the focus will be on your child's cognitive and social development as well as other pertinent issues. If you have younger children, please try to make other arrangements so that you can get the most out of your conference time. School is in session during conferences.

## TUITION AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

**REGISTRATION FEE** This is due at the time of enrollment to hold a spot for your child. This is non-refundable.

**TUITION IS A YEARLY FEE.** For convenience it is divided into 9 payments. A 2 month non-refundable tuition deposit is required to complete your child's enrollment. These payments become the April and May tuition payments for the upcoming school year and are not refundable. Your monthly payment for tuition and lunch bunch, September through March, is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month payments not received will become delinquent and parents will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00 payable along with that month's check. Any family not current with tuition payments before the beginning of the next academic year will not be allowed to return until full payment is made.

**LUNCH BUNCH** is a monthly fee, including September, December and the month spring break falls in. Those fees should be included with your tuition payment. Drop-in fees are due on the day your child stays.

There are no tuition or lunch bunch refunds for vacations, illness, weather/building problems, or scheduled days off. If your child misses lunch bunch because he or she is sick, you may make-up a lunch bunch on a space available basis

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES** If there is a change in your situation (job loss, illness, etc.) that makes paying your tuition a burden, **PLEASE** don't hesitate to speak to the director to work something out. Tuition Assistance funds are meant for temporary crises as well as ongoing need.

### **TUITION ASSISTANCE FUND**

There is a modest amount of money available for tuition assistance based on financial need. Applications are made through the director at the time of registration or any time there is a financial crisis such as a job loss.

## HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A **HEALTH RECORD** filled out and signed by your child's doctor must be submitted **BEFORE** the first day of school and kept on file while your child is a student at UUM Preschool.

**ABSENTEEISM** On the days that your child will not be at school, please call the office (863-7904) and let us know.

The following are reasons that your child **MUST** be kept home:

- Fever of 99 or above within the past 24 hours
- Rash of undetermined origin
- Heavy nasal discharge where mucus is colored dark yellow or green
- Upset stomach with vomiting and/or diarrhea within the last 24 hours

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Written notification of exposure to any communicable diseases (i.e. chicken pox) or conditions (i.e. lice) will be sent home with your child.

If your child has contracted a communicable disease or condition, please call the school to notify the director. You should follow your pediatrician's and the schools guidelines for returning to school. We adhere to the following State Health Department Guidelines:

<b>DISEASE</b>	<b>CHILD MAY RETURN</b>
Flu	48 hours after symptoms disappear
Strep Throat	24 hours after antibiotic begins
Head Lice	After treatment and no nits are visible
Chicken Pox	When all pox are scabbed over
Pink Eye	When there are no secretions
Temperature 99+	24 hours after the temp returns to normal

<b>Diarrhea</b>	<b>24 hours after the last loose stool</b>
<b>Vomiting</b>	<b>24 hours after the last incident</b>

**PLEASE OBSERVE THESE GUIDELINES FOR EVERYONE'S HEALTH. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

**You or your emergency contact will be called to pick up your child early if any of the above occurs during school hours. In addition, your child will be dismissed early if the teacher determines that he/she is not feeling well enough to be at school or if there is extremely inappropriate behavior (i.e. biting, uncontrollable tantrums, etc.)**

### **EMERGENCIES**

**Bumps and scrapes: first aid, ice, TLC**

**An accident/incident report will be filled out to let you know how the mishap occurred. When possible, the teachers will speak to you directly. Please call if you have any questions.**

**Severe cuts, bumps or other injuries: Parents or other emergency contacts are called. If we are unable to reach anyone, we will call the child's Pediatrician's office.**

**Allergic reactions: Medicine that has been provided FOR THAT CHILD will be administered and 911 will be called if necessary.**

**911 will be called without delay if it is determined that the injury or condition is such that treatment is needed immediately. The child will be transported by emergency vehicle to Children's Hospital unless another arrangement has been specified by the parent when providing emergency notification information at time of registration.**

**In the case of a weather emergency, all children and staff will stay in the inside downstairs hallway until it is safe to return to classrooms.**

**Please choose an emergency contact that will be available during school hours and make sure to provide all phone numbers where that person can be reached.**

## **SNACKS**

**A nut-free snack and a glass of water are provided by the preschool and are served daily. Because of allergies, all food items must be peanut and tree nut free. Please let us know if your child has any dietary restrictions or allergies. You are welcome to bring in an occasional special treat, but please check with the classroom teachers first.**

## **APROPRIATE CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES**

**Children should be sent to school in comfortable, washable play clothes. Smocks are provided to children while working with messy materials, however, stains are always a risk in the creative process. Rubber soled shoes, preferably sneakers, are required for the safety of your child. Please do not send your child in party shoes, cowboy boots, flip flops, crocs, ill-fitting shoes, or any other shoe that is not effortless for your child to run and go up and down steps in.**

**EXTRA CLOTHING** On visiting day you will be asked to send a complete change of clothes (shirt, long pants, socks, underwear) to be kept at school for emergencies. When your child uses them, please remember to send them back on the next school day.

**DIAPERS** Parents of children in the 2/3 classes that are still wearing diapers are asked to send extra diapers in the tote bag every day.

### **BACKPACKS AND TOTES**

Children in the 2/3 classes are given a tote bag to use for the school year.

Children in the 3/4 and 4/5 classrooms are asked to bring a backpack every day. Please select one that is big enough to hold art work, notes from teachers and other treasures that will be transported in these backpacks. Please make sure that it has an exposed zipper on the top that your child can easily open and close. Please do not select one that has a flap, snaps, hooks or draw strings or one that has wheels.

**TOYS** As a general rule, toys should not be brought to preschool. Please check with your classroom teacher about bringing theme related items or things from nature. **TOY WEAPONS, ACTION FIGURES, AND ACTION FIGURES ACCESSORIES ARE NOT ALLOWED AT SCHOOL.**

Please do not send an **UMBRELLA** with your child. We have no need for them and they can be dangerous in a group of small children.

### **TOILETING AND DIAPERING PROCEDURES**

Children in diapers are accepted into the 2/3 year old program. Most children show readiness for toilet training during the school year. Please let your teachers know when you begin to work with your child so they can help provide continuity between home and school.

Until a child is fully toilet trained our diaper changing procedure is as follows:

- Families provide the diapers and send them with the children each school day.

- Teachers will not routinely change your child. Only if your child is extremely wet or there is a B.M. will the teacher change your child.
- When a child has a diaper change, he/she will be changed while standing up. This procedure has been determined to be the most reasonable in preschool situations and is the most health conscious.

## **READINESS**

**Children are accepted at UUM Preschool according to chronological age. This alone may not be the determining factor in a child's success in a preschool program. When teachers share concerns for a child's readiness, such as inability to separate, lacking age appropriate social skills, continual aggressive behavior, and inability to make use of the classroom environment, we will discuss the situation with the parents, determine a plan for remaining at UUM and reevaluate the situation in 4 weeks.**

**If it is determined that a child is not growing from his/her preschool experience at UUM, a discussion will be held with the parents at which time it may be decided that this program is not appropriate for the child. The director and teachers will make recommendations of other preschool programs and relevant community services if parents so desire.**

## **DISCIPLINE**

**The staff and director at UUM work to maintain a very positive and nurturing environment for your child. Classroom limits are necessary to provide a sense of order and allow teachers to spend as much time as possible providing a stimulating environment for each child. The staff is trained to anticipate potentially problematic situations; they remind children of appropriate behavior and redirect or intervene when necessary. If needed, a child may be asked to have some time away from a particular situation. However, it is our primary directive to**

encourage the child to use his/her words in a positive manner to resolve situations and to let others know how he/she feels about an action or situation.

When inappropriate behavior is a continuing problem the school will work with parents to understand issues and make appropriate recommendations. It is our goal to make preschool a positive, rewarding and enjoyable experience for each child. We realize, however, that we cannot meet the needs of all parents and children. Therefore, UUM Preschool reserves the right to suspend the enrollment of any child who is a continual discipline problem or for other reasons is unable to meet the readiness criteria discussed previously.

## **BITING**

Biting is unacceptable for any age child attending preschool. The first time a biting episode occurs the teacher will talk to the child and makes it clear that biting is not acceptable. The parents are notified after school. If there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> time, the child is removed from the classroom and reminded of the seriousness of this behavior. If there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, the child is removed to the director's office and the parents are called and must take the child home immediately. If there is a 4<sup>th</sup> bite, the child is suspended for a week. The director and parents will discuss the situation, including what actions parents are willing to take and the future of the child's enrollment at UUMPS.