

# *Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool*



## *Parent Handbook*

2024 - 2025

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

*Proverbs 22:6*

**This handbook has been approved by the FMC Preschool Executive Board.**

## **PURPOSE**

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool is a non-profit outreach ministry of the Franklin Methodist Church of Franklin, Texas. We are a learning center for infants, toddlers, and children nine months through five years of age. Our purpose is to reflect a church sponsored preschool program for our community that will encourage Christian teachings and growth. The staff of the preschool shall strive to give all students a positive self image by providing them with a safe and loving environment filled with acceptance and respect. The preschool shall provide an environment in which the children can grow in their faith, learn about themselves and their expanding world through instruction, exploration, experimentation, and decision making. Everyday classroom experiences will be interpreted in ways consistent with a Christian atmosphere. All faiths are welcome.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Sherry Buchanan – Director  
Misty Skorupinski – Assistant Director  
Rev. Polly D. Standing – Senior Pastor FMC  
Frances Boyette – Administrative Assistant

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Franklin Methodist Church Office

**(979) 828-3355**

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Monday – Thursday)

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool

**(979) 828-2019**

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Tuesday and Thursday)

Sherry Buchanan, Director **(817) 312-5892**

Church Email

[Franklintxmethodist@gmail.com](mailto:Franklintxmethodist@gmail.com)

Preschool Email

[FranklinUMP@yahoo.com](mailto:FranklinUMP@yahoo.com)

# PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE

Sandra Hoegemeyer- Board Chair, Rev. Polly D. Standing,  
Sherry Buchanan- Director, Misty Skorupinski- Assistant Director,  
Pam Cloat, Tabitha Cloat, Christan Rawson, Andy Reed, Monica Stem

The preschool committee's purpose is to approve policy, approve hiring of the director and teachers, review the business management of the center, set tuition and fees, and approve the Parent and Employee Handbooks. The Preschool Committee shall consist of the following:

- Up to six lay persons of Franklin Methodist Church, who have been elected by the Church Charge Conference, upon nomination by the Church's Lay Leadership Committee.  
New committee members shall be elected each year when a three-year term has been completed.  
Each committee member serves a three-year term; however, terms can run consecutively.
- The Pastor of Franklin Methodist Church will serve as a vocal non-voting member of the committee.
- One parent may be asked to serve as a vocal non-voting representative of participating preschool parents.

Preschool committee members shall not:

- receive salaries for their service,
- serve the preschool in any other capacity for which they receive compensation for services, except for the director and assistant director.

A preschool committee quorum will be defined as a majority of the number of preschool committee members present for the transaction of business at any meeting of the preschool committee.

Special meetings of the preschool committee may be called by or at the request of the preschool committee chairperson, FMC Pastor, or the preschool director.

## GOALS

Our goals for each child that attends Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool:

### **Spiritual**

- To develop knowledge of God's Creation
- To learn about God Himself
- To begin to understand how God loves each of us

### **Social-Emotional**

- To develop a positive attitude toward learning
- To experience a sense of self-esteem
- To exhibit a positive attitude toward life
- To demonstrate cooperative, pro-social behavior
- To develop a sense of autonomy
- To acquire self-help skills

## **Physical**

- To enhance gross motor skills (large muscles)
- To enhance and refine fine motor skills (small muscle movements involving hands and fingers)
- To develop hand-eye coordination
- To use all senses in learning

## **Cognitive**

- To acquire learning and problem-solving skills,
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To acquire concepts and information leading to a fuller understanding of the immediate world
- To expand creative and imaginative abilities through make-believe play, art, and music
- To expand language skills, both comprehension and expressive communication skills

# **PHILOSOPHY**

## **Understanding How Preschoolers Learn**

Children develop and acquire skills through a predictable sequence of stages. At Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool, we provide a learning environment that allows a child to build upon existing skills. Children acquire new information by interacting with concrete materials and experiencing the environment through all their senses.

**Curiosity** is an important method of learning for a preschooler. Children can learn best when they are given the opportunity to ask questions and find different solutions to a problem.

**Repetition and Imitation** are necessary for learning to occur. As a preschooler repeats actions, songs, words, and routines, he/she increases skills and understanding for learning. He/she observes and imitates others who model attitudes and actions.

At Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool, we want to provide an atmosphere where each child feels loved and accepted for who he/she is - a special person created by God. Parents and teachers working together can support each other in providing positive learning experiences for our preschoolers. When this is accomplished, we all can look forward to the promise of Proverbs 22:6, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it.”* Children experience God’s love and gain a sense of self-worth when we show them love and acceptance.

# **PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR**

**Sherry Buchanan**

Sherry has served as director of the Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool since January 2018. She initially worked at FUMP as a substitute for staff members. Sherry was hired as a teacher for two and a half years before being named as director in January 2018. Prior to moving to Franklin, she retired after serving 37 years as a speech language pathologist, autism coordinator, and special education supervisor for several school districts in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Sherry chose her career because of her genuine love for children with special needs and their families. The desire to help children and their families and to share God's love is a passion of hers. Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool has a history of success in this community, as well as neighboring communities. As the director, Sherry's goals are to further the growth of the program, maintain the outreach ministry as proposed in the beginning stages of the preschool, and to be obedient unto the Lord.

## **Role of the Director**

- supervise all preschool staff,
- maintain financial records for the preschool,
- perform classroom observations during the school year,
- work collaboratively with the assistant director to create a program that will address the spiritual, social-emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of each student,
- prepare and distribute a monthly newsletter/calendar,
- conduct staff training which includes social skills, academics, motor skills and faith-based teaching that encourages creative expressions of imagination and play to meet the needs of every child. Such program shall be provided in a loving and caring environment, and
- attend executive board meetings to report on the preschool's operations.

# **PRESCHOOL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

**Misty Skorupinski**

Misty was elected to serve as assistant director in June 2021. She worked as an aide for the 2014-2015 school year. It didn't take Misty long to realize that she wanted to be a teacher. She served as a teacher from 2015-2021. It was sad to see her leave the classroom environment, but we are honored for her to fill this position. Misty is very loved by the children, parents, and our community. She gets along and collaborates well with her colleagues. Misty has a strong faith in Jesus and believes that every child needs to feel they belong, which is apparent in the compassion and respect she gives. According to Misty at FUMP, "We strive to build a safe and loving environment for all children and create a lasting relationship with them." Misty portrays leadership skills that will make a difference at FUMP.

## **Role of Assistant Director**

- work collaboratively with the director to create a program that will address the spiritual, social-emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of each student,
- assist teachers with materials, resources, and curriculum lesson planning,
- assist in staff development training,
- work with and inform community day care centers on FUMP policies, i.e., drop off and pick up procedures, sign-in/out procedures, etc., and
- work hand in hand with the director running the day-to-day operations of the preschool and substituting for the director when necessary.

## **STAFF**

We are very proud of our staff. They have been selected for their love of children and their commitment to excellence. Our staff is required to complete **15 Continuing Education Units per year**. These CEUs cover a variety of subjects, such as different strategies for working with children, ideas for curriculum, and how to understand and work with children going through different or difficult stages. They are certified in First Aid and CPR. In addition, Franklin Methodist Church has established a Safe Sanctuary Training (SST). The SST has enabled us to establish procedures to prevent abuse, false allegations, and to protect all children who are in our scope of care. The training shall include but is not limited to appropriate discipline techniques, as well as appropriate physical and emotional boundaries. A criminal history is conducted on each staff member. The small size of the preschool and limited enrollment ensures that each child will receive the necessary individual care and attention from our staff that he or she needs.

## **PROGRAMS**

9 months -5 years

### **Infants & Toddlers**

Students will enjoy a balanced day filled with age-appropriate activities covering all areas of development and learning. The daily schedule consists of stimulating activities, both individual and small group. The curriculum includes sensory activities, music & movement, and outdoor playtime. The children's individual needs for feeding, diapering, and sleeping will be met throughout their day.

### **Two-Year-Olds to Five-Year-Olds**

Older children will enjoy a balanced day filled with age-appropriate activities in stimulating classrooms. The daily schedule consists of learning centers, small group and large group opportunities, hands-on activities, music & movement, outside play, as well as lunch and rest time.

### **Administrative Procedures**

The preschool year shall typically begin on the first Tuesday following Labor Day. The last day is the Thursday of the week before the last week in which the Franklin Independent School District is in session. It shall be closed on all holidays observed by Franklin ISD. On any day which the schools of Franklin ISD close early, the preschool will also implement early school closure. If weather reports cause Franklin ISD to open late or close early, the preschool shall also open late or close early at such times.

The preschool shall be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year from 9:00am to 3:00pm. The doors will remain locked until 8:50 each morning to allow ample time for staff meetings. Parents must pick up students no later than 3:10pm each school day. A fee of \$2.00 per minute will be added to your tuition bill if children are picked up 10 minutes late. Parents must notify the director or assistant director when running late.

Franklin Methodist Church makes the following facilities available to the preschool on school days: the Ullrich Education Center for classrooms and the church playground when weather permits for outside time. The Activities Center & Sanctuary are also available when not in use for official church business.

The director will work with the Franklin Volunteer Fire Department to develop appropriate fire procedures for the preschool. Unannounced fire drills and severe weather/tornado drills will occur each semester during the preschool year. In addition, school Emergency Safety (Lock-Down) drills are also conducted each semester.

The preschool works closely with the Franklin Police Department for procedures and vital information to keep the children and staff safe.

All members of the preschool shall continually maintain the playground to assure that it is a safe and clean place for the children to play. Routine safety inspections of the playground are completed, and concerns will be directed to the attention of the Franklin Methodist Church Board of Trustees.

A teacher or staff member shall attend to the children while in the restroom. No child will be permitted to walk to the restroom unattended. Even though it is each teacher's responsibility to walk the students to the restroom, other staff may be available to escort the student(s). The teachers will encourage all students to utilize the restroom at the assigned restroom time provided in the daily schedule.

## **ADMISSION**

### **Age**

Children must be at least 9 months old to enter Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool. The preschool does not discriminate against race, religion, gender, or ethnicity for enrollment in our program.

### **Registration**

Early registration for current FUMP families will take place each April. After April 30th, registration will open to the general public and continue throughout August or until classes are at capacity.

### **Waiting List**

A waiting list will be maintained for those interested in enrollment when space is limited. Those on the waiting list will be notified when space becomes available according to date the parent contacted the preschool.

### **School Records**

All students at Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool shall have appropriate records on file. We do not consider a child's registration complete until **REGISTRATION FEE IS PAID, ALL THE DOCUMENTATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND TURNED IN AT THE TIME OF ENROLLMENT.** If any information changes during the school year, (i.e., shot records, address, phone number, emergency contacts, etc.), parents are expected to provide updated information. The administration reserves the right to dismiss children who do not have current records on file.

## **FEES**

**Enrollment:** A non-refundable annual enrollment fee of \$100.00 is required at the time your child is enrolled to secure a space at Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool.

**Tuition & Payments:** Tuition fees are \$165.00 monthly. **Payments are due on the first of each month. A \$5.00 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received by the 10th of each month.** Checks should be made payable to Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool or FUMP. All cash payments must be placed in an envelope, provided on the tuition box, with the student's name, parent's name, and month for the tuition. Envelopes are not required when payments are made by check; however, please indicate the child's name on the memo section of the check. Receipts will be written and sent home in the student's folder no later than 2 days after making payment. To keep costs low, Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool currently does not accept credit card payments.

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool is a non-profit program. Fees are set to reflect the high quality of early childhood education provided. As in any other school, expenses are constant, which **prevents credit or discounts for absence due to illness, vacations, inclement weather, or holidays.** Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool offers a 10% discount to families that have two or more children enrolled. This discount applies to the oldest child only, resulting in \$314.00 for two children instead of \$330.00.

**Penalties:** Any payment not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month will be charged a late fee of **\$5.00 per school day** until payment is received. Payments not received by the end of the month may result in temporary interruption in care until the account is made current. A **\$30.00 fee** will be assessed for any check that is returned for insufficient funds. A cashier's check, money order, or cash will be required as payment for the returned check.

**Withdrawal:** Withdrawal is defined as permanent removal from Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool. At times, a parent makes the decision to withdraw their child. A **written notice 30 days prior to the withdrawal** is required. If a family withdraws with less than 30 days' notice, the parent is responsible for the next month's tuition even though your child is not attending.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Our classes are Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**ARRIVAL** Students need to be dropped off daily by 9:00 a.m.; however, doors will open at 8:50 a.m. Parent or caregiver must accompany your child to the assigned classroom. **Each child must be signed in upon arrival and out upon departure with the teacher each day of attendance.** Parent or caregiver **MUST** include who is responsible for picking up their child upon morning drop-off. All classes start promptly at 9:00. There are times/situations that will cause one to arrive late; however, arriving after 10:30 is not optimal, as rest time is shortly after lunch. In addition, tardiness causes your child to miss out on quality learning time and creates unwanted distractions. If tardiness becomes frequent, a conference with the director will be scheduled to determine if other measures need to be taken.

**Early Arrivals and Extended Care:** Parents needing childcare prior to 9:00 or after 3:00 will need to arrange alternate childcare (i.e., family members, friends, etc.) to coordinate drop-off and pick-up from the preschool. The Lion's Playhouse in Franklin (903-388-7592) offers drop-in childcare and will coordinate drop off and pick up with the preschool. It is vital that parents communicate with those individuals about sign-in and sign-out procedures. The person who drops your child off in the morning **MUST** sign who will be picking up your child from the preschool at dismissal. This is to ensure the safety and protection of each child.

**DEPARTURE** At dismissal, a parent/caregiver **MUST** initial and sign the time of pick-up. The teacher must be made aware that the child has been signed out. **As previously stated, it is the parent's responsibility to inform alternate caregivers of these essential security procedures.** No child will be released to anyone not listed as an emergency contact.

Our center closes at 3:00 p.m. and children must be picked up promptly. Parents who are more than 10 minutes late will be charged \$2.00 per minute unless the preschool administrators have been notified. All children not picked up by 3:10 will be waiting in the preschool office. We will notify an emergency contact for pickup if the parent has not contacted the director or is unable to be reached. Chronic lateness may result in additional late charges. It is our policy that each child should be escorted to and from his/her classroom by an adult. The individuals who pick up must be 18 years of age or older. This is a policy for the safety of children.



## **Authorization to Pick Up a Child**

**Written** authorization is required to release a child to someone other than the parent. Any changes to this information must be given to the office and your child's teacher. When someone other than those on your list will pick up your child, you will need to call the preschool ahead of time and send a signed authorization note/text message to the Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Illness**

**Children who do not feel well may not be sent to school.** Please advise the office prior to 9:00 a.m. if your child will not be attending preschool due to illness. Children with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or other symptoms of contagion will not be admitted. A fever of 100° or above oral temperature, 102° or above rectal temperature, or 100° or above auxiliary temperature indicates an illness. Children may return when fever has broken for 24 hours, without medication, before a child may return to school. If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent (or another authorized adult) will be called to pick up the child **immediately**. For this reason, it is imperative that emergency numbers are current and up to date. We will offer prayers of healing while he or she is recovering at home. Your child's well-being is important and missed when they are absent.

### **Medications:**

Due to the length of time the children are in our care, medication may be administered providing the process for record keeping is followed. Medications will be stored in a secure location out of reach of children. **All medications must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Written parental permission with dosage instructions must be on file for any over-the-counter medications or prescription medications.** The director or assistant will administer any medications. All prescription medications must be in the original container and properly labeled. The parent must complete the *Medication Dispensation Release Form* for any medications to be given to their child at school.

### **Allergies:**

Please notify us in writing if your child has a specific allergy, (i.e., food, topical creams, insect stings, etc.). Parents are responsible to supply the preschool with the medical release form signed by your pediatrician. At times parents may need to provide a nutritional food substitute for snack time in the event of a food allergy. When a food allergy has been diagnosed by a doctor, (i.e., peanuts, tree nuts, etc.), FUMP will enforce a no peanut/nut products policy on campus. We ask your support in assuring your child does not bring any item made with the specific allergen. When or if your child does bring an item made with the identified allergen, it will not be unwrapped and consumed at the school. We will send it home in your child's lunch bag with an attached note.

### **Medical and Emergency Procedures**

A current immunization or an Exemption from Immunizations record must be on file for each child. Texas law requires that students show acceptable evidence of immunization to attend childcare settings, private, or public schools. Texas law does allow for immunization exemptions when signed by a doctor. A signed emergency form must also be on file in case your child should need emergency medical attention. This form should list any medications your child takes routinely, any allergies, and health insurance information.

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 and the parent/caregiver will be contacted. If the parent is unable to arrive while the emergency professionals are at the preschool, the director or assistant director will accompany your child to the medical facility. While being transported, the administrator will be in contact with the parents via cell until their arrival at the medical facility. Parents will always be contacted in the event of an emergency.

## **Incident Report Form**

Minor accidents sometimes occur. Parents will be notified of minor scrapes, bumps, and bites on an *Incident Form*. The parent of a child who intentionally or unintentionally hurts another child and the child who was injured will both receive an *Incident Form*. The form must be signed by the teacher, administrator, and parent. The original will remain in your child's file of record, and a copy will be provided to the parent once all signatures are obtained.

## **Toilet Training**

The goal of Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool is to meet the needs of each child. Classes have scheduled restroom breaks and children will be taken upon their request. Children 3 years of age and older must be fully potty-trained. Fully potty-trained means that the child knows when he/she needs to use the bathroom and does not need any assistance in the bathroom. **A reminder that Pull-ups should be worn at school unless the child can:**

- ✓ tell the adult they need to go potty before an accident occurs,
- ✓ be able to pull down their underwear and pants and back up with minimal assistance,
- ✓ be able to wipe themselves, and
- ✓ be able to wash and dry hands.

Your child must wear Pull-ups until they are accident free for a full 30 days.

## **Inclement Weather**

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool will be cancelled if the Franklin Independent School District cancels school due to weather. Parents will be contacted immediately if unsafe weather conditions arise while children are at school. Inclement weather days will not be made up and there is no discount for days missed. Closures or late starts will be on KBTX, our REMIND messaging system, and our Facebook page.

## **Outdoor Play**

Our children will be given outside play time each day, weather permitting. The outside temperature must be 54 degrees or higher for the teachers to take children outdoors. If a child has been ill and must be kept inside, please keep the child home until he/she may participate fully in all Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool activities.

## **Toys**

Our classrooms have adequate toys which have been specifically chosen to engage our students developmentally and educationally. Please do not bring any toys from home unless the teachers ask you to bring something, or it is for show and tell. The exception to this is a comfort item for young children, such as a special blanket or stuffed animal for rest time. Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool is not responsible for lost or damaged items brought from home.

## **Clothing**

Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. Your child will be active in school and will have opportunities to participate in messy activities, such as those with paint, glue, and markers. Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool will not be responsible for damage done to clothing during school activities. It is very difficult for young children to play on the playground in sandals or flip flops. They often fill with rocks and the children easily stump their toes. Tennis shoes are ideal. Each child **MUST** bring one complete set of clothing, according to the season, to be kept at the preschool. Clothing should be stored in a gallon zip lock bag and clearly marked with the child's first & last name; in case they soil their outfit. We do keep a limited supply of extra clothing on hand in case of extra accidents. If your child uses preschool clothing, please wash, and return the clothing to Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool the following school day.

## **Food**

**Breakfast** - We understand how hectic morning time can be, however we ask that children eat their breakfast before arriving to school to minimize classroom disruption. If a child brings a breakfast item to school, the parent will be asked to sit with and supervise the child in the Commons Area to finish eating.

**Lunch** - Parents are responsible for supplying their child's lunch. We suggest the following guidelines: lunch should contain protein (meat, cheese, eggs), vegetables (carrots, celery, tomatoes, etc.), fruit (apple, banana, peach, etc.), and grains (whole wheat products, crackers, etc.). Even though good nutrition is important to our school's program, **please send known food items that your child will eat.** We will assist your child with the set up of their lunch provided from home. All "finger foods" for infants and toddlers should be pre-cut into bite size pieces. We kindly ask that you do not send any food, (i.e., macaroni, ramen noodles, pizza, etc.) products that must be "cooked" first. Many of these foods get very hot and take a while to cool down. We ask that you cook them at home for us to reheat in the microwave. Lunch bags and any non-consumable items (spoons, forks, plastic containers, etc.) must be labeled with your child's name. If a parent brings milk to be placed in the refrigerator, please label it with your child's name. **Please do not send sodas, colored drinks, or hard candy with your child to school.**

**Snacks** – Preschool will provide a kid friendly snack in the afternoon. It is important to list all food allergies on the registration forms to assure safety for your child. **Should your child have any food allergies please complete the required paperwork and notify the administrators prior to the first day of school.** The preschool makes every attempt to provide snacks for all the children; however, parents are always free to provide a snack of their choice or a food substitute in the event of a food allergy.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The purpose of all "discipline" is in the training of a child is to correct, and bring about change that is needed in attitudes and behaviors. The Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool aims to help children become increasingly self-managing and socially responsible. Teachers help children express their feelings, cooperate with other children, and negotiate conflicts. Only positive, non-punitive methods are used to achieve our goal. We recognize that young children have limited and highly variable abilities to manage their emotions and control their reactions. At no time will a child be physically punished, threatened, or intimidated. Techniques used are:

- 1) Redirecting - Diverting attention to a constructive pursuit.
- 2) Compromising and negotiating differences – negotiation skills are learned best by modeling appropriate skills; however, some rules are non-negotiable.
- 3) Encouraging children to seek alternatives within the boundaries of their individual capabilities.

If a distressed child needs help to regain his self-control, he will be allowed supervised private time, away from the situation. A "Take a Break" procedure used at FUMP is for the child to sit on a small stool in the classroom. The child can sit and quiet himself before a reassuring adult seeks to help him re-enter his classroom activity. In no event shall any single period of separation exceed one minute for each year of the child's age. The child may ask to use this space at any time he or she feels they need time away. The "Take a Break" should not be used as a punishment. It is designed to regain composure and take a break from the activity.

If discipline problems continue after the redirection and quiet time techniques are tried, the teacher will consult the director's/assistant director's assistance to work with the child and resolve the problem. If disruptive

behavior is consistent, parents will be contacted so that we can work together to find a solution. The director/assistant director may notify the parent/guardian to immediately pick up their child from preschool, if they consider this the most appropriate approach for the well being of the child. The administrators, teacher, and parents will work together to minister to the child and prepare them for a successful return to the classroom.

After conferring with the parents and problems continue, the director or assistant director shall notify the chairperson of the preschool committee so that a meeting of the committee can be held to determine the best course of action. Although every effort will be made to avoid termination, Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool reserves the right to permanently dismiss any child who is frequently:

- 1) disruptive to the learning process,
- 2) destructive,
- 3) causing deliberate bodily injury to self or others,
- 4) using abusive language,
- 5) referred to the director/assistant director repeatedly without obvious positive results.

### **Aggressive Behavior in Children**

For safety and health concerns, we take aggressive behavior seriously. Some behaviors, such as biting, tantrums, hitting, spitting, pushing, and kicking are typical developmental issues that we see in the preschool environment. While this can be quite a natural response of demonstrated frustration in younger children, children over two years old are expected to have outgrown most of these behaviors. Our program believes that early intervention is in the best interest of children, families, and staff. Our school is committed to addressing developmental and behavioral issues as soon as they arise. If our staff identifies concerns, parents will be promptly notified. Our staff will work with the family to share information, make recommendations, and strategize an individual program for meeting the needs of the child.

### **Biting Policy**

We want to ensure that every child is safe while in our care. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem-solving between the children. Biting is a normal stage of development for young children who are teething and are still developing their language skills. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. This means that it is a particular concern for the staff in the Infant & Toddler Room.

**For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. When it happens, it is very scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers. It is also not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers, and there are no quick and easy solutions to it. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed, intense desire for a toy, or limited verbal skills. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, or attention. Knowing that the effect of their biting will hurt another person is not yet a part of a young child's mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers plan activities, supervise the children carefully, and work to create a learning environment that is proactive in biting prevention. There are times, however, when everyone cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.**

Our policy for handling a biting incident is the following:

- The child who bites is immediately removed from the group with a firm “NO, we do not bite.” The bitten child is consoled, and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The child who bites is not allowed to immediately return to play. The teacher will talk to the child who bit on a level that he/she can understand, then be redirected to play.
- Written incident reports are given to the parents of both the child who bit and the child who was bitten once required signatures have been obtained. The name of a child who bit is not released to the family of the child who was bitten because it serves no useful purpose, can make an already tricky situation more difficult, and is in violation of the Minimum Standards Practice.
- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, to prevent further biting behavior.
- We work with each child who bites on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We try to adapt the environment and to work with parents to reduce any stress the child might be experiencing.

The staff works diligently to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to both the family of the biting child and the other families. If a child bites four consecutive school days, the director will ask that the child be removed for a day to work on the challenging behavior. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the child who bites, do we consider asking a family to withdraw the child. This policy also applies to consistent acts of tantrums, spitting, hitting, or kicking others.

### Child Abuse

We are obligated by law to report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the local authorities.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### **Birthdays:**

If your child wishes to share his/her birthday with classmates, plan with the director or assistant director ahead of time to send a special snack. The administrators or teacher will provide the parent the number of snacks needed for the classroom. All birthday celebrations will be at 2:00 p.m. on the agreed date. **Gifts should not be brought to the honoree.** If you want to do something special (read a story, make a craft, etc.), other than a special snack, then you should be present to assist the teacher in the classroom.

### **Holidays and Special Events:**

Classroom parties are a special part of the preschool experience, this year will include Grandparent’s Day, FUMP Fall Fest, Thanksgiving Family Feast, Christmas Party & Program, Valentine’s Day, Rodeo Day, Easter, and Splash Day. A Graduation Program will be held in May for students who will be attending Pre-K during the next school year.

### **Holiday Closures:**

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool will be closed to observe the following holidays:

- Thanksgiving November 25-29
- Christmas & New Year's December 23-January 8
- Spring Break Week March 10-14
- Student Holiday April 17
- Last Day May 22
- Other days as necessary. We follow the calendar for FISD as closely as possible.

Please refer to the monthly newsletters and important events form for specific dates.

### **Water Play/Splash Days**

To allow the children outdoor activity in a comfortable manner, a *Spring Splash Day* will be scheduled in May. During this time, children may run through sprinklers, play in small wading pools, and participate in other water activities to keep cool. Parents are invited to this fun event. Children should come wearing a swimsuit with swim diapers, if needed. The following items listed below should be provided by the parents:

- Towel (labeled with child's name)
- Plastic bag for wet items
- A change of clothes
- Sunscreen (applied before drop-off)
- Water shoes with a non-slip bottom

### **Parent Volunteers**

The parents of Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool are encouraged to assist in the goal of excellence in all aspects of the center through the donation of time, energy, and/or skills. These are valuable resources used to accomplish the tasks before us, build a unified community, and engage in Christian fellowship as we educate your children. Feel free to ask the administrators and your child's teacher how you could help. There are several ways that parents can help from home, i.e., cutting out, gluing, tracing pictures for crafts, or contacting other parents for classroom parties, etc.

Fundraising and special events are designed to be engaging to our community while helping to meet our fundraising goals. Successful fundraisers help to provide enrichment activities and to fund center improvements.

### **Suggestions for Volunteer Service:**

- Daddy-Daughter Dance – This is our largest fundraiser and community outreach. Your help is greatly appreciated and vital to the success of our ministry!
- Class Parties
- Help with Fall Festival, Thanksgiving Feast, Rodeo Day, and/or Splash Day
- Special Treats
- Staff Appreciation Assistance

## **SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

### **Parent to Teacher**

Your relationship with your child's teacher is very important. Effective communication is vital for building a school-family partnership. The teacher appreciates a note or a quick word about any changes at home (new baby, parents away, illness, death of a pet, etc.) which will allow the teacher to help your child deal with feelings. Conferences with your child's teacher may be scheduled throughout the year as needed. We are happy to schedule specific conferences with the teacher and/or administrators upon request. Please refrain from discussing confidential matters at drop off and pick up times, but instead schedule a conference with your

child's teacher. It is vital that the teacher can give appropriate attention to your concerns and to students who are in the room.

### **Teacher to Parent**

Teachers will provide you with a Daily Report giving additional insight into your child's school day. **Please check your child's folder daily for important information and remove all your child's work.** The teachers may contact parents via phone or email so please ensure we have updated contact information on record for your family. We strongly encourage you to "like" our Facebook page, write a review on our Facebook page, and join our REMIND text message group to stay informed.

### **Office Staff and Parents**

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool Office Staff is here to assist you and your children. We welcome your phone calls and written messages. The key to the success of our program is the open communication between parents and staff. We have a suggestion/tuition box in the main entrance of the preschool. Please feel free to write down any suggestions and put them in the box. Suggestions can remain anonymous if you choose. The director and assistant director will be the only individuals who have access to the box.

### **Open Door Policy**

Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool has an open-door policy for all parents. Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time during our standard hours of operation to observe your child, our operation, and program activities. Call the director to schedule a time you would like to visit. Please be respectful of napping and quiet times when needing to pick up your child early. To gain access to the building at times other than drop-off & pick-up, you must ring the doorbell or call us. This is to ensure the safety of students and staff.

### **Newsletters/Calendars**

Monthly school newsletters will be published. Parents will have the opportunity to receive an electronic copy and/or paper copy sent home in your child's folder. The purpose is to provide parents with additional information on activities, curriculum, and events at the center. This will give you an overview of the curriculum and upcoming events.

### **Policy Changes**

Any policy changes will be communicated to parents through written notification with a signature page attached for your acknowledgement to be kept in your child's records.

### **Parent Orientation and Meet the Teacher**

A parent orientation meeting will be held prior to the start of the new school year. Several dates will be offered to accommodate your schedule. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss important information and answer any questions that the parents might have about the school and classroom policies, curriculum plans, and schedules. Meet the Teacher night is scheduled in August prior to the first day of school. It will provide an opportunity for children and parents to meet with the teachers and become acquainted with other parents as well.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Although every effort is taken to meet the needs of your child, sometimes a parent wants to log a complaint or share a concern. Since we are all human and fallible, mistakes can be made, and misunderstandings may take place. It is suggested that parents follow these steps when voicing a concern about their child's class or if they have a question:

- Always ask the teacher first if you have a question about something that has taken place in class. They are often able to easily explain a circumstance since they are with the child during the day. It is the goal of all teachers that you and your child are happy. Therefore, they will do everything in their power to correct the situation, if needed. Keep in mind that drop-off and pick-up times are not the time to have a lengthy conversation about your concerns. A conference can be scheduled at your convenience.
- If you are not fully satisfied with the answers supplied by your child’s teacher, please contact the director or assistant director. They will almost always refer you to the teacher if you have not already spoken with her. The administrators will gain information from the teacher and will respond to the parents’ concerns within a reasonable time frame (48 hours). Parents are often concerned that if the teacher discovers they are complaining that their child will somehow be treated unfairly. The administrators want to assure the parents that we will strive to make any needed changes. FUMP staff does not discriminate against any parent or child, even if grievances are voiced.
- If neither the teacher nor the administrators are able to provide the parent with a satisfactory conclusion, written documentation may be sent to the chairperson of the FUMP Executive Board Committee. The preschool committee has the final say in all matters pertaining to Franklin Uplifting Methodist Preschool. After a decision is rendered, the chairperson will send a response to the parent in writing.

## WHAT TO BRING

### **Infants & Toddlers**

- Formula or milk labeled with child’s name. Extra milk may be stored in the kitchen refrigerator but must be labeled! Please bring a small container or half a gallon only.
- Bottles labeled with name (to be taken home and cleaned daily).
- Appropriate baby food or “finger food” (pre-cut in bite size pieces) and necessary utensils.
- Diapers, wipes, diaper cream all labeled.
- Change of clothing (appropriate for season) in a gallon zip lock bag with child’s name on it. These will be left at the preschool for emergency use.
- A diaper bag/backpack for transporting important class work and messages home.
- A spill-proof water cup, labeled with your child’s name on the top and cup. The cup is intended to be left at preschool for the school year. It is washed at the end of each day and refilled with water the next school day.
- Necessary soothing items, such as blanket, pacifier, etc. for rest time.
- Nap mat (for 2-year old’s and older)

### **Older Children (2, 3 & 4 years of age)**

- Lunch as outlined in “Food” section of this handbook
- A spill-proof water cup, labeled with your child’s name on the top and cup. The cup is intended to be left at preschool for the school year. It is washed at the end of each day and refilled with water the next school day.
- Nap mat and bedding – to be laundered at home each weekend.



- Change of clothing (appropriate for season) in a gallon zip lock bag with child's name on it. These will be left at the preschool for emergency use.
- Diapers, wipes, diaper cream or pull-ups/extra training pants, as needed (for two-year-olds)
- A book bag or backpack for transporting important class work and messages home.

The \$125.00 supply fee covers all the materials and supplies needed for the day-to-day operation of the preschool. At times we may post a need for certain items, specifically Kleenex, Baby & Disinfecting Wipes, Goldfish, etc. If you can donate any of these items, we would greatly appreciate it.

**Thank you for entrusting your child to us. We vow to teach your child, protect your child, and love your child.**

***“Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him.” Psalm 127:3***

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## Parental Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by its policies.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please sign in acknowledgement that you have read and understand the Parent Handbook. Please return this form on the first day your child attends school. In addition, please return any other forms included in your Meet the Teacher Packet.