

University City
United Methodist Church
Weekday School



Parent Handbook

UCUMC WEEKDAY SCHOOL

The purpose of UCUMC Weekday School is to support the mission and vision of University City UMC and to provide developmentally appropriate experiences that will help meet the individual needs and abilities of each child's cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development.

We are a Christian-based preschool. We believe that there is one God, with three personalities: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe the Bible to be true and from God. Our beliefs are deeply rooted in and guided by the Bible's teachings. We believe that all people are created in God's perfect image, and each have a unique, God given purpose.

DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS

Children grow and mature physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Each child develops in these areas at his/ her own rate. They also learn best by doing. Their learning requires experimenting to find out how things work and through their explorations of the world around them, using all of their senses.

Early childhood is a critical time in the development of a child's perceptions of self, others, the world and God. The goal of our Weekday School is a whole child development approach through play based intellectual learning while maintaining a strong spiritual emphasis

God created each child unique and as an individual. UCUMC Weekday School allows for the differences in ability and interests while encouraging "well rounded" development in every area of a child's life. Our program will be developmentally appropriate meaning that activities and materials provided for the child are appropriate according to the developmental stage of that child.

Most children learn best by doing. Children thrive when they can explore and experiment with their surroundings. Play based learning encourages and enables them to understand themselves and others around them in their world. Our program will provide a wide range of play experiences, creative art, drama, music, science, manipulative toys, sand/water and many others. Biblical and Christian Character themes, Seasonal themes will be incorporated into the program and will be balanced between child-oriented and teacher-directed, structured and unstructured environment.

Cognitive Development

Opportunities will be provided to help foster cognitive growth and an understanding of this world through:

- experiences in dramatic play
- songs, poems, stories, and finger plays
- a variety of sensory-motor perceptual experiences, emphasizing observation, inquiry, exploration, discrimination, and discovery
- activities encouraging creativity and self-expression through painting, drawing, and various art mediums

Physical Development

Opportunities will be provided for children to:

- develop large muscular control, coordination and balance
- develop a sense of rhythm through movement activities
- learn self help skills
- learn and practice rules of safety

Social/Emotional Development

Opportunities will be provided that will encourage a child to:

- share, take turns, respect rules
- practice politeness, thoughtfulness, and cooperation
- respect the rights and feelings of others
- use self control, empathy and compassion
- develop meaningful relationships with others

- accept guidance and authority
- develop a positive self-image
- discover and use socially acceptable behavior
- gain a feeling of security and trust from consistent routines

Spiritual Development

Opportunities will be provided to help each child experience spiritual growth through:

- being nurtured by loving adults who are themselves persons of faith
- communicating God's love in verbal ways
- seeing something of God's greatness as the child hears about and sees God's creations
- associating the love of God with the love received from people around him/her
- regular exposure to prayer, Bible stories, verses and thoughts and participation in chapel time

ARRIVAL AND PICKUP

Weekday School hours are 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Arrival Time – Drop off begins at 8:55 am and ends at 9:05am. Please make every attempt to arrive by 9:05am, as arriving late prevents your child from participating in classroom activities. It also is a disruption to the classroom routine. Prompt arrival contributes in the success of your child's day, as well as the other children's day. Teachers are not required to make up missed artwork or activities with a child if they are habitually tardy.

**New Policy for the 2025/26 school year –No late arrivals will be permitted to enter the building between 9:05 and 9:15 to allow teachers and students time to safely move to the classrooms. Late arrivals must come to the main preschool entrance. After 9:15, ring the bell and the office staff will buzz you into the building. Parents must walk their children to the classroom.*

Drop -Off Carline Reminders (Carline is for three and four year old students, some exceptions are made for younger siblings at the discretion of the director).

Our goal for carline is for it to run smoothly and safely and for everyone to go through in a timely manner. Please be sure your child is ready to exit the car when it is your turn.

For the safety of our students and staff, parents should refrain from using cell phones while the carline is in motion. This includes hands-free calls. We need 100% of your attention at all times.

We request that all children exit the car on the right side.

Parents must remain in the car at all times. If you need to get out of the car, we ask that you park in a parking place.

Children are not allowed to bring toys (unless it is for Show & Tell) or food into the building. Please be sure they are finished with breakfast before you enter the carline, and all toys/tablets are put away.

Pets in cars must be restrained.

Pick-up Time - Parents are expected to be prompt picking up their children at the end of the school day at 1:00 p.m. The doors will unlock at 12:50 and remain unlocked until 1:05. Please contact the Weekday School office as soon as possible should you be unable to pick up your child on time.

When arriving after 1:05 to pick up your child, you will be asked to sign your child out. After three late pick-ups, your child's teacher will turn the sign in sheet to the office. The office will send you a bill for late pick up. Should you receive such a notification, your child will not be allowed to return to school unless the fee has been paid within one week of receiving notice.

*****Please do not be on your phone at drop off or pick up, whether walking in or dropping off in carline.**

If your child is going home with another child or someone different is picking up your child, please notify the teacher prior to the end of the day. Please send all messages by note, through brightwheel, or by email. We cannot accept verbal statements from children concerning changes. Any person picking up your child will have to be listed on your child's brightwheel profile.

SPECIAL ENRICHMENT/PARENT COMMUNICATION

Enrichment Activities - Various on site special guest and enrichment activities will be scheduled throughout the year. A one-time Enrichment fee of \$25.00 will be collected in September to help pay for these activities.

Communication - Teachers will communicate to parents via brightwheel. They will send weekly messages/newsletters.

Conferences – The four year old teachers will hold conferences during the spring. Parents of Toddlers, 2, and 3 year olds may request a conference. Staff members will regularly inform parents of classroom activities and learning activities planned. Parents are free to consult informally with their child's teacher regarding growth at any time. It is recommended that discussion not take place in front of the child or in front of other parents.

Parent events - Through the help of the Parents Council and Weekday School Advisory Committee, several events are scheduled each year that will involve parent participation. See the school calendar for more information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Insurance

UCUMC Weekday School does not offer insurance coverage for students enrolled in the program. Parents are required to provide individual coverage for their children.

Medication

The Weekday School will not apply sunscreen, bug spray, etc., or regularly administer medications at school. Should it be necessary to store medications at school for emergency use, the following steps will be followed:

1. A signed form from the parents or guardians giving permission for the medication to be administered by a UCUMC Weekday School staff member.
2. Parents are to talk to their child's teachers to ensure that they are aware of the condition and understand when and how to administer the medication.
3. There is to be a log filled out when the medication is administered, indicating symptoms presented, time administered, and signature of the staff person administering the medication and when and how the parents were contacted.
4. Copies of these forms will be kept in the child's classroom file, on file in the Weekday School office and with the medication itself.

5. Medications will be stored in a bag with the child's name in a container in the classroom that is clearly marked with a first aid symbol. The container should be easily accessible but is to be out of the reach of children and in a locked cabinet outside of school hours.

Potty Training

Children are not required to be potty trained to attend UCUMC Weekday School, however, they are expected to be fully trained by 3 ½. We will work with you to the best of our ability to help to extend your efforts from potty training at home to the school setting. However, due to classroom ratios and food allergies, teachers are unable to provide food rewards for using the potty, or follow a strict potty schedule. Please be honest regarding your child's potty training, and remember that each child develops at a different rate.

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following:

- 1) Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. They must be able to say the words "I have to go potty" BEFORE they have to go.
- 2) Be able to pull down their underwear and pant and pull them back up without assistance.
- 3) Be able to wipe self after using the toilet.
- 4) Be able to get on and off the potty by self.
- 5) Be able to wash and dry hands by self.
- 6) Be able to go directly back to the room without directions.
- 7) Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are outside and away from the potty.

Children who have accidents everyday will be asked to wear pull-ups until they exhibit that they are able to go to the potty on their own. It is a safety concern when teachers have to leave the classroom throughout the school day to change clothes due to accidents, leaving only one teacher in the classroom. Daily accidents are also a sanitary issue in the classroom.

*If your child is not yet fully potty trained according to the steps above, we require that you send them in either pull-ups that open and close on the side or a diaper. Children who are potty training will need to be changed standing up in the bathroom. Changes need to happen quickly so one teacher is not left alone with the remaining students for extended time periods.

Food Allergies

Please contact the Weekday School office if your child has a food allergy or dietary restrictions that we should be aware of (peanut, gluten, latex, etc.)

All snacks purchased by the Weekday School are nut free and not processed in a facility that also processes nuts. If your child needs gluten-free, dairy-free, etc. snacks, you will need to send those snacks in with your child each day.

Birthday Celebrations

Children's birthdays are observed at school on or near the actual birthday. Summer birthdays may be celebrated on a special day during the year. Our celebrations are very simple. **Parents should make prior arrangements with their child's teacher to send in a special snack (the snack should be approved by your child's teacher and adhere to the nut free restrictions if applicable). Please do not consider this a birthday party. Do not send in lunch for the class, a birthday cake, or goody bags for classmates.** Teachers may not be asked to pass out party invitations however parents may place them in student baskets in the hallway.

Health Issues

A health certificate signed by your physician is required for every child before school starts. This signed certificate is a state requirement. No child may attend school until a current health form is on file in the Weekday School Office.

Parents are asked to cooperate with the school in keeping as healthful a surrounding as possible for the children. We ask that you keep your child at home if he or she is sick during the night or in the early morning with vomiting, diarrhea, or a rash. We also ask that your child be **symptom free for 24 hours** before returning to the classroom. During the height of flu season, we may extend the symptom free period to 48 hours. For the safety of your child and your child's classmates, please err on the side of caution when sending your child back to school after an illness. Please see health chart for guidelines.

If a child is sent to school sick with these symptoms, or becomes ill during the morning, we will contact a parent immediately. Please be certain that emergency numbers are correct and up to date on your child's brightwheel profile. Any child sent home from school because of an illness may not return to school the following calendar day. This will affect five day, four day and TTHF classes particularly.

Please notify the teacher of a child's exposure to, or symptoms of, a contagious or communicable disease such as Covid-19, hand foot and mouth, pink eye (conjunctivitis), or the flu. We will notify each class that is affected if a contagious disease is a possibility.

As part of our policy of good health care, we will take the children outdoors as often as the weather permits. Fresh air and exercise are important to each child's health. Please be sure that your child is properly dressed to play outside daily based on the weather.

Sleeping in School

While we know that there are times when children's sleep habits become disrupted at home, we cannot allow for them to sleep at school. We do not have the facilities to provide a safe place to sleep, nor can teachers sit and hold a sleeping child. Our ratios do not allow for one teacher to be taken away from the classroom as a whole to tend to a sleeping child.

If a child falls asleep in the classroom and cannot be roused, the parent will be contacted to come pick them up early. If it becomes a regular occurrence, the child will be asked to stay home until their sleep routine becomes more in line with the school day.

Keep Me Home If...



Seattle King County
Department of Public Health

When Your Child is Sick:

1. Have plans for back up child care.
2. Tell your caregiver what is wrong with your child, even if your child stays home.

Symptoms that child is too sick for school

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her home from WDS. Please let your teacher know if your child will be out sick for a prolonged period of time. You will be called to pick your child up immediately if he/she shows any of the following symptoms at school:

- **Fever:** temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. **Child must be fever free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.**
- **Vomiting:** child should not return to school for 24 hours following the last episode of vomiting
- **Lice, scabies:** Children may not return to school until they have been treated. Children with scabies can be admitted after treatment.
- **Diarrhea:** more than 2 watery stools in a 12 hour period, especially if the child acts or looks ill
- **Chronic cough and/or runny nose:** continual coughing and greenish nose discharge. Symptoms may be contagious and may require treatment from your health care provider.
- **Sore throat:** especially with fever or swollen glands in the neck
- **Rash:** body rash, especially with fever or itching
- **Ear infection:** with fever. Without fever can attend school, but the child may need medical treatment and follow-up. Untreated ear infections can cause permanent hearing loss.
- **Eye infection:** Eye infection: pink eye (conjunctivitis) or thick mucus or pus draining from eye
- **Unusual appearance, behavior:** abnormally tired, pale, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused or irritable, generally feels unwell

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Registration/Tuition Payments

An annual registration fee is to accompany the completed application form at the time of enrollment. Enrollment for the upcoming school year takes place during the month of February. All registration fees are non-refundable.

An advanced tuition payment for May 2026 is required for all families to be enrolled. Failure to make these payments forfeits your child's class placement.

Tuition will be collected one month in advance beginning in August and ending in March. Tuition payments for the morning program are due monthly on the 1st of the month. Payments received after the 7th are subject to a late fee. Returned payments are subject to a \$25 fee.

Monthly Tuition Rates:

Toddlers		3s	
2 days per week:	\$200/mo	3 days a week:	\$250/mo
3 days per week:	\$250/mo	4 days a week:	\$310/mo
		5 days a week:	\$345/mo
2s		4s	
2 days per week:	\$200/mo	3 days a week:	\$250/mo
3 days per week:	\$250/mo	4 days per week:	\$310/mo
		5 days per week:	\$345/mo
		TK	
		5 days per week:	\$360/mo

Withdrawal Policy

Should it become necessary to withdraw your child from school for any reason, the following procedures are required.

- 1) A withdrawal form must be completed and returned to the preschool office 30 days prior to withdrawal.**
- 2) You are responsible for tuition during the 30-day notice period.**
- 3) Should you withdraw your child without a 30-day notice, you are responsible for 30-days of tuition from the time of notification.**

Tuition Refund Policy

The May 2026 tuition payment is refundable in full until June 30, 2025. After June 30, 2025, the May 2026 payments are non-refundable.

NO discounts are given for extended vacations or absences. Scheduled tuition payments are required in order for the Weekday School to hold your child's space in their classroom until their return. Reentry to our program will depend on availability and subject to a Reenrollment fee of \$95.

Tuition Due Dates/Delinquent Payments

Tuition invoices will be sent to you via brightwheel on or near the 1st of each month. Tuition may be paid on-line, by check or cash. Please pay tuition from your invoice.

Tuition payments are due the 1st of each month and considered late after the 7th. Payments received after this date will be considered delinquent and are subject to a late fee (unless arrangements have been made with the Weekday School Office).

Statements will be mailed only in the case of delinquent payments. Such accounts will not be carried after 30 days unless arrangements are made with the Weekday School Office. Chronic late payments (three late payments over the course of a year) may be a cause of dismissal. The preschool operates solely on the funds generated by tuition, therefore prompt payment is necessary to meet the payroll, buy snacks, art supplies, and equipment.

SCHOOL CLOSING POLICIES

UCUMC Weekday School closely follows the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School calendar for vacation and federal holidays, with a few exceptions. Please see the WDS calendar for exact dates.

In the event of hazardous road conditions due to snow or ice or extreme cold conditions, the preschool will follow the CMS school closings. Please stay tuned to television stations, Facebook, and/or brightwheel messages for school closing information.

In case of inclement weather beginning after school has started if Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools close early, the WDS will also close. WDS will also send out notices through Facebook, emails and brightwheel.

INCLUSION POLICY

In keeping with our call to minister to all of God's children, UCUMC Weekday School is committed to the philosophy that including children with differing abilities benefits all the children in our school. We are clear, however, that UCUMC is not a therapeutic preschool, but an opportunity for children with disabilities and typically developing children to interact, learn, and socialize.

When a child with an identified special need registers for enrollment in the Weekday school, the Director carefully interviews the parents for information about the child's developmental strengths and weaknesses. Any relevant past and current records and evaluations of the child by professionals are requested.

After enrollment the child is observed closely for several weeks. Teachers, the Director, parents, and professionals working with the child are consulted during this time. If the child's needs are determined to put an exceptional stress on the classroom, a third teacher (or Shadow) may join the classroom to provide additional support. It is felt that it is desirable to allow all children this adjustment period except in extreme circumstances. At the end of this period, a determination is again made as to whether the placement is mutually beneficial.

Three possible determinations at this time are:

- the child's presence in the classroom is of mutual benefit
- the Weekday School is unable to meet the child's needs
- there is a need for professional consultation, with the expectation that appropriate intervention will enable the relationship to be mutually beneficial.

If it is determined by consultation between the teachers and the Director that UCUMC Weekday School is unable to meet the child's needs, a conference is set up with the parents, and the parents are asked to seek another placement.

If professional consultation is advised and the parents decline to use these services, and the child is determined not to be functioning well in the classroom setting, then the parents are asked to seek other placement.

If professional intervention is used, the situation is carefully monitored. The decision to continue the child's enrollment is based on:

- the professional advice
- the behavior of the child
- the teachers' input
- parental input
- the Director's input

There are times when a child not identified at enrollment as having special needs, exhibits such behaviors at some point during the year. At this point, the process outlined above is put into place.

Whenever possible, UCUMC Weekday School will make reasonable adaptations to meet the individual needs of each child. However, the safety and successful functioning of the class always has priority over the individual needs of any given child within the above outlined policy.

UCUMC Weekday School believes that there is a range of typical, normal, and acceptable abilities, behaviors, and needs of children. We attempt to accommodate as broad a range as possible in the belief that this diversity strengthens and enriches all children, and the adults who work with them.

OUTSIDE THERAPISTS AND AGENCIES

We believe that early intervention is a key to success for many children. We allow for outside therapists and agencies to provide services to children while they are at school.

In order to work in our classrooms, therapist must have had a background check from their agency. They will need to sign in when they come to provide services. Therapists must respect the classroom teachers' routine and expectations.

ABA therapists are valuable assets in the classroom. If a child's ABA therapist is not going to be at school for any reason, then we ask that the child not attend for school that day. Their therapist is a key to the children being able participate effectively in the classroom, and not having that usual support can be cause for a disruptive day for the child and their classmates.

BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. This biting policy has been developed with both of these ideas in mind. We understand that biting can unfortunately be a part of a preschool setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten will be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. Our "I Got a Boo Boo Today" form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child "NO! DO NOT BITE!"
2. The child will be placed in time out for no longer than the child's age (one year old, one minute).
3. The parents are notified.
4. Incident Form is filled out documenting the incident.

When Biting Continues:

1. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents.
2. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
3. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child inflicts 3 bites in one school week in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If the child again inflicts 3 bites in one school week in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked not to return for 2 school days.
3. If a child once again inflicts 3 bites in one school week in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked to take a two week break from school so they can mature and hopefully reenter the classroom smoothly.

If a child, who has been through steps 1 and/or 2, goes 3 weeks without biting, we will go back to step one if the child bites again.

If a child bites twice in a 4 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from school for the remainder of the day.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is the policy of the Weekday School that corporal punishment will never be used for any reason in the preschool classroom, or anywhere on the church premises. The Weekday School staff is trained to set appropriate limits and boundaries to provide for the safety and well-being of each child in their care. Positive discipline measures will be used to redirect and guide a child's behavior.

Techniques of behavior management in use in the Weekday School include the following:

1. Positive reinforcement
2. Ignoring unproductive behavior that is not destructive to people or property
3. Redirecting children to other areas of the room or to new activities
4. Withdrawal of privileges
5. Time out

By using these techniques, boys and girls learn to redirect their energy into constructive outlets and learn to take responsibility for their own actions.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff and other children is unacceptable. The school reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior consistently disrupts the physical and learning needs of others. Every effort is made to work with each child's individual needs. The Director and classroom teachers will effectively communicate with parents if there is a potential problem situation. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, staff members will work as a team with the parents to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

DIRECTOR DISCRETION & BEST-FIT POLICY

Once your child has been in attendance for one month, they may be assessed to determine how best to meet their individual needs, at which time, the Director reserves the right to recommend other options or placements for your child. The Director of UCUMC Weekday School also reserves the right to at any time deny admittance or revoke enrollment of a child at her discretion, either on a permanent or temporary basis on her timeline, for reasons including but not limited to the following:

- Non-Payment of tuition
- Inability to provide the school with medical records
- Child's repeated disruptive behavior
- Child's violent behavior
- Lack of cooperation with staff by student or parent
- Developmental or health needs which cannot be met at UCUMC Weekday School without fundamental changes to or an undue burden on our existing program or procedures.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

The Weekday School wants to meet the needs of the children enrolled in the program. Knowing that parents may at times have concerns regarding various aspects of the program, the administration, the teaching staff, policies, or operating procedures, a system has been established to provide for this communication to take place.

If a parent has an individual teacher/class-related concern, he or she should seek resolution by contacting:

- First, the teacher
- Second, the Director
- Third, the chairperson of the Weekday School Advisory Committee, should the director be unable to satisfactorily address the concern.

If a parent has a concern related to the Weekday School policies, the administration of the program and/or the operating procedures, he or she should seek resolution by contacting:

- First, the Director
- Second, the chairperson of the Weekday School Advisory Committee, should the Director be unable to satisfactorily address the concern.

Remember it is helpful to place all concerns in writing.

VOLUNTEERS/SUBSTITUTES/ Safe Sanctuaries Training

The Weekday School is always in need of substitutes. Everyone wishing to be placed on the substitute list must have gone through Safe Sanctuaries training.

In an effort to keep our children safe, we require that staff, classroom volunteers and substitutes complete the UCUMC Safe Sanctuaries Training and renew the training annually. We encourage all parents to attend the training. Training sessions will be available at the beginning of the school year.

University City UMC Weekday School encourages parental participation in the classroom throughout the school year for special events, parent council and substitute teaching. As a Christian preschool, it is extremely important to us that all adults-teachers and parents alike model Christ-like behavior while participating in any Weekday School activity-including drop-off and pick-up times.

Preschool children are like sponges and will soak up whatever they are exposed to, especially what they see and hear key adults in their lives do. For this reason, we ask that no negative comments about anybody be made in the presence of others. If you have concerns please contact your child's teacher privately. While this may sound like common sense, it is also important that all adults are treated respectfully at all times as well.

Thank you for your cooperation in this area as we strive to create the most nurturing environment possible for everyone involved in the Weekday School Ministry.

University City United Methodist Church Weekday School

PLAY ° GROW ° LEARN