

## ST. SIMONS UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL...

- Cares for children 8 weeks through four years.
- We do not discriminate by means of sex, race, color, or creed, or special needs.
- Children's records are confidential and kept in a locked file.
- We welcome our parents to come to our facility any time during our operating hours and participate in school events.
- We operate from Monday through Friday 12 months a year with holiday breaks.
- Our hours of operation August 5, 2019 through May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Part Day** program occurs between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. all year.
- **School Day** option runs 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. all year.
- **Extended Day** takes place from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Summer Session** operates from Monday, June 1, 2020 through Friday, July 24, 2020, 7:30 a.m. 5:30 p.m.
- Annual Registration is offered to currently enrolled families, church families, waiting list families and finally, the public, in that order.
- As a Bright From the Start licensed program and a Quality Rated school, we follow all requirements and amendments set forth by the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and Quality Rated standards.

## PRESCHOOL OBJECTIVES

Our overall objective is to help each child become aware that all people are worthy of God's love and the love of other human beings. We seek to honor Christ by pointing the children in our preschool toward Him. We also want them to experience the loving care of adults who will help them develop understandings, attitudes, and skills appropriate for each particular age level. We are a child centered program and would like to instill in our children a love of learning and excitement for the school years ahead.

## GOALS OF OUR PRESCHOOL

### **That each child will:**

1. Develop an ability to communicate effectively, with teachers and classmates, to hear and imitate sounds used to form words, and to understand and follow simple directions.
2. Develop a growing concept of the relationship of numbers, time, space, and form.
3. Have opportunities for observing and understanding the basic phenomena of weather and seasonal changes.
4. Be introduced to the growth cycle of plants and animals.
5. Develop an awareness of music, an appreciation of sound and rhythm, and an ability to participate in some form of musical expression.
6. Learn more about self and others through informal role-play.
7. Have opportunities for using art and craft materials and develop an increasing appreciation of form, color, and texture.
8. Understand that God has something to say to each person in every situation that will be encountered.
9. Experience the loving care of adults whose lives exemplify commitment to the Christian community.
10. Develop an understanding of emotions and feelings.

## **CURRICULUM and ASSESSMENT**

St. Simons United Methodist Preschool uses the Georgia Early Learning Development Standards (GELDS) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) criteria as the basis for our curriculum.

Subjects during the year will include the seasons, weather, holidays, colors, numbers, shapes, home and family, and many more. You will receive a monthly newsletter including a calendar of school events as well as a weekly lesson plan showing activities and concepts being taught and how they relate to the cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual growth of your child.

As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. At the end of October Lead Teachers will meet with all parents to go over observations and a basic checklist of developmental characteristics. In January and May, Progress Reports will be sent home. Parents and/or Teachers may request a conference as necessary.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of posted daily schedules, lesson plans, and individual daily sheets.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Children should always be treated with respect and courtesy. Preventing a situation in which a child might find conflict and therefore exhibit negative actions is the roll of the staff and parents. A child's behavior can be affected by changes in the home and illness. If our staff is made aware of changes in a child's life, it is easier to understand an unusual behavior and address it appropriately. Staff will always be polite and loving when disciplining a child. Finding the right type of discipline for each child is the roll of the teacher. Redirecting a child's attention or getting on level and speaking to a child in a serious tone are other ways to manage behavior. The teacher will make parents aware of a child's daily demeanor with a daily note and/or a short conversation. If behaviors are harmful to other children, the child may be referred to the Director. In extreme instances, the parents may be called to pick up their child and arrangements made to meet with the Director and teacher to construct a behavior modification plan.

## BITING

Biting is a fact-of-life in a preschool for a variety of reasons.

1. Young children have not fully mastered the skill of communication. They are unable to tell you how they feel and get really frustrated.
2. Biting is a very powerful release of frustration, leadership, or anger.
3. Toddlerhood is frustrating as they learn new physical and social skills.
4. They know it gets a great reaction and use it as a way to get attention.
5. They could be teething.
6. It feels good.
7. A child may be hungry or tired.
8. They may have seen another child do it and want to try it, too.
9. Maybe an adult has bitten or nibbled them during play. A child does not know his own strength and thinks that he/she is playing when they bite.
10. They have never been corrected for doing this in the past.

Most children stop biting around the age of 3 when they are better able to use their verbal skills.

To prevent biting:

1. Provide cloth or teething ring for teething.
2. Provide tactile experiences so that proper touching is desired and feels good.
3. Provide redirection experiences to keep their attention focused in a positive way.
4. Reinforce positive behaviors.
5. Help toddlers with language skills or sign language to communicate wants and needs.
6. Provide spaces for one and areas for a few giving children room.

If biting occurs:

1. If the skin is broken, bite is cleaned thoroughly and ice is applied. Parents are notified.
2. If the skin is not broken, the bite is cleaned and ice is applied. Parents will receive a note at the end of the day.
3. The bitten child is taken to a quiet area to be soothed until calm.
4. The biter is taken aside and told firmly, without yelling that: a) biting hurts, b) "See the tears?" of the bitten child, c) demonstrate gentle touch on the biter.
5. If the same child bites again, he/she is removed from the classroom setting for a period of time.
6. In rare instances, if redirecting, feeding, and napping have not stopped the need to bite, parents may be contacted to pick up their child.

## HEALTH

### **Your Part:**

The staff will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of your child. Your cooperation is expected to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. No child should come to preschool visibly ill. If your child shows symptoms such as diarrhea, nausea, sore throat, skin rash, ear ache, or excessive coughing, please **DO NOT** send him/her to school. Children with a fever more than 100 degrees should not be sent to school. If a contagious disease is contracted by your child, notify the Director **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. A letter will be sent home with students immediately notifying parents of their child's exposure to the specific disease. E-mail will also be used to keep parents current. Updated contact information (new phone #, address, etc.) helps locating parents when necessary.

### **Our Part:**

Children should be referred to the Director any time they feel ill or show signs of a fever. If a child has a temperature is 101degrees or higher, parents will be contacted to get their child. If a child has a temperature of 100 degrees and is showing other signs of illness (diarrhea, nausea, rash, sore throat, lethargy) then, the parents will be contacted to get their child. Ill children will rest in the office until an authorized person comes for them. **Children must be SYMPTOM free for a full 24 hours, without the aid of medication, before they can return to school.**

### **Medication:**

**We will not administer non-prescribed pain relievers, such as Tylenol.**

For the Director or Preschool Assistant to administer prescription medication, parents must:

1. Complete the **Child Medication Form**.
2. Bring the prescribed medication in the original container.
3. Drop off medication and form to the Director or School Assistant for proper storage and administration.

In the event of an illness or accident which requires immediate medical treatment, parents will be contacted for instruction. If parents cannot be reached, the Director or other personnel designated by the Director will authorize treatment. If necessary, a child will be transported by the Director, Assistant Director, or designated personnel to the Immediate Care Center, 5000 Wellness Way, St. Simons Island, GA 31522. In the event of a life-threatening situation, 911 will be called.

**(Emergency Treatment form)**

In the event of an illness or accident which requires immediate medical treatment while on a trip off St. Simons Island, and previously mentioned protocol has been followed, a child may be transported to the Immediate Care Center, 3400 Parkwood Dr., Brunswick, GA 31525.

Any substances such as sun screens, diaper cream, anti-bacterial ointment, insect repellent, etc. must be supplied by the parents and labeled with the child's name. Children will not share such substances. Parents will complete an **Authorization to Dispense External Preparations form** to have on file in the school office.

It is the policy of St. Simons United Methodist Preschool that all children have a current Georgia Immunization Form at the time of enrollment. **We will not accept any waivers for immunizations.** Parents will be sent a reminder of an expiring immunization form. **No child is allowed to attend school 30 days past the expired date.** Unvaccinated children or staff members pose tangible risks leading to the spread of otherwise containable diseases, illness and even death. Immunized children and staff not only protect themselves from illness, but also contribute to collective immunity - guarding others who are not eligible for certain vaccines by containing the spread of disease.

Although it is not required for enrollment, we encourage parents of 4-year-olds to have vision, hearing, and dental screenings done by your health professional and submit form 3300 to keep in your child's file. Early detection and treatment of any health concern will only improve your child's development.

We are required, by state law, to report suspected cases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children Services.

We are required, by state law, to report any suspected case of notifiable communicable disease to the local county Health Department.

Please note that all parent notices are available for viewing on the bulletin board outside the preschool office. These include, but are not limited to: our license, copy of rules, review of evaluation report, communicable disease chart, statement of parental access, the names of persons in charge, emergency plans for severe weather, and fire, and procedure for visitors.

## **HEAD LICE**

Head lice are small insects that live on the human scalp, feeding on human blood several times a day. An adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed. The parasites make small bites in the scalp to suck blood and live off of human hosts. The bites do not hurt, but lice excrete a substance to prevent the blood from clotting, which can cause severe itching and allergic reactions. Without treatment, lice can live on the host for about 30 days. Without a host, they live 1 or 2 days. Females can lay between 8-10 eggs each day. The small, white eggs or nits are “cemented” to the hair shaft, usually a ¼ of an inch or more away from the scalp.

Head lice are most common among children 3-11 years old. Lice move by crawling. They cannot fly or hop. The most common way to transfer lice is head-to-head contact. It may also be spread by sharing clothing items, hair items such as combs and bows. It can be on bedding, rugs, and furniture.

A preschool setting involves close contact between children. If a child is found to be with lice, the child will be removed from the room. The parent or guardian will be contacted to come and get the child immediately. The child will be allowed to return to school when no active lice or nits are found on the child’s head or hair. The child will be checked by staff before being allowed to stay. If nits or lice are found, the child will return home with the parent or guardian. If the child returns a second time and lice or nits are found, the child will not be able to return to school without a doctor’s note confirming the fact that the child is lice and nit free. The entire classroom will be checked for lice periodically over a period of 2 weeks. Dress up clothes, stuffed animals, and other shared washable items are cleaned with a soap/bleach solution. Other toys are washed and disinfected as usual. A school-wide e-mail will be sent if a case has been identified.

## **DIAPERING AND TOILET TRAINING**

Infants and toddlers will be checked and changed at regular intervals (every 2 hours) at a vented diaper changing area. If it is obvious a child needs changing sooner, they will be changed. Children will be changed before naps and after if necessary. As children begin to go longer periods between diaper changes and show signs of independence, staff will discuss with parents the introduction of toilet training. Infants and toddlers will have their hands cleaned after diapering and learn to wash at the sink as they mature. During this process, parents will provide diapers, pull-ups, underwear, extra clothes, and wipes. **Children must be toilet-trained to advance to the Threes classroom.**

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

In order to promote better communication between home and school, parents will escort their children to their respective classrooms.

Since we have dedicated our most instructive part of the day to occur between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., we encourage all families to have their children here by 8:30 a.m.

Families with **Extended Day** privileges may enter and exit the school between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the regular school year and 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. during Summer Session.

Families using the **Part-Day** option are encouraged to have their children here by 8:30 a.m. and pick up at 12:30 p.m.

**IMPORTANT: All parents or designated person MUST sign their children in and out at the office window every day. It is a state requirement.**

**NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO ANY UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.** If your child will be riding with someone other than a parent, please write a note stating who will be picking him/her up. We will keep this information on file so daily correspondence won't be necessary. If you have an emergency that prevents you from being able to be on time, please call to let us know who will be coming for him/her. Failure to pick up your child on time will result in a \$1.00 charge for each minute after 6:00 p.m. (5:30 in the summer). Please make sure anyone who may pick up your child is aware of this policy.



## CLOTHING

Please dress him/her in **PLAY** clothing that is durable and comfortable. Since we go outside to play whenever possible, dress your child appropriately for warm or cool weather. Please send a change of clothes and underwear in a ziploc bag with the child's name on it in case of an accident. Children grow quickly! Make sure you send clothing that fits your child. If your child is potty-training, please send him/her in clothing that is easy to remove and several sets of clothing. It is the parents' responsibility to send diapers and baby wipes. **Flip flops are not allowed.** They are dangerous for playing children. We recommend rubber-soled shoes with socks. If your child does not have proper footwear upon arrival at school, you will be asked to go home and get something safe and appropriate.

## TOYS

**ALL TOYS ARE TO BE LEFT AT HOME.** It is impossible for teachers to keep up with extra toys and children get **VERY** upset if they are lost. Often children will want to bring toys that have small parts and will present a danger in the classroom. We have plenty of toys to hold their interest. Sometimes, we will set aside special days to bring items from home as they pertain to a lesson or special occasion. These days will be indicated on your monthly calendar or teachers will give instructions as to which days to bring them. They should be labeled with your child's name.

## FIELD TRIPS

A blanket permission form is included in each folder. This applies to areas of our church property not within our secured hall, for instance, children exercise in the Thorpe Building and we hold chapel in the Chapel. Individual trip permission slips are required for field trips off the church premises, yet within walking distance and when vehicle transportation is needed. In this case, transportation will be provided by parent/guardian vehicles. Parents/Guardians wishing to drive may do so as long as a copy of a **valid driver's license** and proof of **vehicle registration** is on file with the preschool office. Parents will drive their own children or grant permission for their child to ride with another parent as per the Field Trip Permission Slip. No child will be transported without a proper car seat. Off-site trips will be posted on the calendar and parents will be given plenty of notice in order to submit fees and signed permission slips.

## HOLIDAYS

A school calendar is located in this handbook to let you know in advance what holidays and work days our preschool will **not** be in session. While we generally follow the public school schedule, it does vary. **If weather conditions warrant the closing of the public schools, we will close also. Local radio stations report school closings.**

Throughout the year, we will celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, end-of-the-year, etc. Parents can provide cookies or cupcakes for their child's birthday only if they have been commercially prepared. Please notify the teacher of your plans a few days in advance. **We cannot serve other children foods made at home.** It is a BFTS regulation. We will ask for a small monetary donation from families when we have larger classroom parties which will conform to BFTS and government regulations.

## SNACKS/LUNCHES

The preschool will provide 2 nutritious snacks each day. Whole milk will be offered to children 12 months to 24 months. Children two and older will be served skim or 1% milk. If your child has a milk allergy, a physician's note is required to be put in the child's folder stating such. **Please DO NOT send snacks from home UNLESS your child has allergies to certain foods.** If your child is allergic to any foods, please notify the teacher and Director on the first day of school and make sure the **Enrollment Information Sheet** is complete with that information. State Regulations mandate that a time of 2 hours be allotted between eating times. Depending on the class, snacks are offered between 9:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. because lunch is served between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. Please be sure your child has had breakfast if you come in after 8:00.

Parents will be responsible for sending a sack lunch for their child which meets the criteria for *Bright From the Start* lunches. See **Meal Guidelines and Criteria for Sack Lunches**. Parents of infants may refer to **Infant Feeding Guidelines**. If certain meal criteria are not met, parents will be notified and have the choice of bringing missing components by lunch time or let us supply the missing components and be charged accordingly. Parents of infants must complete the **Infant Feeding Plan** sheet. All bottles and food items must be labeled with the child's name. Bottles must come prepared. All opened, unused food, formula, and breast milk will be discarded at the end of the day. Parents will update the **Feeding Plan Sheet** as necessary. **Please note that hot dogs (no matter how they are cut), grapes, and popcorn cannot be served to children two years and younger.** Children advancing from the infant room to the Ones class must be able to drink from a sippy cup or cup. Bottles are not prepared or given in that class.

## NAPS

Children, infant through 2 years, will have a nap time in designated rooms. Children 3 and 4 years of age may also nap. Sleep cots will be provided by the school for Ones through Older Threes. The school has sheets and blankets for our students which we launder and change weekly or as needed. Parents may send sheets, blankets, or nap sacks. Personal bedding will be brought on Monday (or the first day of the week), separated into individual storage bags during the week, and sent home for laundering on Friday (or the last day of the week). Children may have a soft, naptime toy or special blanket. **DO NOT send anything that must go home on a daily basis.** EVERYTHING must be at school for the week. In the event personal bedding is soiled, it will be sent home for cleaning and returned the next day. **Anything that is sent from home must be labeled with the child's name.**

**Pacifiers must not have anything attached to them as it presents a suffocation risk.** Children will be weaned from pacifiers before entering the Two-year-old classroom.

So as not to disrupt naptime, please be sure your child is here before 12:30, otherwise the child may return to school after 2:30. If you are picking up a child after 12:30 or before 2:30 please check in the office. We will notify the teaching staff and bring the child out to you.

## INFANT CARE AND SLEEPING

Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep. No cover or soft items are allowed in the crib. Parents will provide appropriate sleep clothing. Infants who fall asleep in other equipment, on the floor, or elsewhere will be moved to a crib to sleep. We do not swaddle or use positioning devices. Pacifiers with items attached such as little stuffed animals or clips to attach to clothing, teething necklaces, and bibs other than at meal times, are not allowed.