



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

Parent Handbook

2017 - 2018

CONYERS FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

921 N. Main Street

Conyers, Georgia 30012

770-483-4236

www.conyersfirst.org



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

Dear Parents,

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for choosing Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool. We take pride in our school and all that we offer the children in our care. You have enrolled your child in a 50 year tradition at Conyers First and in the Conyers community. Please read this handbook and use it as a guide in understanding our preschool and the policies, programs, and practices that we operate under here at Conyers First. If you have any questions concerning our policies and procedures, please feel free to contact me or your child's teacher.

Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool is a weekday preschool. We are dedicated to partnering with you in helping your child to grow in the most fundamental ways. First in foremost we are devoted to sharing Christian values with each child through our words, our actions, and our lessons. We are steadfast in our commitment to promote the growth of the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects of every child in our care. Finally, we strive to provide the best program that will prepare them for the next step, elementary school.

The teachers and staff of Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool are working hard to make this the absolute best experience for your child. Know that your child will be loved and lifted in prayer while in our care. We are here for you and your family anytime you need us. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can best serve you. Thank you again for choosing Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool.

Thankfully,
Melissa Carter
CFUMC Preschool Director

Start children off on the way they should go,
and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6



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Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

Purpose Statement

CFUMC Preschool is an Early Childhood Education program designed to serve children from 12 months to 4 year old Pre-Kindergarten. We are a church supported, self-funded weekday preschool. We are governed by a Preschool Advisory Board whose members include the Conyers First United Methodist Church Children's Minister, CFUMC Preschool Director, CFUMC Church Members, Parents of CFUMC Preschool students, and CFUMC Preschool teachers.

Mission Statement

The Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool is a vibrant and growing part of Conyers First United Methodist Church. As such it is our mission to provide a Christ-centered education to the children of God in a loving environment. We strive to provide the highest quality early childhood education possible in warm and accepting surroundings, and bring glory to God with all we do.

Belief of the United Methodist Church

The United Methodist Church is an 11-million-strong global church that opens hearts, opens doors and opens minds through active engagement with our world. John Wesley and the early Methodists placed primary emphasis on Christian living, on putting faith and love into action. This emphasis has continued to be a hallmark of United Methodism today. Find more about The United Methodist Church at www.umc.org.



2017-2018 School Calendar

Aug. 6	Parent Orientation
Aug. 7	Children's Open House
Aug. 8	First Day of School
Sept. 4	Labor Day - No School
Oct. 2-6	Fall Break – No School
Oct. 23	Preschool Board Meeting
Nov. 6	Teacher Workday - No School
Nov. 15	Thanksgiving Feast – 11:30 AM in Fellowship Hall
Nov. 20-24	Thanksgiving Holidays – No School
Dec. 14	Christmas Program – 6:00 PM in Fellowship Hall
Dec. 18 – Jan. 2	Christmas Holidays (inclusive)- No School
Jan. 3	Return to School
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Holiday – No School
Jan. 25	Preschool Board Meeting
Feb. 12	Box Tops DUE
Feb. 19-23	Winter Break – No School
Mar. 19-23	Teacher Appreciation Week
April 2-6	Spring Break – No School



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April 19	Art Fair – 6:00 Fellowship Hall
May 1	Pastries with Parents 9:00 AM (Doodle Bugs M/T class)
May 3	Pastries with Parents 9:00 AM
May 17	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL -Explorers Graduation

Highlighted Events

Thanksgiving Feast

Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and friends are invited to attend. The children will make decorations for the tables and each child makes the placemats for invited guests. Entertainment will be music provided by the children.

Christmas Program

Our Christmas program is absolutely wonderful and amazing! Each child, no matter their age, participates in this exciting program. Ms. Theresa will amaze you in bringing out the hidden talents of your child. You will not want to miss this event. So tell your families and friends to mark their calendars now!!

Art Fair/Dinner/Auction

During the year your child will bring home a variety of art work. On this night, you will be amazed at the presentation. Each class completes two creative pieces – a piece of Art completed by the class and an Auction item. Both will be auctioned off be ready to bid for this one of a kind piece of art!

Hours and Days of Operation

School hours are from 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday through Friday. Because we operate under an exemption from the State, we cannot have children in the building more than 4 hours a day. So, please do not ask to drop children off early before 8:55am.

School Calendar our Preschool runs on the same school calendar as the Rockdale County School System, however we start school in August 1 week after the school system and end one week before Rockdale county ends in May.



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

School Closings due to ice, snow, tornados and other inclement weather will be in accordance with Rockdale County School closings. Please check with local radio/television for weather advisories and closings. (WSB 750 AM, WSB TV Channel 2 ABC)



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

CFUMC STAFF and BOARD

<u>Class</u>	<u>Lead Teacher</u>	<u>Assistant</u>	<u>Ages</u>
Doodle Bugs (MMO)	Paula Estes	Janet Latimer	12-23 mo
Leapin' Lizards (I)	Candace Murtaugh	Jeanie Smith	2 yr. olds
Leapin' Lizards (II)	Katie Talbott	Canda Nixon	2 yr. olds
Super Kids (I)	Darlene Yaber	Deborah Harrison	3 yr. olds
Super Kids (II)	Mary Sedyame	Lisa Harrison	3 yr. olds
Explorers	Amy Pridgen	Kathy Tollison	4 yr. olds
Arts Academy	Judy Mauran/ Jennifer Baker/ Theresa Hamm-Smith		

Director

Melissa Carter

Office Number

(770) 483-4236 ext. 119

Chairperson-Preschool Board

Lisa Wust

lisawust@gmail.com



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

Admissions

- Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool is open to any child and acceptance into the school is never based on race, national or ethnic origin, color, or gender. Every child is welcomed and loved as we see each child as a child of God and is deserving of all of the rights and privileges given them by God.
- Children must be of the age for the class they are entering by August 1 of that year. No exceptions will be made.
- A child can be retained at the request of the parents.
- Children must be fully potty trained in order to be enrolled in the 3 year old and Pre-K classes.
- Registration begins in February each year.
- For your child to be registered you must have all required documents and registration fees turned in with your registration packet.
- Preschool classes are filled as openings are available in the following order of preference: Currently enrolled children and their siblings (Conyers First UMC members), currently enrolled children and their siblings (non-members), Conyers First UMC members not currently enrolled, and the general public.
- All children not placed will be put on a waiting list and will be notified as openings are available.
- Placement of all children in Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool is left to the discretion of the Director.

Required Records

- Registration Packet, completed
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Immunization Form #3231 (due 2 weeks after school begins)
State law requires the verification of immunizations of all children enrolled. Immunization forms must be updated and kept current during the school year in order for a child to remain in school. This form (DHR Form 3231 * GA Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization) is provided by your pediatrician.



Conyers First United Methodist Church Preschool

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is based on the family's commitment to a full year of preschool. We do not make deductions from tuition for absences. A tuition envelope is sent home at the end of each month for the next month's tuition payment. Please use this envelope to ensure we see your payment and can apply it toward your balance. **Payment is expected by the 1st of each month and no later than the 8th of the month. Please add a \$10 late fee if turned in after the 8th.**

Tuition Schedule

Doodle Bugs (MMO)	Mon./Tue or W/Th.	\$1,400/year \$140/ a month
Leapin' Lizards (2's)	M, T, W, Th	\$2,150/year or \$215/month
Super Kids (3's)	M-F	\$2,550/year or \$275/month
Explorers (4's)	M-F	\$2,750/year or \$275/month

**There is a charge of \$25 for all returned checks. If returned checks become a habitual problem we will require money orders or cash payments for the remainder of the year.

**There is a 10% discount for siblings, so the oldest sibling pays full tuition, the next receives 10% off their tuition, and so on.

**Children whose tuition is not paid before the beginning of the next month will not be allowed to continue in school until tuition and fees are made current.

Registration Fees: are collected at the time of registration. This fee provides the preschool with materials, insurance, and supplies its programs. The registration fee is equal to 1 month's tuition.

Refunds/Withdrawals: If you need to withdraw your child from the preschool, we ask for a 30 day advance written notice. Tuition payments are non-refundable.

You can now pay for preschool ONLINE. Payments can be made by bank draft or credit card.



Our Program

Curriculum

The preschool is geared to the young child's way of learning. Each teacher is able to manage their classroom to meet the needs of the students being served. Where the Doodle Bugs are learning how to be social and secure, the 4 year olds are using creative play and art to learn mathematics. In all classes the individual is the focus. At this early age it is important to meet each child where they are in order to encourage a lifelong love of learning. Our 3 year olds and four year olds do use the Handwriting Without Tears Curriculum and Jack and Jilly to build handwriting/small motor skills and phonemic awareness. Remember to be patient as they are learning new and different things.

Arts Academy

Our Arts Academy is a collaboration with local businesses to introduce arts into the lives of Conyers First Preschool students. This includes Creative Movement with Judy Mauran of Conyers School of Ballet, Visual Arts with Jennifer Baker of The Sketching Pad, and Music with Theresa Hamm-Smith of Bella Musica, all found locally here in Old Town Conyers. The Arts Academy runs Monday through Wednesday each week.

Chapel

Chapel is taught by Mrs. Melissa. While Methodist doctrine is not taught, the stories and lessons of the Holy Bible are. Weekly the children will get to hear the matchless Word of God, taught on their level through games, songs, and storytelling. It is our mission and duty that every child hear the story of Christ and his love upon entering the doors of our school.

Class Ratios

Class	Student/Teacher Ratio
Doodle Bugs	1:4
Leapin' Lizards	1:6
Super Kids	1:6
Explorers	1:7



Carpool and Car Seats

Children are to arrive between 9:00am and 9:15 am. Preschool doors open at 9:00am. Please be on time as teachers are starting class promptly at 9:15. Teachers are happy to assist your child out of the car each morning. If you arrive after 9:15, please enter through the **Welcome Center** of the church and make your way down to the preschool.

Preschool ends at 1:00pm. Please be on time in picking up your little one. Late pick-ups bring unnecessary anxiety. Also, teachers need to get back to their rooms to clean up from their day and plan for the next class day, parent tardiness interrupts their ability to prepare for the next day. **If a parent comes after 1:15pm a charge of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. Payment is expected the next school day.**

Afternoon Carpool moves more smoothly when parents remain in the car line. It is safer and less disruptive for teachers and children when parents remain in the car line. If unable to wait in the carline, please come to the double glass doors and ask for your child, please do not enter the building. Parents should never take their child from carpool without notifying a teacher.

Teachers cannot buckle seatbelts, please pull forward to buckle in your child. **Every child must have a car seat.** It is the state law and for your child's safety.

Doodle Bugs

Doodle Bugs are to be brought to their classroom between 9:00am and 9:15am and picked up at 1:00pm from their classroom. Please enter through the door that is adjacent to the Doodle Bug classroom.

Leapin' Lizards and Super Kids

Leapin' Lizards and Super Kids are picked up and dropped off under the awning of the preschool building via Rosser Street or Glade Street.

Explorers

For Explorers pick-up and drop-off enter the church parking lot using the driveway between the red brick church and the white parsonage (house) via Main Street. **In the event of rain, please bring Explorers to the awning of the preschool building.**



Authorized Release of Children

No child will be released without authorization from a parent or legal guardian. Written permission or, in an emergency, a phone call to the Director, is required if there is any change *from person(s) authorized to pick-up a child as listed on the child's Registration form.*

If there are permanent changes in these persons during the year, written notification is required and a copy of a Georgia Driver's License must be submitted to the Director.

Verbal messages from children will not be accepted. No child can go home with another child without a note from parent.

Please make the preschool aware of any custody arrangements. CFUMC Preschool must act in accordance with the rulings of the court. All legal papers pertaining to custody must be on file in our office. Legal documents must be updated for any changes regarding custody in order for the preschool to honor them.

HEALTH POLICY

Our health policy is defined in order to protect the well child as well as to promote the best environment for the sick child. Children in good health are expected to attend school each day. If a child shows obvious behavioral or dietary change which could precede an illness, please consider keeping the child at home. Should a child exhibit any of the following symptoms within 24 hours before school, the child must remain at home: *fever (99 degrees or above), sore throat, earache, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, undiagnosed rash, persistent cough, congestion, non-clear runny nose, pink-eye, head lice or any contagious disease.*

If your child suffers from allergies that cause a non-clear runny nose but is otherwise well enough to come to school, we require a note to that effect from your pediatrician before he or she can come to school.

A child who, due to a temporary health condition, cannot play outside should remain at home. We ask that you do not send medications of any type to preschool.

The Director must be informed at once of any communicable disease. Should a child become ill while at school, the parent will be contacted and required to pick the child up as soon as possible.

RELEASE FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Every precaution is taken to keep the children safe and well at school. Parents must sign a Health Information Form in order for us to provide your child optimum care while at school. The school will make every reasonable effort to contact a parent and/or the physician named on the emergency release



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form. In the event an injury or illness does not appear serious but medical treatment is deemed necessary, emergency treatment will be given by the school and/or hospital to which the child is transported.

In the event an injury or illness appears serious and medical treatment is deemed necessary, paramedics will be contacted immediately. The paramedics will decide whether they can administer treatment at the school or if the child should be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency care. Should this be necessary, emergency treatment will be given by the paramedics and/or hospital to which the child is taken at the parent's expense.

ACCIDENT REPORT: When a child is hurt/injured at school, a copy of the Accident Report will be sent home that day.

Behavior Management

At CFUMC Preschool, children are engaged in various activities throughout the day to keep them learning and interested. In keeping the children engaged in what they are doing we can avoid many negative behaviors. However, we understand that everyone can have an off day, in those cases we use these strategies to manage the situation:

1. Redirection and Substitution – Change the child's focus
2. Model and Problem Solve – Show examples of expected behavior and offer suggestions.
3. Logical Consequences – Match the consequence to the behavior being corrected. (i.e. If a child is throwing blocks instead of building he may be asked to play in another center.)
4. Isolate – Time alone helps get feelings under control.
5. Office Visit – If negative behavior continues, a visit with the Director and parent notification may be necessary

Biting: If a biting incident occurs in your classroom, the following guidelines will be implemented: 1. 1st offense or infrequent biting (ex. Biting in September and then again in December) an accident report will be sent to all children involved. 2. For biting incidents that occur more frequently: 2nd offense – biting forms from office will be sent home. 3rd offense – Conference with parents. 3. If biting becomes habitual, further action may be taken by the Director, which could include being excused from CFUMC Preschool.



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INFORMATION AND POLICIES

PRESCHOOL OFFICE

The office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. each school day; the telephone number is (770) 483-4236 ext.119. After 1:45 p.m., please leave a message on voice mail and your call will be returned the next school day.

Your Little One's First Days

It is important to point out that sooner or later after the initial successful adjustment at school is made, all children want to explore the limits of not going to school. This period may occur in October or December or in spring, but it usually last only a short time. When this occurs, here are some suggestions which may help you to handle the situation:

- Place an emphasis on what the child is doing at school rather than what your activities are while he/she is in school
- See that the child is involved in a specific activity or is in the hands of a teacher before you leave
- Tell the child when you are leaving. Avoid prolonged good-byes
- Ask the teacher for help in separation. We expect crying and usually the tears are the child's attempt to elicit a response from the parent. Once the parent leaves, the tears typically stop!
- If the child does not stop crying, the parent will be notified.

SHARE-A-SNACK and LUNCH

Share-a-snack is where you will participate in providing a daily snack for 3-5 days for the number of children in your child's class. Your child's teacher will send home a list of the assigned weeks/parents. Also included will be a list of appropriate and inappropriate snacks. Parents are also asked to provide a lunch daily for their child. Please keep lunches nutritious and simple. We encourage items such as sandwiches, cheese, crackers, fruit, raisins, raw vegetables/dip, pretzels and goldfish crackers for lunch. Children will be eating in their classroom each day. **Please do not include foods that require heating.**

BOOK BAGS/BACK PACKS

Each child is required to bring a book bag/back pack to school each day. It should be large enough for your child's lunch box and 8 ½ x 11 papers. All messages, notes, art work, etc. will be sent home in the book bag each day. **It is the parent's responsibility to check the book bag each day for notes and other information.**



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PARENT COMMUNICATION:

Classroom Monthly Calendar

By the beginning of each month, teachers will send home a calendar highlighting items for that month such as bible verses, art activities, birthdays, letters/colors, field trips, etc. It is useful to post this on the refrigerator or some conspicuous place for easy referral. Please read carefully. The monthly calendar promotes excellent conversational opportunities with your child.

Email and Newsletters

Please make sure that you have a current email address on file with the director and your child's teacher. We use email regularly to communicate important events, schedule changes, and other classroom news. This is your best and quickest source of information. The director and teachers will also send home monthly newsletters via folders or email, please read these so you know what is happening at school.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Formal conferences with your child's teacher will take place twice during the year. Conferences do not take the place of daily communication but allow opportunities for detailed discussion of the child's development and for parents to express concerns or ask questions. These conferences are focused on our three and four year old children and will be scheduled by the teachers. However, conferences may be scheduled at any time during the school year by parents of any age child. Please contact your child's teacher to arrange a time to meet.

We ask that all conversations regarding your child be held in a confidential setting especially if it is concerning behavior or areas of improvement.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please send children to school in play clothes (that you do not mind if they get dirty) appropriate for active learning. For your child's safety and comfort, only closed toe shoes must be worn. **Jellies, flip-flops, open toed shoes, cowboy boots and CROCS are not permitted for safety reasons.** Little toes are easily hurt and children have a difficult time on the playground.

As the seasons change, please send your child with appropriate jackets or coats as we go outside every day we can; please label with child's name. In case of an accident, we ask parents to provide a change of clothes to stay in the classroom at all times.

Please do not allow your child to bring favorite toys, candy, gum, jewelry, make-up, money, etc to school.



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SPECIAL DAYS

Birthdays

Parents are encouraged to observe their child's birthday or a "pretend" birthday for our summer birthdays by planning a SIMPLE celebration with the teacher on the day closest to the actual birthday. Two birthdays on the same day should be coordinated by the parents. Special cookies, cupcakes and napkins may be brought by the parents. *No balloons, please.*

Parent Orientation

This special evening meeting in early August is for all parents to have an opportunity to learn more about CFM Preschool, meet our teachers/staff, get involved and ask questions.

Kid's Open House

This is a special scheduled day before school begins when parents and children visit their classroom and meet their teachers. It also allows children to become familiar with their new surroundings. We encourage all families to take advantage of this special day.

Class Parties

Four class parties will be held throughout the year. These will include Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and an end-of-the-year party. In the children's best interest, the simpler school parties are, the better. Attention should be given to the age of child to determine the best kind of treat. This will be coordinated by the Room Mom or Dad.

Field Trips

Field trips enhance learning. Students in Super Kids and Explorers will have the opportunity to enjoy off-site field trips. We ask each parent who can chaperone to do so. All field trips will be in the Olde Town area. The children will be able to walk to all locations. The use of cars will not be needed.



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PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Room Mom/Dad

Each class is in need of a special person(s) willing to assist the teachers in various ways throughout the year. These may include coordinating class parties, field trip transportation, etc. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer.

Substitute Teachers

When teachers are out due to illness or personal days, we need parents to help fill in. We are happy to pay for your time. Please let us know if you are available to substitute during the school year. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Board Membership

Our Preschool is run by a board that helps the director in making this school the best that it can be. If you are interested in working with a team of great individuals to make your child's school AMAZING, please see Melissa Carter or call her at (770)483-4236 ext. 119

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Throughout the school year, there may be times when students are asked to bring in additional supplies for the classroom. Your child's teacher may have specific needs and may ask parents to contribute these items.

FUNDRAISERS

As a small preschool we occasionally need to have fundraisers to help support the school and its operations. We invite all families to be a part of these in order to better the school. And we thank you for your support!

BOX TOPS

We participate in the General Mills Box Top program. If you are not familiar with the General Mills program, we will send home more information on ways your family can participate. We encourage all our families to clip and collect Box Tops for our school.



Policy for Children with Special Needs

As a small private preschool we are not equipped to take children with disabilities. If a child is already in our care and we observe over an extended period of time:

- a. The child having difficulty performing at an appropriate developmental age level
- b. Is having difficulty adjusting to school, or
- c. Is disrupting the learning environment for children, then
- d. Efforts are made to make reasonable modifications in the classroom, to address this issue with the parents, and to provide resource information regarding referrals in the county in which the child lives. If after all options are exhausted and there is little to no change, then the child will be withdrawn from school.



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