

SPRING VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PRESCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2021-2022



United Methodist
Preschool

7700 Spring Valley Road
Dallas, Texas 75254
972-233-2317
www.svumc.org

Paul Gould, Senior Pastor
Suzan Meyer, Preschool Director
Shea Harrington, Director of Children and Family Ministry

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August 28, 2019

Greetings Preschool Families,

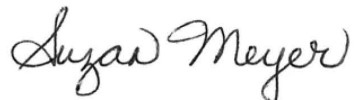
On behalf of each member of the SVUMC Preschool staff, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you. We consider it a sacred privilege to be a part of your lives!

SVUMC Preschool has an outstanding, dedicated group of teachers who have been diligently preparing for the upcoming school year. Because we understand that children learn best when they are in a safe and loving place, we are committed to loving, nurturing, and encouraging your preschooler, as we create a multi-sensory, developmentally appropriate environment for each of our kids. It's going to be a great year, and we all look forward to the friendships and relationships that will grow during our time together.

We understand that we are partners with a common goal – the growth and development of your child. Please feel free to reach out to us.

We are delighted that you have chosen to share your child(ren) with us!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzan Meyer".

Suzan N. Meyer
Director, SVUMC Preschool

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Preschool Advisory Board welcome to Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool.

Our Board is a volunteer advisory body that provides oversight through the Director. We strive to be a liaison between Spring Valley United Methodist Church and the Preschool. We examine policies and procedure, review financial statements and are a sounding board for the Preschool Director. Want to let us know what is on your mind? Feel free to contact us via email or ask to address the Board at it's next meeting.

When you have questions, concerns, or praise to share, we encourage you to start with your child's teacher or a staff member. If your concern is more broad, or if it's sensitivity dictates the involvement of someone other than the teacher, please bring it to the attention of the Director. If the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if it is too sensitive to bring to the Director, request a conference with the SVUMC Senior Pastor, Rev. Paul Gould. At any level of the process, you can expect confidentiality and sensitivity to the needs of your child and your family.

Again, welcome and we hope you and your family have a terrific experience at Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool.

Grace and peace,

Hillary Jackson

Chairman, SVUMC Preschool Board

SVUMC Preschool Board Members

Hillary Jackson

Emily Serold

Mac Rossmurphy

Archimedes Faulkner

Emily Parker

Courtney Wright

Joyce Kemp

Erica Johnson

BJ Hall



SPRING VALLEY

United Methodist Church

7700 Spring Valley Rd., Dallas, Texas, 75254

972-233-7671

www.SVUMC.org

August 28, 2019

Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to the new school year at Spring Valley! We are excited about all the learning, growth and fun ahead for your child/ren.

Please know we consider your child's participation in our program to be a sacred trust. Their growth and development is our top priority. Our teachers and director offer excellent teaching and care, providing your child the nurture he or she needs to thrive in these most formative years.

As we go through the school year I look forward to meeting you and your family personally. I also want to invite you to experience the rest of our children and family ministries at Spring Valley. We have lots of wonderful opportunities. I am confident they would also be a blessing for you.

Again, welcome!

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Gould".

Paul Gould

Senior Pastor, Spring Valley United Methodist Church

MISSION STATEMENT

Children will grow, develop, and learn new skills when they feel safe, secure, and well loved! The mission of Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool is to provide each child with the essential building blocks for academic success and spiritual growth in a safe, nurturing environment. We believe that play is the work of childhood, and skills and knowledge are gained through experience. Learning concepts through play and exploration put children on a path to become lifelong learners.

OUR CURRICULUM

Teachers set their classrooms up in Learning Centers. Each week, activities and literature will be centered around unit-based themes, Sample units include nursery rhymes, fairy tales, seasons, holidays, animals, health and safety, Texas, U.S.A., transportation, and occupations. Our preschool curriculum, LifeWay's WEE Learn, provides the teachers with foundational resources for stimulating activities that are Biblically sound and age-appropriate. Frog Street Press Pre K, a "comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines" is utilized in the two, three and four year old classrooms.

Each age group's classroom structure is designed keeping developmentally appropriate practices in mind. Bible stories and Bible verses are integrated throughout all areas of our program, providing an opportunity for children to develop an awareness of God's love as experienced through relationships with teachers, preschool and church staff, peers, and classroom volunteers.

Unit based lessons plans will focus on language, literacy development, and pre-reading skills, beginning number awareness and math; gross and fine motor development (including handwriting readiness skills) and social and emotional growth. Learning takes place during teacher led activities as well as during group and individual play and exploration.

SVUMC Preschool Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Friday
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

WEBSITE

<http://www.svumc.org/#/preschool>

CONTACTS

Suzan Meyer- Preschool Director

972-233-2317

smeyer@svumc.org

Jill Chris - Administrative Assistant

972-233-2317

schoolsec@svumc.org

Paul Gould—Senior Pastor

973-233-7671

pgould@svumc.org

MAILING ADDRESS

Spring Valley United Methodist Church

Attention: Preschool

7700 Spring Valley Road

Dallas TX 75254

FAX: 972-233-1758

Attention Preschool

GRIEVANCE POLICY

If you ever have a concern or question regarding your child or the operation of the preschool, please contact your child's teacher or the Director and request a conference. For serious grievances, and to better enable us to respond in a timely fashion, please initiate your complaint within 24 hours of the occurrence or event. If, after discussing your concern with the Preschool Director, it is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if your concern involves the preschool director, please request a conference with the Senior Pastor, Rev. Paul Gould. Confidentiality and sensitivity to your needs and concerns are very important to us.

Spring Valley United Methodist Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

A copy of the "Minimum Standards Guidelines", the current SVUMC Preschool license, a copy of the most recent Licensing Inspection Report and additional required postings are located in Director's Office for review. SVUMC Preschool is regulated by the local licensing Office:

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

8700 N Stemmons FWY, STE 104

Dallas, TX 75247

(214) 583-4046

24 Hour Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

www.dfps.state.tx.us

GANG-FREE ZONE

The Texas Penal Code indicates that any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY STATEMENT:

We welcome children regardless of language, class, culture, race or family structure.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

Spring Valley United Methodist Preschool: 972-233-2317

Spring Valley United Methodist Church: 972-233-7671

Spring Valley United Methodist Church FAX: 972-233-1758

Spring Valley United Methodist Church: www.svumc.org

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: 1-800-582-6036

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: www.dfps.state.tx.us

Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 and www.txabusehotline.org

SECURITY

Here at SVUMC Preschool we take your child's safety very seriously.

The security of your child is of the utmost importance. We take every precaution to provide a safe environment for your child. Each family will be given an access code for entrance into the preschool. We ask that you *never* give this information out to anyone. Also, please *do not teach* your children the code or let them practice unlocking the doors.

Ways to keep our school safe:

Accompany your child to class and make sure that they are signed in and signed out. If you will be absent please email the Director/Teacher so that we can keep an accurate count of who is in the building.

If someone new will be picking-up your child, you must let us know in writing. Also, let that person know that we will be checking identification.

When visiting the SVUMC Preschool during the school day we ask that you to check in and check out with either the Director or Admin Assistant.

PROGRAM DAYS

September-May (See calendar for specific start and end dates)

School Day: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Lunch Bunch: Monday - Thursday 12p.m. -3 p.m. (additional cost)

Summer Camp (See calendar for specific start and end dates)

Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

July & August- Closed

REGISTRATION OVERVIEW

Registration begins in January, using priority tier groups. Once classes begin to fill up, we will give priority to siblings and currently enrolled students, as well as the children of staff and church members.

Upon notification of acceptance, registration forms are required by state licensing. Payment of your child's registration fee will ensure your child's spot.

When a class is full a waiting list is started. Students may be accepted as spots become available. Children are placed in classes according to age, teacher input, and consideration of special circumstances. Children are not moved into another room when they have a birthday. The class "ages" together through the school year. Children are assigned to new classes each school year.

Parents of a child with special needs should discuss these needs with the Director at the time of enrollment in order to ensure a successful placement for your child.

REGISTRATION FORMS

The state requires the following to be completed before a child can enter SVUMC Preschool:

1. Enrollment Form
2. *Current record of immunization
3. Health Statement signed by your child's doctor
4. **All four year olds must provide the results of a hearing and vision check
5. An Allergy Action Plan for any child with food allergies, completed and signed by your child's health care provider

*IMMUNIZATIONS

All children are required to remain up to date on their immunization and provide a copy of those immunizations to SVUMC Preschool. If immunizations are deferred for reasons of conscience or medical contraindications, a notarized affidavit is required before the child can start school. SVUMC Preschool can only accept an original, notarized affidavit which can be found at immunizetexas.com. Unvaccinated children will be required to stay at home in the event of an epidemic or other health emergency as determined by the Texas Commissioner of Health.

**VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

The State of Texas requires all children four-years and older on Sept.1 of the current school year to have vision and hearing screenings. This screening must be completed by a licensed professional within 120 days of admission and the screening results provided to SVUMC Preschool.

Please request this service at your child's 4 year well child check up.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Per Texas law, parents of children in our care are entitled to access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are at SVUMC Preschool, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g. Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) SVUMC Preschool must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be followed. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign a request for more liberal interpretation of the orders.

In the absence of a court order on file with SVUMC Preschool, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. SVUMC Preschool cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, SVUMC Preschool suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. SVUMC Preschool will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the School Director and are allowed in the preschool at the discretion of the School Director.

TUITION/FEES

REGISTRATION/SUPPLY FEE

One Day \$100

Two Days \$200

Three Days \$210

Four Days \$220

Five Days \$230

Registration and supply fees are *nonrefundable*.

TUITION RATES

Days A Week Annual Tuition Installment (9 MONTHS)

One Day \$110 per month

Two Days \$210 per month

1 & 2 year old Three Days \$230 per month

3 & 4 year old Three Days \$235 per month

Four Days \$255 per month

Five Days \$280 per month

Lunch Bunch is held on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 to 3:00.

One day = \$60 monthly

Two days = \$120 monthly

Three days = \$180 monthly

Four days = \$240

Drop in lunch bunch is available, if space allows, for the fee of \$20 per day.

SVUMC Preschool offers Lunch Bunch to families enrolled in regularly scheduled classes.

The full payment amount is expected for all children enrolled whether present or not. Please keep in mind that you are paying for the **space** reserved for your child in a classroom, not for your child's attendance. Thus, to hold that space, payment must be made regardless of attendance.

TUITION PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Tuition is due the first week of each month, September through May, even if your child is absent from school. This date will always be printed on your invoice for reference. Unless you have communicated a need to change your due date there will be a late fee of \$25 dollars added to any account that misses that date.

There is no discount if you choose to pay your tuition in full in advance.

TUITION PAYMENTS

1. Cash: Please deliver cash payments to the Admin Assistant or the Director so that you can receive a receipt. **DO NOT LEAVE CASH IN THE DROP BOX.**

2. Personal Checks: Make your check out to Spring Valley United Methodist Church and place it in the drop box next to the School Secretary's office. *If your check is unable to be deposited or is returned for any reason, there is a \$25 fee attached.

3. Auto Payment: Parents set this up with your bank, and the bank mails us a check each month. You will select the date for payment to be issued. Please be certain to include your child's name and the memo "tuition" when establishing an auto payment. *If your check is unable to be deposited or is returned for any reason, there is a \$25 fee attached.

*Please note that if an account has two returned payments or checks, that account will be asked to pay by cash or money order in the future.

INVOICES/RECEIPTS/TAX DOCUMENTS:

Invoices are sent out the week before tuition is due.

Receipts for cash are given at the time SVUMC Preschool receives the cash. End of Year Tax Statements are available upon request; please contact the Admin Assistant or Director for more information.

DISCOUNTS:

SVUMC members receive a \$25 discount on registration fees and tuition.

Siblings receive a \$15 per month discount on registration fees and tuition.

Only one discount may be applied.

LATE PAYMENT FEES/ PENALTIES

A late fee of \$25 will be assessed after the due date on any account with an outstanding balance, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director/Admin Assistant.

A continual problem of late tuition payments and/or NSF returned checks could result in your child being dismissed from SVUMC Preschool.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

An account that is more than 30 days delinquent will require automatic withdrawal of the child/children, unless appropriate arrangements have been made with the Director.

LATE PICK UP

There will be a \$1.00 per minute, late fee for picking up your child after 12:05 on regular days and after 3:05 on Lunch Bunch days. For example, if you pick up your child at 12:10, the fee is \$5 per child. All children being picked up late will be in the Director's office. Please contact the Director/Teacher as soon as you know you will be late.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SVUMC PRESCHOOL

SVUMC Preschool requires a written 30-day paid drop notification.

If it is necessary to withdraw a child from a class at any time during the school year, the parent must notify the Director in *writing via letter or email* (we cannot accept a verbal notification) at *least one month* before the withdrawal date. If less than 30-day notification is given we require the tuition be paid for the month following withdrawal.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE OR ILLNESS

To report an absence, please email the director to let us know that your child will not be in school. It will be helpful to include your child's name and classroom in the email.

We request parents notify the Director as soon as possible if they believe their child has contracted a communicable disease. The Director, if appropriate, will then communicate this information to those who need it.

ILLNESS

SVUMC Preschool will not accept children for class who are showing any signs of illness. This is not only for the protection of your child, but also for the protection of the other children and teachers.

We ask parents to inform your child's teacher if your child was given any type of medication prior to coming to school (including allergy, cold or cough medicine)

Please do not bring your child to school when any of the following symptoms exist:

- Fever- must be free of fever (100° or more) for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medicine)
 - Vomiting and/or diarrhea (must be free of vomiting and /or diarrhea for 24 hours)
 - Any symptoms of childhood diseases
 - Chicken pox - all sores must be completely scabbed over and dry underneath
 - Common cold
 - Sore throat
 - Cloudy, green or excessive runny nose
 - Persistent cough or croup
 - Skin rash or infection of any kind (such as boils, impetigo, etc.)
 - Difficult or rapid breathing
 - Conjunctivitis or other eye discharge (24 hours on medication)
 - Any communicable disease
 - Live head lice*

We also ask that any open wounds, large scrapes or cuts be properly covered with a bandage. We require all open wounds to remain covered while the child is at school.

SVUMC Preschool may find it necessary to modify the illness policies during flu or other similar related outbreaks.

Children cannot be kept in their classroom while their class is outside on the playground. According to state law, if a child is too sick to go outside, he/she should be kept at home.

*According to Texas law your child will be sent home from school if live lice are found in their hair. However, they won't be sent home, if only nits are found. The law also states that your child is allowed to return to school after one medicated shampoo or lotion treatment has been given. When your child returns to school, a head check is not required by law and there is no requirement to report cases of head lice to officials.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

If your child begins to show symptoms of illness at school, the Director/Admin Assistant will attempt to contact the parents. If we are unable to contact the parents, we will start contacting people on your authorized pick up list. Please make all of your authorized pick up people aware they may be called and expected to pick up your child in case of an illness or accident.

ACCIDENTS

The Director, teacher, or Admin Assistant will render first aid to an injured child and then determine if the parent should be contacted.

All accidents at SVUMC Preschool are required to be reported on an Accident/Illness Report form. This form is completed by the staff member who witnessed the incident. If a form has been completed on your child, the classroom teacher will review the form and ask for your signature. A copy of this form will be filed in your child's record.

Your child's teacher will inform you at pickup time if any minor accidents, bumps or scrapes have occurred while your child was at school. She will make you aware of how the incident occurred, what first aid was rendered, and any notable visible signs.

If your child becomes ill or gets injured at school, we will adhere to the following procedures: If your child has a slight injury, such as a scrape or minor cut, we will wash the injury with soap and water or Band-Aid brand antiseptic wash and apply a bandage. We do not use any other medication.

If a child receives a bump on the head, we will contact a parent and let the parent decide if you want to come pick up your child or leave them at school.

If your child has an allergic reaction or more serious injury that does not require a hospital visit, we will contact a parent.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PLAN

In a serious or life-threatening emergency, the Director will contact 911. The Director or Admin Assistant will contact the parent to instruct them to either come to SVUMC Preschool or the hospital. If a child is taken to the hospital via ambulance, the Director will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with the child until parents arrive.

MEDICATION POLICIES

It is the policy of Spring Valley that NO medication will be administered at the school by the staff. Medication may **not** be placed in a child's tote bag or lunch for the child to take himself. If your child must take medication (such as insulin) during the day, please schedule an appointment to discuss this with the director.

Teachers are not allowed to apply sunscreen or bug spray as they are considered to be a type of medication. If needed, the parent will apply these prior to school. Do not put these products in your child's backpack.

Allergy Action Plan - If your child has a food allergy, s/he may require medication to treat serious, life threatening reactions upon exposure. SVUMC Preschool must be provided with an allergy action form which has been completed and signed by the doctor responsible for treating your child. An Allergy Action Plan permits SVUMC Preschool staff to administer an epi-pen or other necessary medication. This action plan must be renewed every year by your child's physician.

SVUMC STAFF

SVUMC Preschool is a ministry of Spring Valley United Methodist Church. SVUMC staff are privileged to partner with you as we work together in the best interest of each of our kids!

All staff members are required to complete a minimum of 24 hours of staff development training every year. Staff members are certified in Pediatric CPR and First Aid.

Staff is also trained every year on identifying suspected Child Abuse/Neglect and mandated reporting responsibilities.

Staff is required to comply with the guidelines outlined in the "Minimum Standards Guidelines." All staff undergoes a criminal background check and fingerprint check as required by state licensing.

According to Texas law, SVUMC Preschool does not require staff members to obtain vaccines or TB testing.

All personnel have the following qualifications:

- Education and experience in teaching young children
- Continuing education, either through classes or workshops, in child development and guidance—a minimum of 24 hours each year
- Ability to relate to young children and their parents
- Find pleasure in teaching young children
- Agree with and support the church and the preschool's philosophy and goals
- Are certified in CPR training (infant, child and adult)
- Are certified in First Aid

Each year during in-service training, staff members review:

Developmentally appropriate practices

Program philosophy and goals, policies and procedures

Expectations of ethical conduct

Health, safety and emergency procedures

Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques

Daily activities and routines of the school and curriculum

Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures
Regulatory requirements

RATIOS

Age	Teacher to Student Ratio
One Year Old (12 months as of September 1 and walking)	2 teachers to 11 children or 1 teacher to 5 children
Two Year Old (2years as of September 1)	2 teachers to 13 children or 1 teacher to 7 children
Three Year Old (3 years as of September 1)	1 teacher to 11 children
Pre-K & Transitional K (4 years as of September 1)	1 teacher to 12 children

DAILY SCHEDULE

- Predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of children
- Provides time and support for transitions
- Includes both indoor and outdoor (weather permitting) experiences
- Responsive to a child's need to rest and to be active
- Incorporates time and materials for play, self-initiated learning, and creative expression
- Includes time for large group, small group and individual activity
- Includes both child initiated and teacher directed activity

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

PARKING LOT

- Please be cautious in the parking areas. Do not exceed 5 mph. **The use of cell phones is highly discouraged while entering and exiting the parking lots.**
- If a family needs assistance with drop-off or pickup, please contact the Director for assistance. We do not offer curbside drop-off or pickup, therefore, a parent or guardian must walk a child to his or her classroom. Please be mindful of children in the parking lot when you arrive for drop off or pick up! We ask that you notify the school of any pre-arranged carpools.

BELL TOWER

- Please do not let your children climb, run or balance their way in or around the bell tower. This is a safety issue for the children of the church and preschool. Talking and playing outside of

class can be directed to the courtyard, which is in-between the church and preschool. The children can play and run, and the parents can catch up and talk in a safe, enclosed environment. The playground door will be latched at the top; please do not go onto the playground during this time.

DROP-OFF

Be prompt in bringing your child and picking your child up from school. Your code to access the preschool will activate at 8:55 a.m. If you arrive late, please remember that class will have already begun, and have your child enter the room quietly. Remember, drop-off time is not the time for private discussions with your child's teacher, who will be busy greeting the students and beginning the school day.

SIGNING IN/OUT CHILDREN

We need your help to ensure the safety of our students. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. It is state mandated that each parent:

Complete the sign-in/sign-out sheet fully. If someone other than the child's parents will be picking the child up on that day that information must be provided to a staff member.

All parents are required to sign their children in and out on a sign-in/sign-out sheet which will be located on a table next to each classroom door. Don't forget to include the time.

Thank you for partnering with us to keep each child safe here at SVUMC Preschool.

PICKUP

During pick-up time, the teacher's main responsibility is to ensure each child leaves with the appropriate parent or guardian. For this reason, we ask parents to refrain from entering into the classroom. The teacher will be at the door ready to greet you and call your child to the door.

For the security of the children, please:

- Wait outside the classroom if the door is still closed. The teacher will open the door once class is finished.
- Pick up your child's backpack and other belongings from their bin.
- Remember, once a parent or other authorized person has signed out their child, he or she is then solely responsible for the supervision of the child.

SPECIAL RELEASE

Children should be picked up no later than 12:05 p.m. or 3:05 p.m. for Lunch Bunch. Children will be released only to their parents, unless other arrangements have been made with SVUMC Preschool staff.

Parents must inform the teacher if anyone other than the child's parents will be picking up their child that day. You will also write this information on the sign-in/sign-out sheet.

If a person unknown to us arrives to pick your child up, we will ask to see ID. We will not release children unless we have received prior consent from a parent.

LEAVING YOUR CHILD

As each class day begins, the teachers are engaging the children in activities as others arrive. For this reason, we ask parents not to enter the classroom when they drop their children off in the mornings.

Parents, please do not let your children run ahead to their classrooms when you enter the building. Until they are signed into the classroom - you are the responsible party.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR SCHOOL

BACKPACKS: Your child will need backpack or tote-bag to carry items to and from school. This bag must be taken to and from school each day. Make sure your child's bag is clearly marked with their name.

Important: Please check your child's bag **daily** for information from the teacher and remove papers and projects out of their backpack.

WATER BOTTLE: Each student is to bring a **LABELED** water bottle or sippy cup with water in it every day; if a water bottle is not labeled the teachers will write on the bottle with a permanent marker. These bottles or cups should only contain water and will be used throughout the day.

CHANGE OF CLOTHES: Every child should have at least one change of clothes in their backpack/bag, appropriate for each season. Please make sure all items are clearly labeled. In case of an accident, your child will be changed and the soiled items will be bagged and sent home. Accidents are not always bathroom related. We do a lot of crafts at school and if we get too messy we may need a change of clothes.

DIAPERS/PULL UPS as applicable.

SNACKS

We serve snacks in our school which have been provided by the parents. We do not prepare or serve meals. Each teacher will provide parents with a sign-up sheet of foods we would like for snack time that are approved and appropriate for your child's class. The class then shares the same snack for that day; we do not serve individual snacks. We serve water to drink. State licensing requires that we do not serve food that might present a risk of choking to infants or

toddlers (up to age 35 months). Examples of these foods include hot dogs sliced into rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, string cheese, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonfuls of peanut butter and chunks of meat that can be swallowed whole.

If a child has a special health care need or food allergy or special nutrition need, the child's health provider must give the school an Allergy Plan. The school protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. We ask families of a child with food allergies to give us permission to post the information in classrooms, so that all staff, including substitute teachers, will have access to the information.

LUNCH

If your child stays for Lunch Bunch, you will need to send a lunch to school with your child. All lunches must be ready to eat. We do not have the ability to heat up lunches. We can't refrigerate lunch boxes, so please send food that can safely remain at room temperature until around 12:00 p.m. You do not need to provide a drink as water will be served with lunch. Please be sure to send any required utensils.

NAP MAT

If your child stays for Lunch Bunch, you will need to send a nap mat to school with your child. All classes will have a rest time. After a busy day, preschoolers need this time. For the older classes, the duration of the rest time is left to the discretion of the teacher.

Nap mats will go home on the child's last day of school each week to be washed; unless solid before that. Again, please be sure to label all Lunch Bunch items.

PARENT CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

The staff at SVUMC Preschool highly respects the role and influence of parents. We value parental input and encourage parents to participate in school and classroom activities. We have an "open door" policy and parents are welcome to observe classroom activities at anytime. While parents are not required to secure prior approval, it is helpful if you check with the teacher prior to planning a visit. This will allow you to plan a time that works into the class schedule.

Please, remember to check in with the Director or Admin Assistant when you come to visit.

The first few weeks of school are a very sensitive time while children are adjusting and adapting to their classroom environment. Please keep in mind that for some younger children, it can be quite confusing when parents visit once the day has begun. At these young ages, when children see a parent arrive, they assume it's time to go home.

HOLIDAYS

Holidays and any other days off during the school year are listed on the calendar. You can access our calendar via our website or the parent portal. Your child's teacher will also send out this information in their monthly newsletter.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

August Meet the Teacher Night

Sunday Funday (information will be provided)

Halloween Parade

Veterans Day Program

Thanksgiving Feast

Family Advent Workshop

Christmas Program

Family Fun Night

International Program

Spring Program

Chapel - Chapel is held weekly for children 3 year and older. It is led by the ministers of SVUMC on a rotating basis. It is approximately 15 minutes long. All parents are welcome to attend. Chapel meets Tuesdays at 9:15.

Parent Conferences - Twice per year, during the fall and spring semesters, we have designated conference days. However, you don't have to wait for an official parent conference day to talk with your child's teacher—feel free to schedule a conference at any time.

Seasonal Parties - All classes will be involved in classroom parties at various times of the year. Parents sign up to provide treats, party favors and paper products. You are always invited to attend parties.

We will have special school-wide events during the year in which all groups will participate (e.g., Red Ribbon Week, Dr. Seuss Day, and Teacher Appreciation Week). The dates for these special days will be published in upcoming newsletters.

If your child does not attend school on the day of the class party, you may bring your child to the party. However, we ask that you remain with your child in the classroom during the party. Parents may be asked to sign up and bring certain items to the above class parties.

Birthday Parties - Birthday snacks are always a special treat. Parents are encouraged to provide simple snacks, as well as plates and napkins if desired, to celebrate a child's birthday. Your teacher will coordinate a day and time for your special birthday snack.

See the section on meals and food service for further guidelines.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We use several different forms of communication to relay important information to our preschool families. Take time to do the following so you can stay informed:

Read all information that is sent home with your child.

Check the sign-in table at your child's classroom. We will post some notices at the table.

Check your email for information and updates. Read your emails thoroughly.

Please try to avoid hallway conferences with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up. When she is with her class, her attention needs to be focused on her students. If you need to talk to her or set up a conference, please call the school office and ask that she return your call when she has a break. For your privacy, the teachers have been instructed *not* to discuss any issues or concerns at the classroom door. This is for your privacy so that others, including your child, will not overhear.

Parents are encouraged and welcome to discuss any issues or concerns with the Director. You are highly encouraged to contact the Director as soon as a concern arises regarding your child. You are welcome to stop by, email, call or set up an appointment.

Our teachers are not allowed to use their cell phones during class-time, which means they will not be able to receive personal calls or texts from parents during the school day. This is a Texas state guideline. If you have a concern, please contact the Director or Admin Assistant.

Teachers work in partnership with families to establish and maintain regular, ongoing communication. We use some of the following tools to help achieve that goal:

Class Newsletter - Your classroom teacher will distribute these newsletters via email. The class newsletter will keep you informed about what your child is learning at school during that month. This will give you an opportunity to share in your child's week by asking questions about things that he/she is learning at school.

Website - The preschool website also has information posted. Our website address is www.svumc.org/preschool

INCLEMENT WEATHER/ WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

If for any reason the Richardson Independent School District (RISD) cancels school, we will cancel school. If RISD has a delayed start at or after 10:00 a.m., we will cancel school on that day. If you are uncertain if we are closing early, please call the preschool.

You can check WFAA closing for an updated list of closings; SVUMC Preschool has an account with this station. <http://www.wfaa.com/closings>

No credits or makeup days will be given for any weather or emergency-related closings.

POWER OUTAGES

In the event of an extended power outage during school, the Director may determine to contact parents for immediate pick up.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

SVUMC Preschool conducts monthly fire drills. Tornado drills and Lockdown drills are conducted 4 times a year. If a parent is present during a drill, we ask that you follow instructions given by the teacher and participate fully. Our staff is trained for each of these emergency situations.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

If the Director finds it necessary for staff and students to evacuate the building and surrounding area due to a dangerous situation, all children will be moved to an emergency evacuation site within walking distance. All children will be transported to the emergency evacuation site in the safest mode possible. SVUMC will follow the Dallas Police and/or Fire Department instructions.

Teachers will have all contact numbers with them.

A copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan is available in the Director's Office and on our website for review.

CURRENT INFORMATION

It is extremely important that SVUMC Preschool be able to contact the parents in case of an emergency. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify SVUMC Preschool of any changes in the contact information which was provided on the child's application. You will be required to review your family information in January to ensure we still have your most current information. In the meantime, if anything changes, please email us the new contact information.

CLOTHING

Please label all your child's belongings. It is especially important that you label tote bags and backpacks, coats, hats, gloves, scarves, nap mats, and lunchboxes.

Toys should only be brought to school on designated "show-and-tell" or "share bag" days.

Dress your child in comfortable clothes.

Here are some items to consider when preparing for school:

- Potty trained/training children should be sent in clothing that will allow him/her to go to the restroom with little assistance from the teacher.
- Select clothing free of complicated fastenings.

- Washable play clothes are recommended for school days. We have a lot of fun at school, including lots of painting, so please keep the dress clothes at home.
- Pack a complete change of clothing labeled with your child's name, and include underwear and socks in his/her bag every day. Please remember that accidents are not always bathroom related.
- For all students' safety, shoes must be worn at all times while at school. Children are encouraged to wear tennis shoes or other similar **closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes**. The slick bottoms on Cowboy boots, Sandals, Clogs, Crocs, Flip-Flops and Jellies make it very difficult for a child to play safely; therefore, they are strongly discouraged. We want all children to be able to run, climb and play in shoes that help ensure their safety. Velcro-fastened shoes are great for little ones.

PLAYGROUND/OUTDOOR TIME

Our playground areas are enclosed and gated. Our classes generally go outside every day (several times a day)—even in the cool weather. Remember to pack a jacket or coat during cooler weather. All ages will go outside during the school day, weather permitting.

TOILET TRAINING

We want to support your child in his/her potty training. Communication is the key to success during this time. Please discuss home potty training schedules and successes with your child's teacher to determine the appropriate time to begin training at school. There will be daily communication between parents and teachers during potty training.

- One and two year old children are not required to be toilet trained. Once potty training begins, these children will be taken to the bathroom by a staff member frequently (every 1 to 1 ½ hours).
- We ask that all three-year olds be potty trained. * If your three-year old is actively training and still wearing pull-ups, s/he must be willing to go to the bathroom and try to potty when asked by their teacher. Children must have the ability to communicate to the teacher the need to go to the toilet.
- **All children entering Pre-K and Transitional K classes must be completely toilet trained.

A child is considered completely toilet trained (urination and bowel movements) when he/she no longer wears diapers or pull-ups and is able to:

- Anticipate the urge to use the toilet.
- Communicate that need to their teachers.
- Control the urge and get to the toilet on time.
- Pull down his/her pants.
- Use the toilet
- Clean themselves

- Pull up his/her pants.
- Wash up after him/herself.

*Children must wear pull-ups or protective pants until they have been consistent at school for two weeks (no accidents) due to health/sanitation issues in the classroom.

**For 4-5 year olds, after two accidents in a two-week period, parents will be contacted by the Director or teacher to address this concern.

DIAPERING

Ones and two-year olds must bring disposable diapers. Families may be asked a few times throughout the year to bring containers of wet wipes or money for wet wipes that are shared in the classroom

Pack all disposable diapers, wipes, diaper ointments and other items that your child will need during the school day. All diaper ointments (prescription or over the counter) may only be applied by SVUMC staff with a parent's written authorization. Be sure to label all items with your child's name.

PERSONAL TOYS

We ask you to leave your child's toys at home or in the car with the exception of a naptime security item.

We cannot be responsible for any personal stuffed animals, special blankets or irreplaceable items that could get lost or torn, so please remember this if choosing to provide a "lovie" for nap-times. If you child requires a "lovie" of any kind, it will remain in his/her bin until nap time.

Play guns and weapons of any kind are not allowed at SVUMC Preschool.

STROLLERS

We cannot allow any strollers to be left in the hallways or stairwells as they are considered a fire hazard.

NURSING ROOMS

SVUMC Preschool is supportive of and encourages breastfeeding for as long as the mother deems appropriate. SVUMC Preschool has a room available to nursing mothers; room #172. This is for your convenience and comfort during school hours. Parents also have the right to provide breast milk for your child while in our care. Please meet with the Director for more information.

PETS/ANIMALS

Pets are not permitted on the premises at any time. This allows us to maintain a safe, healthy environment for all children and staff members.

FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION

SVUMC Preschool does not take field trips and children are not transported from the center unless there is an emergency.

WATER PLAY AND SPRINKLER ACTIVITY

Water activities are limited to water play in the classroom or playground by using the water table or small tubs. During our June Summer Camp we offer splash day where the children have supervised play at water tables and in sprinklers.

PARENT NOTIFICATION AND POLICY CHANGES

When a policy changes, parents will be notified in writing.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Children's records are open only to the child's teachers, the Director and her assistant, an authorized employee of the state licensing agency, and the child's parent or legal guardian. No information about any child will ever be shared with anyone other than those listed above, for any reason.

ASSESSMENT AND PROGRESS REPORTS

The school uses an in-house assessment tool.

Assessments cover the following areas:

Shapes, Colors, and Number skills

Language development and early literacy skills

Socio-emotional development

Health and safety practices

Personal and social development

Gross and Fine motor skills

While assessment of a child's skills, abilities and progress occur on a daily basis, teachers formally assess students a minimum of two times each school year. If you have questions regarding your child's progress, please call the teacher or director and set up a conference. You will receive a copy of any assessment completed on your child during your parent teacher conferences.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

Children enrolled in the program must be able to participate in the normally planned activities for their age group. This includes participation in indoor and outdoor activities, learning activities and social interaction appropriate for their age group. The safety and the welfare of the class will have priority over an individual situation. SVUMC Preschool reserves the right to determine if the program is not able to provide adequate care for a child.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early intervention can be a vital tool in assisting children with possible learning differences. It is during the early years that a trained specialist can assess and assist a child with certain special learning needs. SVUMC Preschool reserves the right to recommend that a parent considers having his/her child evaluated by either a public or private specialized service. We reserve the right to terminate enrollment if it is determined that our program is not able to meet the needs of the child while providing a quality experience for both the child and other children in the program.

SEPARATION ANXIETY/ LEAVING YOUR CHILD

If your child experiences anxiety during the morning transition time, we have found that it is less stressful on the child if you say your goodbyes at the classroom door, keeping it brief and cheerful.

By 9:05 a.m., the class day is beginning. The teachers are engaging the children in activities as others arrive. For this reason, we ask parents not to enter the classroom. Please, refrain from peeking in the door after you have dropped off your child and said your goodbyes. Not only can this be a distraction to the entire class, but it can also prolong your child's anxiety.

If your child's anxiety continues for an extended period of time, the director may contact a parent to discuss the situation.

If you are concerned about how your child is doing during the day, please feel free to contact the Director and we will be happy to check on them.

BITING AND HITTING

SVUMC Preschool recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the one and two-year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior, so that it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Children older than three years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlines in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. SVUMC reserves the right to un-

enroll a child who bites three or more times in a school year, because the safety of all children in our program is of the utmost concern.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered confidential and cannot be disclosed.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Guidance is a necessary part of an early childhood program. With age-appropriate techniques, children learn to trust adults, to work and interact successfully in the learning environment, to learn self-control and how to resolve conflict or difficult situations in an acceptable way.

Staff members help promote pro-social behavior by:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- Redirecting behavior

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. This aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior. Positive cooperation is expected from the family when dealing with disruptive behavior. We feel that consistency from all involved parties is the best way to handle these issues. SVUMC Preschool reserves the right to un-enroll a child for discipline problems.

Our teachers are trained to utilize the following techniques:

- Teach desired behaviors rather than simply punish undesired behaviors
- Serve as role models in the classroom, modeling the desired behaviors
- Use active calming techniques
- Understand behavior as a form of communication
- Allow children to express their emotions while supporting and comforting children in distress

We will not use corporal punishment or harsh punishment that hurts or humiliates a child.

EXPULSION POLICY

The State of Texas mandates the following information:

Occasionally, there are situations that result in the expulsion of a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. These situations are always unfortunate. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with you, the parents/guardian, in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

- A child who is a safety threat to themselves or others
- A parent threatens physical or intimidating action toward staff members, other students, or parents
- A parent engages in verbal abuse toward staff members, other students, or parents
- Unsuccessful resolution of an issue, resulting in the un-enrollment of a student, would necessitate the un-enrollment of siblings and other family members.
- Unsuccessful resolution of an issue where a parent develops an expressed or apparent lack of confidence in the staff

PARENTAL ACTIONS THAT MAY LEAD TO A CHILD'S UN-ENROLLMENT

- Failure to pay and/or habitual lateness in tuition payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's updated immunization records
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child

CHILD'S ACTIONS THAT MAY LEAD TO A CHILD'S UNENROLLMENT

- Child is a threat to himself or others
- Dangerous, inappropriate behavior
- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Employees of SVUMC are considered mandated reporters under this law. The employees of SVUMC are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. At Spring Valley United Methodist Church Preschool, we take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. Immunity from civil or criminal liability is guaranteed if the report is made in good faith and without malice. Reports of child abuse or neglect are confidential.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, burns, or cuts on a child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to cleanliness, season, size
- Transporting a child without proper child restraints (car seats)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol

- Not providing proper meals and nutrition for your child
- Leaving a preschool child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms which would typically require the child to be kept home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

Staff is trained annually in the detection and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

They also take an online child abuse prevention course sponsored by the Methodist church called 'Ministry Safe'. This is renewed every two years. These trainings serve to increase awareness of issues regarding abuse and neglect, including warning signs and prevention techniques.

If parents need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html Please reach out to the director, your teacher or a minister on staff here at Spring Valley for help, support, and help in accessing resources.

For more information or to make a confidential report:

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Additional resources may be found in the Director's office.

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP

PLEASE check your child's tote bag after each school day, and read emails from the school. Label everything -- coats, hats, sweaters, etc. with full name.

Do not allow children to bring toys.

Dress children appropriately for messy play and weather.

Keep sick children at home.

Be on time at drop-off and pick-up.

Notify teachers in writing (either note or email) when someone other than yourself or regular carpool will be picking up your child. Include driver's license number and a brief description.

Pay tuition on time and pay the correct amount.

Notify the preschool office immediately of any contagious disease or other illness. Also, let us know if your child will be absent for any other reason.

After you say good-bye to your child, leave.

Focus on your child when you pick them up. They are excited to see you.

Respect our teachers - They are professionals.

Address concerns when they happen but not in front of the child.

Communicate what's going on at home, including social, emotional or developmental changes.

Become active in preschool functions.

Make sure we received updated vaccination records after any checkups.

PLEASE CONTACT THE DIRECTOR, VIA EMAIL OR PHONE, SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF SVUMC PRESCHOOL.