

Navarre UMC Preschool Parent Handbook 2023 - 2024

Navarre
United
Methodist
Church



PRE SCHOOL
& School Age Program

License number - CO1SR0021

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NAVARRE UMC MISSION STATEMENT

“To develop each person into a fully devoted disciple of Christ.”

WELCOME

We want to welcome you and your child/children to our program. This handbook has been written and approved by the preschool board, and we hope it helps you better understand the NUMC Preschool ministry. We ask parents/guardians to read and follow the operating procedures in this handbook and any supplemental notes and newsletters we send you. We hope you feel free to participate in the preschool, offering suggestions, comments, constructive criticisms, and financial and moral support.

PRESCHOOL STANDARD

We always intend to uphold the Navarre UMC Mission Statement (above). In this spirit, the preschool board, administration, and staff are accountable for the Christian development of the students. In the planning and employment of all areas of the preschool, we will be prayerful and mindful of the following verse from God’s Word:

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” -- Philippians 4:8

AIM/PURPOSE

Our preschool is a Navarre United Methodist Church outreach ministry to the children and the parents of the congregation and the surrounding community. We value and celebrate each child with unconditional love, care, and support. We welcome children from all races, faiths, and nationalities. Our goal is to provide your child with a well-balanced, developmentally appropriate, Christian environment where they will feel a sense of belonging and grow ready for a lifetime of learning. We strive to partner with you, the parent/guardian, to achieve these goals.

Our Preschool:

- *Upholds the truths of the Holy Bible
- *Teaches that Jesus loves all of us, no matter what
- *Models love and caring for others, prayerfulness, joy, and thankfulness
- *Supports children in the development of their relationship with God
- *Helps to lay the foundation for a life-long relationship with Christ
- * Affirms each child's self-worth/encourages creativity and uniqueness
- *Validates and encourages the appropriate expression of feelings/emotions
- *Focuses on the “whole child” to promote learning, exploration, and discovery
- *Plans for success in the following aspects of development: spiritual, social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language
- *Promotes sharing, love, kindness, honesty, obedience, responsibility, good health, valuing the rights of others, and caring for all of God’s creations
- *Recognizes and provides for the preschool child’s need to learn through play and hands-on experiences
- *Provides experiences that are relevant and meaningful to a young child’s life
- *Provides a nurturing, secure, and clean learning environment
- *Provides choices with appropriate boundaries
- *Provides sufficient supervision to allow for considering individual needs and interests

PRESCHOOL BOARD

Our preschool, as a ministry of Navarre United Methodist Church, operates under our Church's Council. The Board of the preschool is elected annually by the Charge Conference of Navarre UMC and serves as a supportive, consultative body to its directors and staff. Voting members of the board shall include church members who also serve on the church's Staff-Parish Relations, Trustees, and Finance committees, at least one church member from the congregation at large, and two preschool parents (while warmly encouraged, parents can be members of other Christian churches). Members of this Board will include the church pastor, the children's minister, the preschool director, and the assistant director, who have a voice on the Board but do not vote.

Board member responsibilities include:

1. Attend meetings
2. Consult with Director regarding the preschool operating budget and student tuition recommendations.
3. Act as a sounding board for directors and staff.
4. Maintain confidentiality.
5. For parent representatives only, complete 10 hours of volunteer work in the preschool per semester.

CURRICULUM/PROGRAM GOALS

Our teachers are trained in developmentally appropriate practice and Florida's Early Education standards. They are responsible for planning for success in the following areas of development: spiritual, social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. Teachers use the Ages and Stages and VPK assessment tools to track their student's progress and plan for their differences and needs. Teachers will help foster students' spiritual development through scripture and visits to the chapel and the Godly Play classroom.

We strive to help children learn to value others and themselves and that God uniquely creates all people. We celebrate the differences between people in communities and groups just as we recognize and encourage the many personalities and cultures within our preschool staff and families. No child shall be expected to adhere to values that conflict with their family's values. (Ex.: The preschool staff members go by their first names instead of their last names. If a family prefers, their child can call the staff by their last names.) Likewise, there are always choices in our classrooms. No child shall be forced to participate in any activity. (Ex: Trying to force a child to taste a particular food or participate in a project.)

CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

Planning for individual needs requires flexibility in scheduling the classroom curriculum. Also, children's interests are built-in motivators for learning. For this reason, our teachers are free to explore and wonder with their students and plan their classroom curriculum. We have a variety of resources available to teachers for supplemental activities. They use their professional training, creativity, our teacher library, and outside resources to provide various age-appropriate experiences for the children in their classes. Your teacher will contact you regularly to inform you of the class progress, and a lesson plan will always be posted in the classroom.

CREATIVE CURRICULUM

Navarre UMC Preschool uses The Creative Curriculum, from Teaching Strategies, Inc., as a framework to build developmentally appropriate lessons and plan for the child 's needs. This framework starts with a foundation of years of theory and research that inform early childhood decision-making – the work of Piaget, Maslow, Vygotsky, and Smilansky. There are five components to this framework:

1. **How Children Develop and Learn:** Each student is assessed throughout the year regarding their social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. We use the Developmental Continuum, a tool for observing children's development and tracking their progress, to plan for the individual child.
2. **The Learning Environment:** The classroom structure allows teachers to teach and children to learn. Teachers create a classroom community where children learn how to get along with others and solve problems peacefully. This community includes established schedules and routines, organized choice times (interest areas/centers), and small and large group times.
3. **What Children Learn:** Preschool children learn content and skills best through play and daily experiences. This play is not without purpose! Your child will learn content in the following areas: Biblical, literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. The state of Florida has established Learning and Developmental Standards for children of all ages. It is the teacher's job to be sure their classroom teaches the content in ways that respect these developmental stages of preschool children.
4. **The Teacher's Role:** Teachers use careful observations of their students, their knowledge of the early childhood field, and various resources to plan and employ multiple teaching strategies in the classroom.
5. **The Family's Role:** We want to partner with every family and work together to support children's optimal development and learning.

SCRIPTURE

Classes will follow a monthly scripture schedule. The purpose of this scripture is to help children begin, at this early age, to understand that God's words come from His Book, The Bible, and that those words have meaning in their lives. Children will practice "writing God's word upon their hearts" through discussion and song.

CHAPEL

Classes will participate weekly in Chapel as a part of their Christian education curriculum. The students will be introduced excitingly and engagingly during chapel to bible stories and songs.

GODLY PLAY

Godly Play is a unique and engaging Montessori-based method of Christian education. It encourages children to wonder about God and become more fully aware of the mystery of His presence in their lives. Teachers and their students will explore together religious language, stories of Christian tradition, sacred stories from the Old and New Testaments, stories told through Parables, and stories about the liturgical cycle. The process of "wondering" together prevents Storytellers from forcing an interpretation of the stories on the kids. Instead, children can enter these stories, be contemplative, and relate them to their experiences.

A WORD ABOUT PLAY

We believe that play is a child's work. Years of theory and research have proven that young children are experiential creatures. They must experience a concept before they can internalize it. For this reason, stationary desk work is kept to a minimum at our school. While some worksheets and printed visuals are used as additional resources for students during lessons, most daily

classroom time incorporates various modalities and active engagement. Your child will learn concepts through the active planning of qualified teachers and staff. Looking in the classroom, you will see exciting areas around the room. These interest areas are explicitly planned with a developmental goal in mind. They will have choices and adequate time to “work” on skills that will promote readiness to enter the elementary grades later. Your child will use all five senses to experience the concepts we introduce, including numbers and letters. We intend that children who come through our program become independent, creative, empathetic individuals who enjoy learning and interacting appropriately with others.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our school is open from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Our part-time classes follow Santa Rosa County Schools, beginning August 10, 2023, and ending May 24, 2026. The entire school is closed on holidays and teacher planning days.

HOLIDAYS/SCHOOL BREAKS

We will be open for care during the Santa Rosa County school holidays and breaks for full-time students only. We must have a minimum of 10 students signed up for holiday care. Full-time students must pre-register for care during holidays and school breaks. A rate of \$25 per day will be charged to your account. Holiday care is available for ages 3 through 5th grade only.

PRESCHOOL CLASSES

We provide a quality preschool program for children ages three years to pre-kindergarten. Children will be placed in classes based on age on September 1st of the current school year. This is consistent with the public school placement law.

Three-year-old classes - 2 days (Tues/Thurs), three days (Mon/Wed/Fri), or 5 days (Mon-Fri)
Maintains a ratio of 1:6 (teacher to student) with a maximum of twelve children/room.

Pre-Kindergarten classes - 5 days (M-F)
Maintains a ratio of 1:8 (teacher to student) with a maximum of sixteen children/room.
Rooms 101 and 103 maintain a ratio of 1:7 (teacher to student), a maximum of fourteen/per room.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Parents must provide a copy of the child's requested medical information, school physical, and immunization form within 30 days of being accepted at NUMC Preschool. We do not need original documents; copies are acceptable.

According to regulations set forth by the Florida Department of Children & Families, we must keep students up-to-date documents. This has become a stringent mandate, and we must be firm to avoid disciplinary action in our school. The parent is responsible for providing the school with updated documents before the old ones expire. Not keeping this agreement will suspend your child from our school until the appropriate documents are presented. No credit or refund of tuition will be given if your child is suspended for this purpose.

REGISTRATION FEES

An annual, non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of registration for all three-year-olds and full-time four-year-old students.

Three-Year-Old students, part-time, have a registration fee of \$150.00

Three-Year-Old students full-time have a registration fee of \$250.00.

Full-time four-year-olds will pay a \$250.00 registration fee.

Four-year-old students enrolled in VPK-only or Lunch Bunch will not pay a registration fee.

**If you are a military member receiving orders before the beginning of the school year, bring a copy of the charges to the preschool office. Your registration fee and activity fee will be refunded.

TUITION

Invoices

Invoices will be sent home to you at the end of every month to let you know what you owe for the following month. Monthly tuition prices stay the same throughout the year, and you are responsible for paying your bill on time since your amount remains the same.

Billing

Tuition is due on the 1st of every month. If the 1st falls on a weekend, tuition will be due the next business day. An adult should bring payments to the gray box outside the Director's office. The staff will not be responsible for payments delivered by students. Please do not place payments in your child's lunchbox or backpack. Tuition is the average number of days your child will attend for the school term. Therefore, education is the same each month (September – May) regardless of the number of class meetings. Tuition will not be pro-rated and must be paid in full even though your child may not attend for a portion of a month due to illness, vacation, etc. The tuition payment holds your child's spot until their return. Vacation or illness is not an excuse for the late cost of tuition. Please pay before vacations or mail your education to us if you are on vacation or your child is sick. Make checks payable to Navarre UMC Preschool, 9474 Navarre Pkwy, Navarre, FL, 32566.

Late Payments

A \$10.00 late fee per child will be assessed on tuition not paid by the 5th of each month. Your child will be dropped from the program if the delinquent amount is not paid in full by the 15th. The vacated spot will be filled the following business day. There will be a \$35.00 charge for any returned checks.

TUITION RATES:

Three-Year-Olds

Part-Time (8:50 AM - 12:50 PM)

2 days per week - \$225.00 per month
3 days per week - \$325.00 per month
5 days per week - \$450.00 per month

Three-Year-Olds

Full-Time (7:00 AM - 5:30 PM)

2 days per week - \$325.00 per month
3 days per week - \$425.00 per month
5 days per week - \$625.00 per month

Four-Year-Olds (VPK)

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten is free of charge from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM Monday-Friday. For \$150.00 per month, students can stay an extra hour for “Lunch Bunch.” Students will eat lunch and participate in our enrichment classes during this time. For \$475.00 per month, students can attend full time - from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm, during VPK days. For an additional fee, they can stay during school holidays and breaks If over 10 students have opted for holiday care.

Part-Time (9:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

Monday – Friday -- no cost (Voluntary Pre-K)
*Lunch Bunch -- \$150.00 per mo. (*optional*)
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Full-Time (7:00 AM – 5:30 PM)

Monday – Friday -- \$475.00 per mo.
*Covers all except VPK
(*includes Lunch Bunch & snack*)

Non-VPK Pre-K (if not covered by VPK funds for 3 hours a day)

VPK Hours Only: Monday – Friday - \$400.00 per mo.
VPK Hours and Lunch Bunch: Monday – Friday - \$550.00 per mo.
7:00 AM – 5:30 PM: Monday – Friday - \$700 .00 per mo.

EXTENDED CARE

Extended care (snack included) is available to part-time students as space is available. Space is limited, and 24 hr. notice is preferred. Students staying for extended care must bring a towel or small blanket for rest. Comfort items (lovie or pacifier, etc.) are encouraged but unnecessary. Towels/blankets will be sent home once a week to be washed. Times available are:
Morning Care - 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM \$10/day
Afternoon Care - 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM \$25/day

WITHDRAWALS

If you wish to withdraw your child from preschool, two weeks’ written notice is required. If you do not give two weeks’ notice, you will be charged 2 weeks’ tuition. Also, the Preschool Board and the Preschool director reserve the right to terminate a child's enrollment. Depending on the circumstances, notice may be given to the parents. The tuition deposit and any tuition paid will not be refunded.

ARRIVAL

Part-Time

Children should arrive by their slotted time for class. If you arrive earlier, wait in the hall with your child until the teacher invites you in. Please try to be on time. Late arrivals are very disruptive for the entire class.

Full Time

Children should arrive no earlier than 7:00 AM. If you arrive earlier than 7:00 AM, please wait outside with your child until this time, as the front doors stay locked until 7:00 AM.

Safety

Safety is our number one concern. For this reason, our classroom doors remain locked throughout the day. If you arrive after class has begun, knock on the door, and a teacher or assistant will admit your child to class.

An adult should drop children off and pick them up at their classroom. Do not allow your child to walk to class alone. Children must be signed in and out by an authorized adult. After they have been admitted to class and signed in, the preschool staff is responsible for them until they are signed out, even if you are visiting or volunteering at the preschool. Therefore, all children must remain with their assigned class until they are signed out.

Doorbell

The front doors of the preschool will be locked at 9:20 AM. To access the building, when doors are closed, you must ring the doorbell, and an administrator will come and let you in.

DISMISSAL

VPK-only students will be dismissed at 12:00 PM. All other part-time classes and VPK Lunch Bunch will be dismissed at their time. The school closes at 5:30 PM.

At dismissal time, please wait in the hallway and allow the teacher to dismiss the children to you. This way, we can ensure each child gets to the correct adult. Please only enter the classroom if the teacher asks you to; it causes too much confusion. Parents, guardians, or other authorized persons shall sign the children out before taking the children from the premises.

There will be a fee of \$1.00 per minute assessed for all children not picked up starting 10 minutes past the scheduled class end time or 5:30 PM for full-time & school-age students, based on school clocks. The fee will be added to your following billing statement. If late pick-up occurs more than twice, the parent will be assessed a \$3.00 per minute late fee for all subsequent late pick-ups. If your carpool is late picking up, parents are held responsible. If you know you will be late, please call the school 30 minutes before the pickup time to inform us of the alternate pick-up arrangements you have made for your child.

Please let the teacher know who will drop off and pick up your child regularly. If a change is necessary, the parent must send a note or email with a name and brief description of the person transporting your child. A phone call will only be accepted for a change in transportation if the person is already on the child's enrollment form. Children will only be released to people listed on the enrollment form that are 18 or older. We will ask to see identification if the person from the list has not picked up before or is unknown to the staff. Please do not leave younger siblings in the car unattended to drop off or pick up your children.

If you need to pick your child up early, please check in at the preschool office before going to the classroom.

DISCHARGE POLICY

Navarre United Methodist Church Preschool Board and Preschool Director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- *Non-payment or late payment of fees.
- *Disregarding the rules of the center as outlined in the handbook.
- *Child needs cannot be adequately met with our current staffing patterns.
- *Physical and verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.

ILLNESS

If your child will be absent, please let the preschool office know as soon as possible. The Director must be notified if a child has a contagious illness, such as strep throat or head lice. The school shall notify parents or guardians of suspected exposure to communicable diseases. Please do not send your children to preschool if they are sick. They will be sent home if they arrive at school sick or become sick during school hours. Children will be isolated and given appropriate care until a parent, guardian, or emergency contact arrives to pick them up. Children with symptoms of contagious illness may not return to school UNTIL SYMPTOM-FREE (WITHOUT MEDICATION) FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS. Do not send your children to preschool if any of these symptoms are present:

- * Fever over 100.4 degrees
- * Red eyes with any discharge
- * Unexplained pain
- * Decrease in appetite &/or activity level
- * Untreated infected skin patches
- * Head lice and nits (proof of treatment and head check by a staff member is required for return to school)
- * Heavy nasal discharge (Runny nose not clear in color & child can't keep clean)
- * Unusually dark urine &/or gray or white stool and yellowish skin or eyes
- * Child is fussy, cranky, and generally out of sorts
- * Any unusual sign or symptom of illness
- * Severe/Constant cough
- * Diarrhea
- * Vomiting
- * Unexplained rash
- *Blisters from Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease

CHILD THAT NEEDS TO STAY INDOORS

Sometimes a parent may ask the preschool staff to keep a child indoors during the playground period. A note from a physician is required for a child to remain indoors. Generally, if a child is too sick to go outside on a given day, they are too ill to be at school. Our ability to oblige depends on room arrangements, the number of children present on a particular day, the number of adults available to supervise children, etc. The parent or guardian can request a new physical, reaffirming that the child can participate in all school activities indoors and outdoors.

MEDICATION

A written authorization, signed by a parent or guardian, is required for any medication to be given to a child. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the name of the physician, child, and directions for administering written on the label. A separate authorization is needed for each type of medication to be given. Please note that medicine must be labeled with age/dosage instructions for staff to administer. All medications should be brought by an adult to the director's office, not given to classroom teachers. The child's lunchbox, backpack, Chapstick, and sunscreen are considered medication, and a form must be filled out before it can be applied. The preschool shall not be responsible for failure to provide the requested medication nor for adverse reactions that the administration of the requested medication causes. Medications should be timed around school hours and given before or after school by the parents.

INJURIES

The preschool will give appropriate first aid treatment to an injured child. Parents or guardians must sign an "Accident Report" upon pickup, which documents the incident. If the injury may require a doctor's treatment, the preschool office will call the parent to notify them or ask them to get the child. You will be called regardless of the severity of an injury above the shoulders. If the preschool staff judges that the damage is of an emergency nature, paramedics shall be called to the preschool, and a parent or guardian shall be contacted. If we cannot get the parents, an emergency contact named on the child's registration form will be called. If necessary, we will utilize the emergency medical release you provide. Someone from the preschool staff will accompany the child in the ambulance if the parents or someone authorized by the parents are unavailable.

DISCIPLINE

Our school believes in a positive approach to discipline. An essential part of our job is helping children learn to function peacefully within a group, develop self-control, and ultimately become responsible for their actions. Teachers work to provide an environment and routine that is carefully planned to prevent problems and accommodate appropriate interaction between students. Parents will be informed of the teacher's behavior management plan at enrollment.

When behavior issues arise, teachers encourage children to examine the situation and work together to solve the problem. Children may be re-directed or removed from the area to help them calm down and make better choices. Spanking and other forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Discipline will never be associated with food, rest, or toileting, and the child will never be denied outdoor/active play due to misbehavior.

Severe, consistent behaviors threatening the safety/well-being of anyone in the classroom will not be tolerated. If a child's threatening behavior cannot be redirected after several attempts, they will be removed from the school, and parents will be called to take them home. Also, such behavior could result in removal from our program at the discretion of our Preschool Director.

BITING POLICY

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through, typically between the ages of about thirteen to twenty-four months. Some reasons children bite other children/adults: anger, frustration, over-stimulation, fear, teething, lack of verbal skills, reaction, attention, and curiosity. NUMC staff will encourage children to "use their words" and communicate positively with each other. They will always maintain close and constant supervision of the children to intervene before a biting incident occurs. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No..... we don't bite people."
- The staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and the parent contacted.
- The teacher and a center director will counsel the biter, and the parents will be notified.
- **If the child continues to bite, they will be dismissed from our program.**
- A detailed Accident/Incident form will be completed for both children.
- If the skin is broken, parents of both children will be encouraged to discuss the incident with their child's physician.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH/SNACKS

Breakfast:

Children enrolled in full-time or morning extended care may bring breakfast from home until they arrive before 8:15 AM. After that time, clean-up and classroom transitions are taking place, making it challenging to sit down and eat. Therefore, breakfast will not be served at 8:15 AM. The Department of Children and Families requires that you provide, at a minimum, three different food groups for breakfast.

Lunch:

Lunch times vary with each classroom but generally within the 11:00 AM. time frame. (VPK students who stay for Lunch Bunch will eat lunch between 12:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

- Our students' guardians provide lunches, which should be brought daily to school.
- Please send beverages in containers that do not spill easily. **WITH FIRST AND LAST NAMES ON THE CUP.**
- Send a variety of foods for your child, including items from at least 4 food groups, as required by The Department of Children and Families.
- Please do not send candy; it will not be served.
- Items on our "Not to Send" list in this handbook will not be served if you send them to school with your child.
- Children will be served their main course first. Additional items will be served after the child has eaten their main course. Please limit sugary items in your child's lunch.
- If you send a lunch lacking nutritious foods, you will be called to bring healthy foods. Children will be offered alternative choices from our cupboards when nutritional choices are not provided from home. Good nutrition is part of what we are teaching children at our preschool.
- Fast food cannot be brought to school for lunch.
- Children are not permitted to share food with their classmates.
- Children will be expected to sit with the class during lunchtime.
- **Be sure to label all your child's belongings with their FIRST and LAST name (Including cups!)**
- **There will be a \$5.00 charge every time we need to supply your child with lunch!**

If food needs to be kept cold, please put an ice pack in the lunch box. Most of our classrooms only have small, dorm-size refrigerators in them. We **will not** heat foods. Ideally, children should be able to eat lunch independently, with minimal help from staff. Self-confidence, responsibility, and independence are part of what we are trying to teach your child.

Snack:

The teacher will let you know if your child will have a morning snack and may ask for parent donations. Full-time, afternoon extended care, and school-age students will be provided a nutritious snack around 3:00 PM.

DO NOT SEND THE FOLLOWING FOOD ITEMS:

Carbonated and red drinks (will be sent home)
Red jello
Marshmallows
Whole grapes (cut into quarters)
Gum
Whole/round rings of hot dogs (please cut into half and then into ½ inch or smaller pieces)
Candy/chocolate-coated foods
Glass or glass-lined containers
Nuts
Popcorn
Fast Food Lunches
Hazelnut

FOOD ALLERGIES

If your child has a food allergy, you may be asked to provide an appropriate substitute for snack time. **ALL ALLERGIES MUST BE DOCUMENTED WITH AN EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN.** If your child has an allergy and you still need to fill out an Emergency Action Plan, please see the office. Due to the rising number and severity of allergies, specific foods/items may be prohibited in certain classrooms or the entire school. The preschool office will keep you apprised of any such situations.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher communication is essential. Drop-off and dismissal times are not safe or appropriate times for discussion. Phone calls, e-mails/text messaging, and notes to and from home are great ways to keep this communication going. If an in-person conference is needed/requested, parents and teachers should schedule an agreed-upon time to meet before, after, or during school. Meetings will only be prepared for a period of up to 30 minutes.

NEWSLETTERS/CALENDARS

You will receive monthly newsletters, calendars, and e-mails from the classroom teacher and the office to keep you “in the know.” These may contain helpful hints on child-rearing, preschool happenings, special notices, holiday/school break reminders, words to finger plays, songs sung at school, church events, etc. You can also check the church website for regular updates:
www.navarre.church/preschool.

FACEBOOK

Be sure to “like” our Facebook page for general updates, interesting articles, upcoming events, and more! You can find us listed under “Navarre UMC Preschool.” Please remember that while you are welcome to “check in” on Facebook, no photographs can be taken on school property.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special, and we like to recognize them. Please check with your child's teacher to learn the class routine for birthday celebrations. We ask that you only pass out invitations to private parties at school if you invite the entire class. We cannot give out class members' names, addresses, or phone numbers without the parents' consent.

DRESS

We recommend that you dress your children in play clothes so they can manage themselves at potty time. Play clothes are recommended because there is always the possibility that paint, glue, markers, etc., may get on clothes. If you are sending your little one in a dress, please put shorts or leggings on under due to climbing on play equipment and sit at circle time. Clothes fastened to the shoulders, overalls, suspenders, and belts are not recommended. Since we will go outside daily, weather permitting, dress your child accordingly. Select shoes for your child that give support and allow freedom of movement, such as tennis or walking shoes. Sandals, cowboy boots, dress shoes, and shoes that slip off efficiently inhibit activity on the playground. Shoes must be closed toe and have some strap holding the shoe onto the child's foot. Send jackets/coats in cool weather. Please send an extra change of clothes in a gallon-size plastic bag to be kept at the school as needed. Be sure to label your child's belongings. We do keep a supply of clothes and underwear in the office in case they are required. Please wash the clothes and return them after use.

TOILET TRAINING

We understand that every parent handles toilet training in their way. Many children experience toilet training success through the combined effort of parents and teachers. Our policy is that all children entering the three-year-old classes are fully toilet trained. There is no changing facility in this classroom. If a child is not having success, the Director will evaluate the situation and conference with the family. Instead of immediate withdrawal, we will offer a suspension period of two weeks so the child can concentrate on toilet training at home. A tuition break will not be granted during this time. Upon return to the preschool, we will evaluate the child's progress and meet with parents to discuss any further necessary action.

VISITORS/ VOLUNTEERS

Visitors (including parents, family members, or special guests) may occasionally visit the classroom for a short period. All visitors should sign in at the front office and obtain a pass before entering the school. You will only be admitted to class with a key.

Volunteers regularly enter the classroom to help or assist the teacher in some way or to drive/chaperone on preschool or school-age field trips. Background screening and safe sanctuary training are required of all volunteers. Approval must be received before anyone can volunteer in the preschool. Also, the Department of Children and Families requires that all volunteers sign a "Volunteer Affidavit" and keep it in the preschool office. All volunteers should sign in at the preschool office and obtain a pass before entering the classroom. You will not be admitted to a school without a receipt. Parents are encouraged to volunteer, visit, and share in their child's classroom, on the playground, or with one of the special events that we have planned for this year. We ask that you not enter the classroom if you are not planning to stay because this disrupts the classroom activities and distresses the children. When you visit or volunteer for any reason, your child must remain with their assigned class. If your presence changes your child's behavior, you will be asked to limit your visits and volunteering to special occasions.

When visiting/volunteering at the preschool, wear comfortable clothing that will not be ruined if it gets painted on it. Remember, too, that most of our playground surface is sand. Tennis or other walking shoes are more comfortable than open sandals or high heels.

Individuals who come into the preschool to visit/volunteer must present a warm and friendly personality, be sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, be able to relate well to the children and be willing to support the preschool's philosophy. The people visiting and volunteering in our preschool shall refrain from reprimanding children of other families while on the school premises. Discipline is the responsibility of the staff.

Responsibilities of the volunteer:

Duties will include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Assisting as needed under the direction of the professional staff.
- Always maintains a professional attitude at the school.
- Allowing professional staff to deal with problem situations.
- Supporting the philosophy of the school.
- Treating all children with dignity and respect.

Code for volunteers:

- As a volunteer, I realize that I am subject to a code of ethics similar to that which binds the school staff. Like them, in assuming specific responsibilities, I expect to be accountable for those responsibilities. I will keep confidential matters "confidential."
- As a volunteer, I agree to serve without pay but with the same high standards as the paid staff.
- I promise to take an attitude of open-mindedness to my work, to be willing to be trained for it, and to bring to it an interest and attention.
- I believe that my attitude toward volunteer work should be professional. I think I have an obligation to my work, those who direct it, my colleagues, those for whom it is done, and the community.
- Being eager to contribute all that I can to human betterment, I accept this code for the volunteers as my code, to be followed carefully and cheerfully.

Ways to volunteer in the preschool:

1. Assist with parties/special events
2. Be a resource/share careers or hobbies
3. Teach songs
4. Assist on playground
5. Tell/read stories
6. Prepare/assist with art project
7. Set up/assist in learning centers
8. Prepare bulletin boards
9. Plan/assist with cooking projects
10. Help with school picture days
11. Help children on the computer
12. Help with making copies or office work
13. Help with fundraisers!
14. Assist on workday

TOYS

We have toys and equipment in the classrooms for your child to play with at school. We ask that you not permit your child to bring toys from home to school for hygiene and safety reasons. We understand that comfort items can make the transition to a new environment more accessible, and we will allow them in the classroom, but we will pick them up and discreetly put them away once your child has let go of them. (Perhaps your child would like to share a favorite book, tape, or picture instead?) We want to avoid damaged or lost items, so please remember that the preschool staff will not be held responsible should something happen to an article from home. **No** weapons, war toys, hand-held devices, toys of destruction, sorcery, or violence are permitted under any circumstances - they will be confiscated.

FIELD TRIPS

Outings on the church grounds and outside the licensed preschool building/playgrounds are considered field trips and require a general permission slip. These outings include but are not limited to, nature walks, zoo mobile visits, fire truck visits, water play days, field days, bubble play, sidewalk chalk drawing, picnics, etc. Please sign your permission form in your introductory information packet, so your child can take advantage of such activities.

GENERAL SAFETY

Your child's safety is our number one concern. Some of the ways we do this:

1. All staff must complete 40 hours of child development/regulations training. Each year after that, staff continues with annual training in the early childhood field.
2. Every staff member and volunteer must complete a thorough background check and attend a Safe Sanctuaries training session. Safe Sanctuary is a program of "guidelines, policies, and procedures implemented to create an environment in which children, youth, and the adults who work with them can have boundaries of safe space." (<http://www.gbod.org/ministries/family/safe>)
3. Security cameras are installed throughout the preschool building and playground areas. These cameras monitor the entrances to the building, classrooms, and playgrounds. They are in no way connected to the internet. The monitor is housed in the preschool office and is used by administrative church staff only.
4. Fire Drills will be conducted at least once a month to familiarize your child with our procedures in the event of a real fire. Tornado and lockdown drills will be conducted twice or more yearly

TRAFFIC/PARKING LOT AND AFTER PICK UP SAFETY

Please do your part in helping to keep the preschool grounds safe for our children. Parking lots are a source of danger to young children.

1. Enter and leave the parking lot with extreme caution. Drive slowly in our parking lot. Be on the lookout for wandering children.
2. Always hold your child's hand when going to and coming from an automobile. Do not let your child run ahead of you. They may inadvertently run in the path of a car.
3. Please do not stand in the parking lot conversing with other adults unless your child is seated safely in the car with doors closed.
4. Remember that the parking lot traffic moves one way.
5. Park only in the designated parking spaces.
6. Once you pick up your student from class, you must go straight to your vehicle and exit campus. There will be no allowed play time out front due to safety and lack of supervision in the past.
7. Leave handicapped spaces for those authorized to park in them.
8. Do not block the mailbox or dumpster.
9. In keeping with Florida law, do not leave your child unattended in a motor vehicle under any circumstance. The Department of Children and Families and NUMC Preschool staff will report you to the proper authorities if they see a child in the car unattended.

PRESCHOOL EMERGENCY/WEATHER POLICY

The preschool follows the lead of the Santa Rosa County Schools. Do as they do in the event of severe weather. The preschool will close if they close their schools for severe weather. Part-time preschool will reopen when Santa Rosa Schools reopen. Listen to local radio stations and Channel 3 News for a list of school closings.

In the event of a school closing due to inclement weather, tuition amounts will not be adjusted, or the school year will be extended until after one week of closing. If we are required to close for more than one week, the Preschool Board will either give tuition breaks (for days beyond the initial closed week) or extend the school year to make up for those days. We will inform parents of these decisions promptly.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR PRESCHOOL

To help your child have a happy preschool experience:

- Talk about school positively/think positively. Young children can sense your excitement, as well as your misgivings.
- Communicate with your child's teacher. The teachers and staff can more effectively provide for your child's needs if they know what is happening at home.
- Plan so that mornings before school are relaxed and unhurried.
- Ensure your child gets a good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

Children will be released to either parent unless legal papers or a restraining order is presented. A copy will remain in your child's records. Please refrain from having disputes in the preschool about custody matters.

CHILD ABUSE

Florida Law requires the entire Preschool Staff to report suspected cases of child abuse, sexual or otherwise, neglect, or endangerment of which they become aware to appropriate authorities.

NUMC PRESCHOOL SUN CARE POLICY

PURPOSE

Safe outdoor play is an essential aspect of the healthy development of young children. Our program provides daily outdoor experiences for every child. One way we help keep your child safe is through the education and practice of skin protection. Too much-unprotected exposure to the sun's UV radiation can lead to sunburn, eye damage, wrinkles, and skin cancer, including life-threatening melanoma. Research indicates that one severe childhood sunburn could trigger skin cancer in later years.

Our Sun Care Policy has been developed to promote positive attitudes toward skin protection and encourage practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and related issues. This policy can help encourage all NUMC Preschool members - children, staff, parents/guardians - to take effective skin care measures.

AIMS

- To promote the protection of all children and staff from skin damage caused by the harmful effects of the sun
- To promote positive attitudes toward skin protection among staff, children, and parents
- To promote lifestyle practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and related issues

PROCEDURES

- Staff should plan to be indoors or under cover when the sun is strongest (11:00 AM – 3:00 PM during daylight savings time and 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at other times).
- Center Directors will ensure sufficient shade is provided each day and will be cognizant of the day's UV Index, mandating indoor-only play as deemed necessary.
- Staff will have a "backup plan" for active indoor play if UV Index or high temperatures are hazardous to children.
- Children and staff should wear sun-protective hats (bucket style or broad-brimmed) that protect the face, neck, and ears when outside.
- It is recommended that children and staff wear appropriate protective clothing, such as loose-fitting clothing that protects as much of the skin as possible for outdoor activities (shirts that cover the shoulders and have collars; longer style skirts and shorts). Darker colors are less likely to reflect UV radiation onto the skin.
- SPF 30+ Broad Spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen (provided by parent) should be applied to all exposed body parts at least 20 minutes before outdoor play.
- Parents of children who attend full-time care are asked to provide the school with a bottle of SPF 30+ Broad Spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, for use as described above and apply it before coming to school.
- Children attending 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM should have sunscreen applied by parent/guardian before sign-in.
- Children will be encouraged to utilize shady areas of the playground.
- Planned outdoor play and activities will be set up in shady areas.
- Staff and visitors should act as role models by looking after their skin and avoiding sunburn, as well as by following the procedures in this policy.
- The Sun Care Policy will be reinforced positively through parent newsletters, e-mails, classroom activities/lesson plans, and staff training.
- Center Directors will keep themselves informed about current trends, recommendations, and legislation that impacts this policy.

NOTIFICATIONS OF ABSENCES

Regulations require us to call parents and anyone on the child's pick-up list if a child is out of school unexpectedly. This is a required welfare check that DCF has implemented. To avoid phone calls, please let the preschool office (or your child's teacher) know if your child will be absent. This can be done by phone, email, or by talking to the teacher beforehand.

VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE POLICY

The VPK program allows you to send your child to preschool and help prepare them for kindergarten without the pressure of childcare costs. We, as educators, partner with the parent to be sure that our goal is met in VPK: To prepare your children for Kindergarten in a Christian, loving, joyful, developmentally appropriate environment. Our teachers are well-trained, enthusiastic leaders who do an excellent job helping students meet developmental goals, but they cannot do it alone! Our VPK attendance policies are as follows:

- A. ATTEND REGULARLY** – Your child will not benefit from our program if they are not here. This includes being on time daily to avoid interfering with learning hours. Absences must be kept to a minimum. Of course, we do not want children attending while sick; these absences are unavoidable. We ask you to schedule vacations around our preschool calendar, which follows the Santa Rosa County School schedule. Absences from the program interfere with our efforts to ensure adequate time to prepare the students for kindergarten. When vacation and illness absences exceed the allowable amount in any given month, this causes us to lose significantly needed funds. These funds are necessary to continue the VPK program. Your child must be present for 15 minutes daily to be counted as current.
- B. MAXIMUM ALLOWED ABSENCES** – Students may miss no more than 20% of the scheduled class days per month. At the end of each month, we will send home a card stating how many days (s) your child missed that month and how many they were allowed to miss for the 20% rule. VPK students may not miss the first or last day of school. Also, you may not attend another school while registered and attending NUMC Preschool. If this happens, you will be withdrawn immediately.
- C. DISENROLLMENT** – Absences beyond the 20 % allowable affect your child’s readiness for kindergarten and are not paid for by the state. These absences will be closely monitored, on a case-by-case basis, by the Preschool Directors and may result in your child being disenrolled from our program. Families who meet these criteria may or may not have the opportunity to continue attendance at the non-VPK tuition rate listed in this handbook.
- D. DOCUMENTATION** – Your child must be signed in and out each day with a full signature in ink – no initials!
Additionally, each parent must sign their “Parent Choice Certificate” after each month as a testament that their child did attend here for the prior month. During the first week of each month, your child’s teacher will place a binder outside of their classroom labeled “VPK Student Attendance Parental Choice Certificate Class A, B, C, or D.” Please take a moment to find your child’s certificate and sign it during that week.

COVID 19 PROCEDURES

As you know, our Program seeks continued and ongoing guidance from the Early Learning Coalition, CDC, and Florida Dept. of Health as we continue forward. Please remember that we value the partnership with our families in creating a safe and welcoming environment for our students. If you have questions, please let us know, and we will answer those to the best of our ability.

Masks/Face Coverings

Face masks during this time are optional. Please let the teacher know if you want your student to wear one.

Campus Hygiene

· Our custodial staff will continue to conduct enhanced cleaning protocols, setting up remote cleaning supply stations for additional use by staff. Additional staffing will help support these additional sanitizing methods, including daily wiping down/sanitizing all touch points and flat services. We have UV Lights in all our HVAC Systems; this helps kill germs and bacteria and keeps clean, fresh air circulating in our classrooms.

Please know that the Department of Health will communicate with families for COVID diagnoses as necessary. If an active case arises, we must report to the Health Department and follow their guidance. As discussed with the Health Department, they will inform families and others in our preschool about possible exposure and our following protocol. I will continue to call them to see if they have updated their procedures and protocols so that we are operating within the most up-to-date COVID parameters. All Information can be found at [Santarosa.floridahealth.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov/sant/rosa).

SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAM

We care for children in grades K-5 after school and on school breaks. We provide a positive, secure, and fun place for Holley-Navarre Primary and Intermediate School children. Our program offers a small group setting with plenty of adult supervision, homework help, outside play, and opportunities for both quiet and energetic activities. We are closed on Teacher Planning days and Federal Holidays. See the school calendar for details.

AIM/PURPOSE

The After School Program intends to provide a warm, loving, safe, Christian environment for children to stay in while their parents work. Under our care, these children will fellowship with and be mentored by Christian staff members, volunteers, and peers. We maintain a teacher-to-student ratio 1:13, with a maximum capacity of 19 kids per room.

BILLING & RESERVATION PROCEDURES

Tuition will be prepaid monthly following the same schedule as our preschool program (see page 6). Drop-in reservations must be requested the Friday before the week your child will be attending. Payment for drop-in reservations is due the 1st day the child attends, at parent/guardian pick-up time.

TRANSPORTATION

Children attending Holley Navarre Primary and Intermediate Schools will be transported to our program by bus. These children are governed by the Santa Rosa County School District rules until they get off the bus. All discipline matters should be addressed to the bus driver or your child's school.

HOURS OF OPERATION & TUITION RATES

After School Care (Bus arrival – 5:30 PM):

- \$250.00 per month (5 days per week)
- \$16 per day, drop-in rate
- Annual Activity fee 50.00

REGISTRATION FEE

**An annual non-refundable registration/activity fee of \$50.00 is due at the time of registration.

Parent Contract 2023 - 2024 School Year

Children Attending: 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. I have read, understand, and agree to the policies in the NUMC Preschool Handbook.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date _____
(or Guardian)

2. I understand that providing NUMC with updated physical and immunization forms before they expire may result in suspension from the program until such documents are submitted.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date _____
(or Guardian)

3. I understand tuition is due by the 5th of each month to avoid a late fee. I know that paying late tuition by the 15th of said month will result in my child's withdrawal from the program.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date _____
(or Guardian)

4. I have read, understand, and agree to uphold the NUMC Sun Care Policy. I am aware that parents and guardians are asked to:

- Provide a suitable, sun-protective hat for my child to use at school.
- Provide a suitable sunscreen, as described in this policy (if applicable)
- Give authority and directive for staff to administer sunscreen to my child
- Act as a role model by practicing sun-protective behaviors myself.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date _____
(or Guardian)

****Remember to like Navarre UMC Preschool on Facebook!**