

Lil' Voyagers Preschool Parent/Student Handbook



"Setting Sail Into the Lifelong
Journey of God's World"

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Church Office Hours
(9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday)

Preschool Office Hours
(Tuesday thru Thursday)

Parents and teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of early childhood experiences. What the child learns during his/her early years strongly influences his/her future development.

In our program, emphasis is placed on the needs of the individual child. The child is helped to experience success at his/her particular level of maturity and is given many opportunities to learn and grow in activities new to his/her experience. Children will be placed in age-appropriate classes to receive the full benefits of the Lil' Voyagers Preschool Program.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Lil' Voyagers Preschool is to provide spiritual and social growth at appropriate developmental levels. Our goal is to guide children in a theme based program which develops awareness of basic concepts of language, mathematics and the sciences through process oriented activities.

WE BELIEVE THAT...

- ☺ Learning is a lifelong experience.
- ☺ Everyone deserves to experience success.
- ☺ Relationships are more valuable than material pursuits.
- ☺ The emphasis on learning is process not product.
- ☺ Learning occurs through planned, guided play along with teacher directed activities.
- ☺ Education is a trusting partnership between children, teachers, parents, community and the church.

LIL' VOYAGERS PRESCHOOL PREMISE RULES

- ☺ No running in the building
- ☺ No open beverage in the building
- ☺ No firearms, or drugs of any kind
- ☺ No smoking inside any building on premises
- ☺ Unapproved visitors will not be allowed in the building (This includes Lil' Voyagers Preschool sChildren's family, members, friends who have not been approved by the enrolling parent of the child (**LEGAL DOCUMENTATION WILL BE REQUIRED**))
- ☺ No hitting or biting

SAFETY MEASURES

1. Please be sure to use care when entering and leaving the church parking lot. **DRIVE CAREFULLY!** If one person is bringing a group of children/he/she is responsible for seeing that each child is accompanied to his/her room.
2. Please enter and exit through the front doors of the church **ONLY**. Side entrances will remain locked.
3. Once you pick up your child from his/her room, please keep them with you and do not allow them to run through the church. Also, keep them close to you in the parking lot.
4. For the safety of our children, remember to sign your child **IN** each morning **AND** sign your child **OUT** each afternoon. Please note any changes in pick-up routine on the sign-in sheet, or by written note. Verbal mention to teachers is also helpful.

GUIDELINES FOR PLAYGROUND AND OUTSIDE

1. Slide **DOWN** slide, feet first.
2. One child on slide at a time.
3. No toys on slide area.
4. Climbing is for the Little Tykes slide and mountain playscape.
5. Wagons are pulled by one child, and the child in the wagon must be sitting.
6. Tennis shoes are best footwear for playground.
7. Keep play areas neat and tidy.

CHAPEL TIME

Lil' Voyagers Preschool includes a "Chapel Time" in its daily curriculum. We believe that you agree with us that such a devotional time is appropriate within a Church Context. However, no attempt is made to inflict a particular denominational view on your child. God and Jesus Christ are lifted up in Praise and Prayer. You are welcome to sit in at any time.

CURRICULUM

- ☺ Learning Centers include manipulatives, role playing, book, building, writing, listening, etc.
- ☺ Story/Circle-Time is for the development of listening and communication skills with emphasis on basic concepts of letters, numbers, time, shapes and colors.
- ☺ Arts and Crafts
- ☺ Music for creative expression through sound, rhythm and song

- ☺ Monthly themes - enrichment with themes based on seasons/holidays, self and others, science, nature, and literature.
- ☺ Chapel Time-experience the loving care of a Christian community, Bible stories, verses and songs.

HEALTH

Children enrolled in Lil' Voyagers Preschool will be asked to present, a Doctor's OR Parent's Statement Form noting the child's state of health and immunization record. Please notify the teacher if your child has been exposed to and/or contracted any communicable disease. If signs of approaching illness are discovered at school, the parents will be contacted to pick-up their child. The child will be kept isolated until they can be picked up. If a child is ill, he/she must be kept at home. Children should not return to school with signs of illness such as fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, bad cough, sore throat or excessive nasal discharge. The child must be fever free for 24 hours (without medication) before returning to school. In the event of your child's absence, please notify the program.

Emergency guidelines: in the event a child suffers an acute illness or exhibits signs of severe illness, parents will be called immediately and 911 will be called.

MEDICATION

There will be no dispensing of medication at school. This includes all over-the-counter as well as doctor prescribed medication. Schedules for prescription medication should be adjusted for school hours or parents must make arrangements to administer medication themselves at school. For the safety

of all children attending our school, please do not send any medication to school.

****Children with medical needs that require consistent and daily medication will be addressed on an individual basis through a teacher-parent-director conference.****

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

We are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect.

ENROLLMENT

Registration forms are available from the Director or the church office. All forms must be completed, properly signed and notarized to insure class placement. An enrollment fee is also required at this time and is non-refundable. Call for current fee information.

WITHDRAWALS

Our current policy states that a written two-week notice must be given prior to withdrawing your child from the program. The cost of 2 weeks tuition will be due at that time. If your child does not attend for two consecutive weeks without proper notice being given to the office, your child will be considered withdrawn from the program and his or her space given to another child on the waiting list. If you have withdrawn your child and wish to re-enroll in the same school year, 1/2 of the normal registration fee must be paid. The above policies are designed to help insure consistency and quality in our program. The Board of Directors reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of anyone who abuses the privileges and/or policies of the program. The Board

of Directors reserves the right to implement a probationary/cancellation policy for a child if severe disruptive behavior, including biting, persists. Fees are not returned or prorated.

TIME OF OPERATION

HOLIDAY / WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

Lil' Voyagers Preschool will hold Fall/Spring classes each Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with the school holidays and weather closings of the Rockwall Public School System, and funerals that are scheduled on Tuesday or Thursdays being the only exception unless otherwise stated by the Lil' Voyagers Preschool calendar. Please check local news and radio broadcasts to be informed of district bad weather closing.

School begins at 9:00 a.m. Early arrivals are discouraged due to lesson preparations. Teachers and staff will be ready to welcome students at 9:00. Lateness will delay activities and can be unsettling to some students. Parents are to bring their children directly to their classrooms. A ***sign-in*** sheet will be present at each classroom. Parents must sign their child in daily as a record of attendance and for safe keeping of children. We encourage eye-contact or verbal greeting between parents and school personnel during arrival time. We rely on parental assistance and cooperation during this busy time of our school day. Changes in departure/pick-up routines should be reported to the teacher through written and verbal notification at this time.

DEPARTURE

The school day ends at 2:30 p.m. There will be **NO PROVISIONS** for the care of your child after 2:30, so please pick your child up promptly. Situations beyond your control can arise, if late pick up occurs, there will be a \$5.00 fee charged for any part of a 15 minute interval of late pick up. Abuse of this late pick up could result in the revocation of your child's enrollment and notification of child protective services.

Each teacher will have a copy of the STUDENT RELEASE FORM. Any time a change in routine occurs, all parties (teachers, children, staff) feel more comfortable with prior notification. If someone other than the parents or pre-approved persons are to pick up a child, the program **MUST HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION.** Persons unknown to the program should have their photo I.D. ready for teacher at pickup time. It is the **parent's responsibility** to inform family members and friends of Lil' Voyager's dismissal procedure. We rely on parental assistance and cooperation during this busy time of our day.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

With the aim of enabling the child to function within a classroom setting, we use a combination of behavioral modification and social reinforcement to reward positive aspects of the child's behavior and minimize the negative areas. It is our policy to reinforce all appropriate behavior, to promote the child's self-esteem and only correct the inappropriate behavior, never condemn the child.

If inappropriate behavior continues to occur after the teacher has spoken to the child and has tried to redirect their behavior, the child will be removed from the activity.

The teacher in charge will help the child to verbalize his/her behavior. The child will be given a few minutes to regain control and then a plan will be discussed for the child to rejoin the group and be involved in a positive learning activity. Should disruptive behavior continue, a conference will be held with the parents so that ways to help the child can be discussed cooperatively. If severe disruptive behavior continues the child will be placed under a probationary period and possibly withdrawal from the program.

REASONS FOR STUDENT DISMISSAL

- Unresolved disruptive behavior, which is affecting group dynamics and well-being of other children.
- Any parent/family actions which are considered inconsistent with the goals of the program.
- Unwillingness to work with the staff on child's program goals. Inappropriate behavior toward staff or other's involved in the program.
- Absence from the program for two weeks (+) without updating/informing the staff of the reason could result in termination of enrollment.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Concerns or grievances should always be discussed first between the conflicting parties. Many times statement of the concern or clarification in communications may resolve an issue. If resolution is not achieved, then the situation should be taken to a higher authority for mediation in accordance with the proper channels. If understanding or satisfaction is not achieved, then the next level in the chain may be approached.

Lil' Voyagers Preschool will use the following channel of communication:
Parent→Teacher
Teacher→Director
Director →Board

Open communication between conflicting parties leads to successful resolution. Proverbs 26:20, "*Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.*"

SUBSTITUTE RESPONSIBILITY

Please contact the director if you are willing to work, as a paid substitute, should one of our staff members be unable to work.

If we are unable to maintain an active substitute list, we will notify you that you will be asked to be on call to work on a rotating basis. A criminal background check will be required for each substitute

TOILET TRAINING **Two Year Olds**

We at Lil' Voyagers Preschool believe toilet training is an individual, developmental skill best learned at home in a one on one, parent/child, environment. We at Lil' Voyagers encourage, assist and celebrate the development of toilet skills at school in the following ways.

1. Regular visits to the restroom.
2. Attention to child's body language in regards to toilet needs.
3. Acceptance of parental information that will aid and assist their child in a school setting.

4. Teacher assistance which develops child's independence and self-help skills.
5. Teacher will use a kind, sensitive manner with children during toilet training.
6. Use of stories which encourage development of toilet skills.
7. After toilet training is successful during daytime, use of diapers or pull-ups during nap if parent/teacher deems necessary.

Parents, please remember, ***a child should be accident free at home before he/she wears underwear to school.*** In times of regressions or set back, please return to use of pull-ups or diapers during school. This policy will insure a ***sanitary environment*** for all children.

TOILET TRAINING / ACCIDENTS

Three years and up

Children three years and older **MUST** be toilet trained to be enrolled in our preschool classrooms. Toilet accidents do occur with our trained preschoolers. We at Lil' Voyagers Preschool address accidents in the following manner:

1. Child will be approached in a kind, sensitive manner.
2. Child will change into dry clothing (provided from home in a Ziploc baggie) in a restroom. Teacher will assist in gathering necessary items and dressing as appropriate for age of child. Teacher will encourage child to assume responsibility for changing and drying themselves.

WHAT TO WEAR

- ☺ Children should be dressed comfortably.
- ☺ Children should wear play clothes. Even with care, clothes can get messy, please refrain from wearing special outfits with lots of accessories to school.
- ☺ Boots, shoes with slick soles, sandals and thongs are not recommended.
- ☺ Fastening on clothing should be simple enough so the child can use the bathroom with a minimum of assistance.
- ☺ Please have sufficient clothing to go outside as weather permits.
- ☺ We go outside all winter except under extreme conditions.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- ❖ We ask that you not allow your child to bring toys from home to the classroom unless the teacher has requested them for a special activity. However, if you have books, pictures, or items of interest that correspond to the topic being discussed in the classroom we would welcome them. All care will be taken to keep the items safe and in good condition. However, we are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- ❖ Please do not send party invitations to be distributed unless the entire class will be receiving one. Party arrangements and travel to after school parties should take place off school grounds. Gifts, party favors, etc. should not be brought to school.
- ❖ No gum, candy, or soda.

SUPPLY LIST

BE SURE EVERYTHING IS CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

2 year olds

- Full size backpack
- Juice or water in 2 sippy cups
- Ready to serve food for lunch; including beverage (fruit should be peeled and sectioned) - no microwave or refrigeration available
- Disposable diapers (at least four)
- A complete change of clothing (including socks) placed in large labeled Ziploc bag
- A lightweight blanket/pillow
- Special toy to sleep with if desired
- A three or four fold vinyl rest mat for use at naptime (to be left at church) No odd shaped or cloth covered mats.
- Refill pack of unscented wipes

3 year olds

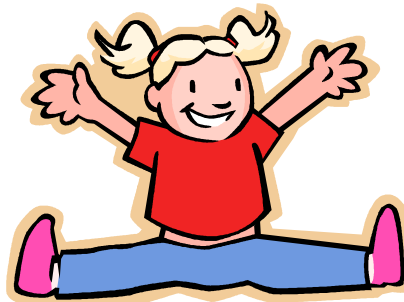
- Full size backpack
- A complete change of clothing including undergarments and socks, placed in a large Ziploc bag with name.
- Some classes may not nap. If napping, a three or four fold vinyl rest mat for use at naptime (to be left at church) no odd shaped mats or cloth covered mats.
- Blankets and small pillow if desired.
- Ready to serve food for lunch; including beverage (fruit should be peeled and cut up) No microwave or refrigeration available.
- Refill pack of unscented wipes

4 year olds and Pre-K

- A complete change of clothing including undergarments and socks placed in a large Ziploc bag with name.
- Full size backpack.
- Ready to serve lunch and beverage.
- Refill pack of unscented wipes

NUTRITIONAL SNACKS

Snacks will be served mid-morning each day. We ask that you bring snacks for your class on a rotating basis. Each classroom will have a schedule you may sign-up on. We will occasionally request ingredients for cooking experiences that occur during the week. A half-gallon of juice or milk will serve a class. We discourage soda pop as a beverage for our growing children. We hope to serve sound nutritional snacks with your help. Suggestions are: grapes, cheese, crackers, muffins, pretzels, bananas, bread/cheese sandwiches, etc. Please send snacks ready to serve.



Every Stage of Development is complete in itself. The three year old is not an incomplete five year old. The child is not an incomplete adult. Never are we simply on our way! Always we have arrived!
ENJOY NOW!!!- J.C. Pierce