



Mountain View Preschool

A ministry of Mountain View United Methodist Church

2300 Jamerson Road, Marietta, GA 30066

770.591.8659 MVUMC.ORG

Parent Handbook

Dear Mountain View UMC Preschool Parents,

We are very excited about the upcoming school year and want to welcome back all of our returning students and families and give a special welcome to our new students and their families. We have a great year planned and trust that God will shine through all of our activities, events, arts and crafts, etc. This will be a FUN year! We feel so blessed to watch your child learn and grow. Please feel free to contact the Preschool at any time with any concerns, questions, and comments.

In His Service,

The Staff at Mountain View UMC Preschool

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Carpool will begin on the first day of school. We encourage use of carpool from the first day to aid children in becoming comfortable with a routine.
- Please have your picture ID ready in carpool line for the first couple of weeks until the teachers get comfortable with knowing everyone.
- If you come to the preschool, please ring the doorbell downstairs and check in at the preschool office to receive a visitor's pass.

PHILOSOPHY

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." (Mark 10:13-26) We believe that each child is a child of God and should have an equal opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually to the fullest potential. We are called to the ministry of caring for children, showing concern for families, and providing support for the community. This ministry is dedicated to creating a program that helps parents raise children with strong Christian values. We strive to provide young children with a rich and stimulating environment that is warm, loving, and supportive of the child's own developmental pace. We believe that children learn through play and use play-centers as a means of educating young children.

GOALS

The goals of our preschool program are to provide or to develop the following:

- An understanding of God's love
- An acceptance of all God's children and their cultural diversities
- A positive self-image and a feeling of personal worth
- A way to work and play happily with others in a group
- Respect for the rights of others
- Growth in self-control
- Appropriate expression of feelings
- The ability to work to his or her greatest potential
- A broad range of interests
- The use of speech in expressing ideas
- The expression of creative ideas
- Readiness experiences that will foster growth physically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and intellectually
- Active appreciation of music and art
- Readiness experiences that will lead to success in math and reading
- Sound health, safety, and nutritional habits

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Preschool hours are from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The doors will not open until 9:00 AM. Mountain View UMC Preschool falls under the Georgia state "exempt status for churches and preschools" and is not a licensed daycare. Therefore, we cannot legally operate for more than four (4) hours per day. Your cooperation and understanding are appreciated.

Please do not bring your child before 9:00 AM as teachers will be busy preparing for the day's activities.

MORNING ARRIVAL: Morning carpool is from **9:00 - 9:15 AM**. Staff members will come to your car door to receive your child. MMO parents may choose to walk their children in to the classroom or use the carpool line. If MMO parents choose to walk their children in, please park upstairs and enter the building by the church office. If children (all ages) arrive after carpool time has ended (9:15) parents should park downstairs and bring their children to the Preschool entrance and ring the doorbell. Staff will then take the child to class. We've found this method creates less of a distraction for all children. Children need to be prompt each morning so that they do not miss important class time.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL: MMO students will dismiss from their classroom and should be picked up at **12:45 PM**. Preschool and Academy carpool is from **1:00-1:15 PM**. Beginning at 1:16 (12:50 for MMO), parents will be billed \$1/minute until your child is picked up so that staff can be compensated for staying late to supervise your child.

Our **holidays and teacher workdays** are in accordance with the Cobb County Public School Calendar with the following exceptions: MVUMC Preschool classes will begin at least one to two weeks after the public schools begin in August and finish at least one week before the public school ends in May. We are closed in observance of Good Friday. We will also close for one day each year so that our teachers are able to attend professional training sessions provided by the Georgia Preschool Association. For specific dates, please refer to the Mountain View United Methodist Church Preschool Calendar and your child's class newsletters.

INCLEMENT WEATHER: The preschool will follow the decision of the Cobb County School System as to when to close due to inclement weather. The TV and radio stations will not be notified by the preschool. Follow what is stated for Cobb County Schools. For delayed openings, if Cobb County delays one hour then we will open at 10:00 AM and end at our regular closing time. If they delay two hours, we will not open that day.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

PARENT GROUP: Here at Mountain View, we feel that parental, guardian and grandparent involvement is a key ingredient in our preschool program's success. Much like schools have a PTA, we have the Mountain View Parent Group. The Parent Group meets throughout the school year and helps organize several events, including our Annual Raffle Basket Fundraiser, Santa Shop, and Teacher Appreciation Week. The Parent Group is a great way to meet other parents and grandparents. It is also a wonderful way to build even stronger relationships with our staff. Once the school year begins, you will receive more information on how you can become involved. We are looking forward to a great school year and are excited to have not just your children here, but each parent and family member as well! See letter in packet from your Parent Group leaders for this year.

PARENTS HELPING HAND: We encourage parent participation in the classroom. If you would like to visit and observe, read a story, help with cooking or art, please feel free to do so. It would be helpful to call your child's teacher ahead of time to coordinate your plans.

COMMUNICATION

CONFERENCES: Sometime during the first six weeks of school, your child's teacher will contact you to informally let you know how your child is adjusting to school. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher at any time with concerns or questions. We are always happy to have a conference at your request at any time during the school year. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled each year in January during the weeks before registration for the following year. Parents will be contacted and given the opportunity to come in for a conference. At that time any questions concerning your child's placement for the following year will be addressed.

SCHOOL BAGS: We will provide each child with a school book bag. **DO NOT SEND A DUFFEL BAG OR BACKPACK.** We prefer the provided book bags because they are convenient for placing and removing papers and artwork. The book bag is our means of daily communication between home and school. Please check your child's bag daily for notes and communication from school then return the bag the next day.

NOTES: Please attach any correspondence for the Preschool to your child's school bag with the clip provided or with a paper clip or safety pin. This makes it easier for the teachers to find. If an EMERGENCY comes up during the school day, please call the Preschool Office. **PLEASE REFRAIN FROM DELIVERING MESSAGES TO TEACHERS AT CARPOOL AS IT CAUSES DELAYS OR CAN LEAD TO MISCOMMUNICATION.**

ABSENCES/ EARLY PICK UPS: If your child will be absent from school, please call the Preschool Office so the teacher can be notified. If your child is absent because of a contagious disease, please let us know so we can be aware of possible symptoms in other children and notify their parents accordingly. If you need to pick your child up early, please send a note to the teacher. If you need to pick up your child early, please do so by 12:30 PM to avoid interfering with carpool.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES: When your child will be picked up by someone other than you, follow these policies. If you have listed the person on the pickup info on file with the Preschool Office, send a written note or email with the change. If the person is not listed on your pickup info on file, send a written note **AND** an email including the person's name and phone number. In an emergency, where you are unable to follow the previous procedures, please call the Preschool office (770)591-8659 for more instructions.

REMIND: The Preschool communicates with parents frequently using a service called Remind. If you are not already registered with this service, you will be prompted to join when we send a message. The Remind service allows you to choose to receive messages by text or email.

TUITION

Tuition is calculated for an entire school year. You may choose to pay for the entire year at once, or you may choose to divide the tuition into 10 payments. If you choose the 10 payment method, each payment is due on the 1st of each month (August-May). Please pay by the 5th to avoid a late fee. At this time, tuition can be paid by check or with cash. If you pay with cash, please send it in an envelope with your child's name on it.

AFTER SCHOOL CLASSES

A few after-school classes are offered by companies or individuals not affiliated with the Preschool or the Church. Information about these classes will be distributed by the Preschool, but all registration and applicable tuition will be collected by the class provider. Children participating in the classes will be released to the provider at 1:00 on the class day. Classes vary, but previous years have included soccer, dance, gymnastics, and art. More details about this year's classes will be provided once they have been confirmed.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline has never been a major concern for our preschool, and we certainly do not anticipate it being a major concern this year. We have found that the best way to handle a disruptive child is by redirection. This is usually handled simply by giving the child another alternative. For example, if a child were disruptive in the block center, we would simply suggest that he or she might like to paint at the easel for a while.

If this technique does not work at the time or if a child has physically hurt another child, we may suggest that the child sit down for a few minutes until he or she is ready to play appropriately. We do not set a time limit. We work with the child in determining when he or she is ready to resume play.

As a final attempt, or if a child continues to physically hurt another child, he or she may be taken to sit with the Director for a short time. If this is the case, the parent will be notified so that strategies between home and school may be discussed. Often parents are able to give us clues as to how a child is accustomed to being disciplined, and the problems are solved very simply. We do not hit or verbally abuse a child, but address problems in a positive manner.

DRESS CODE

SHOES: Your child should wear comfortable closed-toe shoes that fit properly and are appropriate for the playground. Rubber soled shoes are encouraged. Open-toed shoes (i.e., sandals) tend to collect mulch and can be uncomfortable. Due to safety hazards, we ask that your child not wear cowboy boots or flip-flops.

OUTER WEAR: WE PLAY OUTSIDE WHENEVER WEATHER PERMITS. PLEASE SEND SUITABLE OUTDOOR CLOTHING. Clearly mark your child's name on all coats and outerwear. If your child's coat does not have a hood, send a hat. Umbrellas are not allowed.

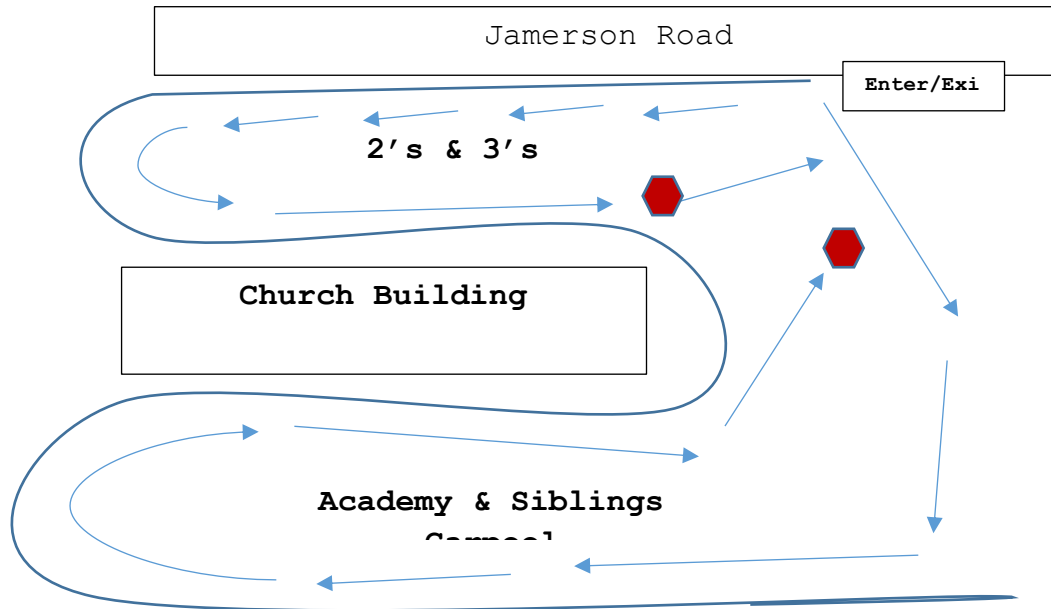
CLOTHING: Please have your child wear comfortable, washable clothing that is suitable for play and the sometimes messy activities of preschool. We provide smocks for the children to wear when they are painting, but accidents and spills happen. For sanitary reasons, when you send your daughter to preschool in a dress, please have her also wear a pair of shorts underneath. Please pack and keep a COMPLETE, head-to-toe, set of clothing, including underwear and socks, in a Ziploc bag in the bottom of your child's school bag. If an accident does happen, your child will have his/ her clothes. PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING.

CARPOOL PROCEDURES

- There will be several staff members directing cars during carpool. Please pay close attention and follow their directions.
- For everyone's safety, cell phone usage is prohibited once you enter the carpool line.
- Every family will be assigned a carpool number. The carpool number should be displayed **with the number facing staff members who assist in carpool**. We love when families make arrangements to share carpool responsibilities with other families. This helps us with traffic congestion, plus provides you with a little extra free time. 😊
- As we need to move the carpool line along as quickly as possible during both drop-off and pick-up times, carpool is NOT the appropriate time to discuss your child's progress or personal concerns. Please send a written note, email, or call the teacher or director to address these.
- **Morning carpool** is 9:00-9:15 in the lower parking lot. We encourage everyone to use the carpool line from day one because we find the transition is easier for both parents and children. However, if you'd like to walk your child in at the beginning of the year, please park in the upper parking lot and enter the building by the church office.
- During **morning carpool**, the upper parking lot is used as a "holding tank" to keep cars from backing up onto Jamerson Road. If the line for the lower lot extends to the entrance, please drive up to the upper lot and circle around by the playground to form the extended line of cars waiting to turn into the lower lot. Please be sure you do not cut off other cars doing this as well. If at all possible, there will be a staff member at the entrance directing traffic, so please follow their directions.
- **Afternoon pickup** for MMO students is at 12:45. Parents of MMO students should park in the lower lot to the left of the cones and come inside to pick up children from their classroom. All MMO cars need to be loaded and moved by 12:55 to allow for Preschool carpool to begin.
- **Afternoon carpool** is 1:00-1:15 in the lower lot for Preschool (2's and 3's classes) and the upper lot for Academy (PreK4's and Kindergarten classes) and their siblings.

- Follow the map below to help understand **afternoon carpool** procedures.

Afternoon



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- During **afternoon carpool**, when your vehicle is adjacent to the sidewalk, please get out of your vehicle and wait for your child to be handed to you from staff. Please immediately buckle your child into car seat and get in your vehicle. All children **MUST** be buckled before cars move. Once you and your child are buckled in, turn on your hazard lights to indicate you are ready. You will be dismissed by staff once the other cars at the sidewalk are ready. Do not drive away until directed by staff. When you reach the stop signs on the map, please look for directions from a staff member directing traffic.
- Please notice that the Academy & Siblings carpool line drives on the “wrong” side of the road. Please drive cautiously and follow the directions of the staff directing traffic.

CAR SEATS & BOOSTER SEATS

According to Georgia Law: *Every driver who transports a child under eight years of age in a passenger automobile, van, or pickup truck, other than a taxicab or a public transit vehicle, shall, while such motor vehicle is in motion and operated on a public road, street, or highway of this state, provide for the proper restraint of such child in a child passenger restraining system (car seat/booster seat) appropriate for such child's height and weight and approved by the United States Department of Transportation.*

Preschool staff will not allow children to ride in a car without a car seat or booster seat. Please make arrangements with anyone who will pick up your child from school for them to have a car seat or booster seat. For your convenience, you may drop one off with your child in the

morning for someone else to use that afternoon. They should arrive early to pick up and install the car seat.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATE: We require a certificate of immunization from your child's doctor or the Health Department. These must be on the Georgia Health Department Form #3231 (**Revised 3/2007**), and must be on file at the Preschool by the first day of school or within 30 days of enrolling after school begins. Kindergarten students are also required to provide a certificate of eye, ear, and dental exam which is Form #3300.

EMERGENCY CARD: An Emergency Card for each child is to be completed by the parent or guardian and kept on file at the Preschool. This emergency information should be updated as the need arises. The people you list as contacts should be able to pick up your child if he or she should feel ill while at school. Please notify us of any changes on the Emergency Card as they arise. If there are times when you know that you will be unreachable by phone during the school day, it is very helpful if you send a note to the teacher advising her which person on the emergency card will be able to be contacted. For instance, if you know that you will be assisting in an older child's elementary class or at a doctor's appointment for the entire morning, please send a note on that particular day.

OUTSIDE PLAY: We play outside on a daily basis unless weather prohibits it. PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE IS NOT WELL ENOUGH TO PLAY OUTSIDE. We do not have the staff available to look after children staying inside while the rest of the class goes out.

SCHOOL INJURY: If your child receives an injury while at school, every effort will be made to contact you before carpool time. If we are unable to contact you and the injury was small enough (i.e. scratch, mosquito bite, etc...) for us to manage at school, a note will be placed in your child's bag, and you will be notified at carpool. If the injury is of a serious nature, we will first call an ambulance, and then try to contact you.

ILLNESS: Please notify the Preschool of any allergies your child may have, or if your child is on any medication. We are unable to administer antibiotics or routine medication, but it is helpful to know that they are on medication in case we see possible side effects. If it is essential for the child's well-being that medication be on hand at school (such as an EpiPen or inhaler), then the parent must complete an Allergy Form, preferably from the Prescribing Doctor's office with directions which will be kept on file in the office. **We must stress that you keep your child home if he or she has any contagious condition, such as nausea, diarrhea, sore throat, green or yellow discharge from the nostrils or drainage from eyes, rash or skin eruptions.** Unfortunately, parents have reported, "My child vomited last night, but seems fine this morning." This is a violation of our illness policy and your child needs to stay home.

Please make sure that your child is **symptom free for twenty-four (24) hours** before allowing your child to return to school. NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND WHO IS RUNNING A FEVER. If we are concerned that your child has a fever, we will take their temperature. If the temperature is 100 degrees or higher, we will call you to come pick up your child.

Please notify the preschool staff at once if your child has a contagious illness.

DIARRHEA: There are many reasons that children have diarrhea and this is not necessarily an indication that they are sick or contagious, however if a child has two incidents of diarrhea during one school day, we will call you to pick up your child.

LICE: Should lice nits be found on your child's head, we will immediately call you or your emergency contact person to come and pick up your child. Your child will be able to return to school only after he/she has received treatment for lice, and nits combed out. A note from the pediatrician or health department may be required if the Director deems this necessary. Head lice are a very common occurrence and is not a testimony to your or our housekeeping or hygiene. The condition does need to be treated quickly to avoid further contamination.

SAFETY DRILLS

As a preschool, we must educate our children on how to keep safe in all types of situations. We will be performing various drills throughout the year to have the children comfortable in case of a true emergency. These drills will be performed in the least threatening manner possible. Children who are sensitive to the drills will be given special care by the teacher in order to help in the transition.

SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS: Severe weather drills will be done seasonally. The children will be instructed before the drill as to what to do when the bell alarms sound. The children will be in close contact with their teachers and assistants during the entire drill and will be aided to help remain calm. The teachers will use a lot of praise to communicate appropriate actions.

FIRE DRILLS: Fire Drills will be performed monthly. This is a requirement from the Cobb County Fire Marshall. The children will learn to line up and go out the quickest exit and walk to a safe location away from the building. Staff and children will await the Director's instructions to re-enter the building.

LOCK DOWN DRILLS: The children will learn a drill of how to be quiet and be in a safe area of the church in case of a lock down of the church, local businesses, or nearby school. The children will be instructed in a safe and non-threatening manner.

SECURITY

For the safety of our children and staff, Church doors are always locked. There is a buzz-in system used to access the building during Preschool and Church office hours (generally 9am-2pm). The buzz-in system upstairs is typically used for Church visitors and the buzz-in system downstairs is typically used for Preschool visitors. Please ring the doorbell located to the right

of the double doors at either entrance. Once you have been identified through the camera, a staff member will unlock the door so that you may enter.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a very important time in a child's life. If you wish to provide a special treat for your child's day, please communicate with the teacher to discuss arrangements. We have found that children seem to enjoy cookies more than cupcakes. Cupcakes tend to go uneaten (icing gets licked 😊) and are much messier than cookies. If you want (certainly not required!), SMALL favors can be placed in the school bags to go home. We hold the right to cancel this if it tends to get out of hand. In regards to invitations, we ask that if you do send in party invitations to school, either all students in the class must be invited or all of your child's gender must be invited. If not all are invited, teachers will not distribute invites. Alternately, you will receive a Class Roster which can be used to arrange private distribution of invites.

LUNCHES & SNACKS

Parents will pack a lunch for their child each day. Please clearly mark lunch boxes, water bottles, and food containers with your child's name. Any food allergies should be clearly noted on your child's lunch box.

Your teacher will either ask you to provide a snack for your child each day, or she will assign some days during the year for you to provide snacks for the whole class. Special treats and juice should be reserved for parties. We believe our children are not taught to drink enough water, so on regular school days we will provide God's juice (water) to drink.

Popular snacks include:

Graham Crackers * Cheez-Its * Vanilla Wafers * Cheese Cubes or sticks * Ritz Crackers
Goldfish * Granola Bars * Yogurt * Fruit Salad/ fruit slices * Pudding/Jell-O * Muffins
or be creative!

Due to choking hazards, **NO POPCORN, UNCUT GRAPES, HOTDOGS, PEANUTS, MARSHMALLOWS (of any size) OR HARD CANDY** are allowed in snacks or lunches.

Some classrooms will be "Nut" free rooms so please take note if your child's classroom has a severe allergy and please take caution when packing your child's lunch. If your child's classroom is affected by allergies, you will receive a note regarding special instructions.

SCHOOL PARTIES

There are parties scheduled for Fall, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's, Easter and at the End-of-Year. We ask that parents help with at least one party during the year. Do not feel you have to be elaborate. The children are happy just to have you in the class. Every effort will be made to have one main "class parent" who will communicate directly with the teacher about parties. If you are the "class parent," while planning parties, please reach out to the teacher as they will be able to make suggestions for food or activities that work well or they may have special requests. The "class parent" will then communicate with the other parents who have volunteered to help with the parties.

Please keep the following info in mind:

- Parents, siblings and grandparents are welcome to attend all parties.
- Check newsletters for specific details such as start times for upcoming parties.
- Party parents only need to provide refreshments for the children, but are welcome to provide for teachers and parents too if they'd like.
- Please be mindful of any classroom allergies when deciding about food.
- Also, keep in mind foods that are considered choking hazards (i.e. popcorn, uncut grapes, hard candy, and marshmallows).
- Books and simple crafts are good activity choices.
- Typically, it works best to have activities before party food.
- Elaborate decorations are not necessary. Simple party plates & napkins are plenty of décor.
- Due to choking hazards and latex allergies, please NO BALLOONS at parties.
- **NOTE TO ALL PARENTS: If you plan to check your child out after the class parties, you must sign your child out from the teachers.**

Thanksgiving parties are a little different from the other parties.

- ❖ Some classes have a Sharing Day for Thanksgiving. Each child is asked to bring in their favorite food to share with the class. Party parents are asked to provide paper goods and drinks.
- ❖ The Academy classes will have a Thanksgiving Feast where families are invited to join the class in the Fellowship Hall for a Feast. Families will be asked to bring items for the feast. More information will follow.