



Druid Hills
United Methodist Preschool

We grow hand in hand

Parent Handbook
2008-2009

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www.dhump.org

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Druid Hills United Methodist Preschool Enrichment Program is concerned with the development of the whole child...physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. The context of the learning environment as a church sponsored preschool is one where each child is celebrated as a unique creation of God. Therefore, we attempt to individualize instructions according to the needs and skills of each child.

Recognizing the curiosity and intellectual potential of children, we aim to build the foundation needed in school. We do this in an atmosphere of love and understanding rather than in a climate that pressures children to perform. We also endeavor to help parents strengthen the family by providing support, information and concern.

Druid Hills United Methodist Preschool is a community of students and faculty from a variety of socioeconomic, ethnic, national, and religious backgrounds. This diversity provides a rich culture for growing the mind and heart of each student and provides for life-long learning in a diverse and interdependent world. We incorporate into our curriculum the ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity in which we live.

RELIGION

We welcome children and teachers of all faiths. In an on-going effort to recognize our Methodist foundation without making any child or family feel excluded or different, the following two affirmations serve as our religious foundation:

1. God created this beautiful, wonderful world and wants us to take care of it.
2. God loves each one of us and wants us to love each other.

CURRICULUM STATEMENT

It is our goal to encourage learning in ways that respect the individual interests and strengths of children. We strive to serve the needs of all children by offering a variety of exciting materials, open-ended activities and interesting projects.

The program changes to accommodate the skills and interests of each developmental level. Teachers individualize instruction; plan activities and present new materials based on the current interests and developmental level of the children in any given group. This is accomplished through planned daily activities including art, music, creative movement, storytelling, cooking, reading, and plenty of time on the playground. Children are introduced to language arts, science, math, and social studies through fun and challenging hand-on activities and by capitalizing on the "teachable moment". Play is at the heart of the children's day, and activities are child directed and executed with respect to the importance of play.

Our enrichment programs further enhance the program. Specialized teachers who teach music, creative movement, story telling, and Spanish design and implement these programs.

PRESCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors governs the preschool. The voting members of the Board are comprised of four members of Druid Hills United Methodist Church and three parents elected by the preschool PTA membership. Non-voting members of the Board include the pastors of the church, the Director(s) of the Preschool, the PTA president(s), and a representative of the preschool teachers. Board meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. The dates are posted on the school web-calendar.

The Board sets the budget for the Preschool, oversees the Preschool Directors and sets policy for the operations of the Preschool programs. The Board uses committees to accomplish much of its work and has standing committees on Finance, Personnel, Public Relations and Long Range Planning.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

We are proud to have a very active PTA to establish a foundation of family involvement in your child's education beginning with his or her earliest school experience. The purpose of PTA is two-fold. First, to promote school fellowship, and second, to raise funds to provide additional programs like cultural arts events, playground and building improvements, classroom supplies and equipment. The PTA extends a warm welcome to all parents to join in these fun (and important) efforts on behalf of our children.

Why join? Preschool is the beginning of your child's adventure in education; your participation in their school life enriches everyone's experience – you, your child, your teacher, and his/her young friends. You don't have to do everything; it's a busy world we live in. Pay your annual dues; bring one dish to the potluck; sign up for one volunteer rotation at Fall Fling; bring a hammer to one workday; come to a PTA meeting. A few hours here and there can make a big difference to all of us.

Need more reasons? It's fun, really it is! It's a great way to meet other parents. Join us at a mug-n-muffin for a friendly chat, a Q & A with the preschool leadership or to learn about an interesting new topic. You can help in your child's classroom by painting the room or building new shelving at an indoor workday. Join the PTA and enjoy the good feeling that you will most definitely have after sharing your time and talent with your child's school.

Just like our children, we adults each have unique and worthy talents, creative energy, and spirited minds that can make a contribution to our preschool in some way. Find yours and join us in PTA!

FEES AND DEADLINES

TUITION IS DUE ON THE 1st OF EACH MONTH

2 days per week	\$225 per month
3 days per week	\$300 per month
5 days per week	\$385 per month
Pre-K 5 days per week	\$390 per month
Kindergarten 5 day per week	\$425 per month

A payment coupon booklet is provided for your convenience. Please read the coupon booklet for details. Tuition payments are due on 1st of each month and are late after the fifth. A \$10.00 late fee will be charged for all late payments and is deposited into the scholarship fund. Please remember that we are non-profit and dependent upon prompt payment of fees to pay our teachers each month. Accounts that fall more than 30 days behind without making acceptable pay arrangements are subject to disenrollment.

REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Registration will be held in February for the following school year. Preference in enrollment is given to church members, who receive a 20% discount on registration fees, and to children of families already enrolled in the program. **The registration fee of \$150.00 is non-refundable.** Thirty days notice is required to receive a refund of May tuition.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

We offer a Scholarship Fund, which began through the generosity of an anonymous church member. It's continued availability is dependent upon donations from parents, church members, alumni, and school fund-raisers. You may use your coupon booklet to make donations to the scholarship programs. The scholarship program provides financial assistance to preschool families and is administered by the Preschool Board Scholarship committee. Applications for scholarship are available in the preschool office.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are 9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Teachers arrive early to set up their classrooms and make preparations for the school day. **If you arrive before 9:30 am, please be considerate of your child's teacher and her time and use the playground or the library on the second floor to wait with your child until arrival time.**

Your child's teachers are always happy to talk with you about your child. However, arrival and dismissal are not good times to have conferences with the teachers. The teachers' attention needs to be focused on the children during these transition times. Please keep

conversations brief during transitions and feel free to schedule a time for lengthier conversations. Arrival and dismissal are important transitions for your child. It can be distressing to arrive after the class is involved in activities and also to be left after all others have gone home. **Please do your best to adhere to the arrival and departure times.**

SIGN OUT

A child will not be dismissed to any person other than a parent or official guardian without written consent. If a parent or guardian who is not known to your child's teacher or the director needs to pick up your child you must let us know in advance and that individual must be prepared to show identification. **No child will be dismissed to any person other than parents or official guardian without written consent.** Should you receive a written notice asking you to release a child to someone you do not know you must ask for identification. It is our policy in custody disputes where one parent is legally barred from seeing a child that we have court documentation on file in the event the police must be contacted.

You must "sign-out" with your child's teacher at pick up time. After you have signed out your child, you are welcome to enjoy the playground with your child and other preschool families. This is a wonderful opportunity for all involved. Please help us maintain a secure playground by closing and latching the gate after entering or exiting. Your cooperation is essential in keeping our playground safe!

LATE PICK UP

A late fee of \$1.00 per child will be assessed for every minute past 1:35 p.m. your child has not been picked up. If your child's teacher has left for the day you will need to pick your child up from the preschool office. The late fee will be billed to your account.

WHAT TO BRING

- If your child is wearing diapers, please provide the disposable kind and wipes.
- If your child has something special (blanket, pacifier, teddy bear, doll etc.) that helps him/her feel secure during the day, bring it along. Please do not attempt to wean your child from these items as he/she begins school. Your child's teacher will give you more details about how to handle "security blankets" and transition objects.
- Teachers encourage sharing interesting things from home or trips. Nature specimens, collections, and child creations are always welcome, as are children's books.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Toys, money, jewelry, candy and gum. They are distracting and easily lost or broken. A very special toy may be brought for sharing on special days. Please check with your child's teacher. **PLEASE NO TOY GUNS OR WEAPONS OF ANY KIND!!**
- Do not allow your child to bring any precious, expensive, irreplaceable items. The teachers have their hands full providing for the safety and well being of the children. While our teachers do everything possible to protect your child's belongings, please do not send items to school that are irreplaceable – sometimes things do get lost. If your child really wants to share something of this nature, please make arrangements with the teacher to attend show and tell or circle time so that you may be present for the sharing and then take the item home with you. Your children will enjoy your participation in their classroom.

WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD WEAR

Please dress your child so that he/she feels comfortable and is able to play outside in all types of weather. Labels on clothing and possessions are a must. Your child should not wear cowboy boots or shoes with slick bottoms to school.

Children are expected to wear comfortable, washable play clothes. Outfits that your child can manage him/herself make the day go more smoothly and are imperative to a child in the process of potty training.

Do not, under any circumstance, send your child to school in clothing that is of sentimental value or which might cause you or your child distress if stained. We play hard during our day at school. We will paint and play in mud, colored glue, dirt and sand. We will climb, jump, and hang upside down. Please do not burden your child by asking him/her to keep clean. That's not what preschool is about.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found box will be maintained on the 2nd floor outside the Preschool Office. Periodically the contents of the lost and found box that have not been claimed will be donated to a charitable organization.

LUNCH

You provide lunch for your child. Send it in a standard lunch box and don't forget to:

- Label lunch box and containers
- Send a drink
- Send food your child likes and have it ready to eat, i.e. sliced, peeled, etc.

Please remember that your child's teacher is helping eight to sixteen children eat at the same time. Anything you can do to make this easier is truly appreciated by the teachers and your child!

SNACKS

PLEASE DO NOT BRING SNACKS CONTAINING PEANUT PRODUCTS!!! Due to the prevalence of serious peanut allergies in young children we have opted to become a peanut free preschool. If you have a child with an allergy please be aware that while we have created this no peanuts policy, we cannot guarantee a peanut free environment.

Each child has a snack every day. Your classroom teacher will let you know when to bring snacks for your child's class. Some snack suggestions:

pretzels	applesauce
cheese	raisins/ dried fruits
granola bars	trail mix
cut veggies and dip	sandwich halves
cut fruits	popcorns for older classes
yogurt	cereal and milk (a favorite!)
crackers (all the shapes and flavors)	muffins

. There is no need to be fancy every day or to go overboard – a box of graham crackers is often the most appreciated by children. Please provide a choice when bringing snacks.

BIRTHDAYS

These are important days in the year for young children. We will emphasize the birthday child's uniqueness and growth at school. Feel free to bring cupcakes or something special to share for your child's birthday celebration. However, please do not send or bring individual party bags for children. Please do not send birthday party invitations through school lunchboxes or place them in cubbies as this often results in hurt feelings.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

There are times when parents will have concerns about policies, procedures, or the philosophy of our school. You are always welcome to discuss these with the teachers and director(s). If, however, these concerns remain unresolved, you may follow the conflict procedure, which has been laid out in detail and is on file in the preschool office. Please feel free to refer to these guidelines if you feel it is necessary.

INCIDENT PROCEDURES

With the philosophy of our school in mind, we have set forth procedures to handle significant incidents and inappropriate behavior. These guidelines are detailed completely and approved by the board. These procedures ensure the physical and emotional safety of our children. The following are the basic guidelines for handling inappropriate behavior:

1. Remove the child from the situation.
2. Explain inappropriate behavior and offer more appropriate responses in term the child can understand.
3. A child over the age of 2 may be brought to the office to provide a calmer atmosphere.
4. No corporal punishment will ever be used

A more detailed guideline is available in the teacher handbook.

BITING

Please remember that while biting is very upsetting for parents and teachers, it is a normal way for your child to express frustration and does not indicate anything unusual about the child. Please trust us to do everything possible to safeguard the emotional and physical well being of all the children at our preschool. We have a detailed biting policy available at your request.

DISENROLLMENT

Children who are hurting themselves or others and/or chronically disruptive to the extent that they are not benefiting from the preschool program may be disenrolled from the program. Families will be given assistance in obtaining resources to help the child benefit from the program including assessment referral and treatment options. Disenrollment of a child is the last step taken after all other attempts to help the child within the program have been exhausted.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The teachers and staff of DHUMP are obligated to report any evidence of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH INFORMATION

Sick Child Policy

The staff will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of each child. Your cooperation is necessary to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. If your child develops a contagious disease, please let the Director or the teachers know so that other parents may be notified of the possible exposure of their children.

You should keep your child at home if he or she has any of these symptoms:

- Skin rash
- Fever
- Coughing and “unclear” runny nose
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Sore throat

CHILDREN MUST BE FEVER AND DIARRHEA FREE FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.

If your child should experience a non-emergency illness during school hours, we will contact you and then provide a comfortable, secure place for your child to wait for your arrival. Generally that will be the office, especially if we suspect that the child may be contagious.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

All children must have a Medical Emergency sheet on file in the preschool office. These sheets contain all the necessary information to contact you or a relative or friend in case of sickness or emergency. It also gives us permission to seek medical attention in an emergency. **It is imperative that you have emergency information sheets for each child and that you keep this information up to date.**

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

We require that a current “Day Care and Early Childhood Certificate of Immunization” be on file at our school. If you choose not to immunize your child please provide us with a notarized “Exemption from Vaccinations” from which may be obtained on the internet. The required Certificate of Immunization is available from your pediatrician or local health care provider.

BAD WEATHER POLICY

We will follow school closings in both Atlanta City and Dekalb County school systems. If both school systems are closed, Druid Hills UM Preschool will be closed as well. If, however, only one school system closes, we will make a decision about preschool closings based on the conditions at the Druid Hills UM Preschool. As always, you must make a personal choice based on travel conditions from your home to the preschool.

SAFETY AND PARENTS

DHUMP is an in-town, socially responsible preschool and church located at a busy intersection. We work hard to make the building safe for children and we encourage everyone to help with this effort. Please do not allow children to roam in the school, the parking lots or the areas between the playgrounds and the building unattended by an adult. Make every effort to get acquainted with each other and do not hesitate to introduce yourself to someone if you have questions about their presence in the preschool. After 10:00 a.m. all entrance doors will be locked and you will need to buzz the preschool office from the ***Briarcliff Door Entrance*** only to enter the building. Please do not use the Ponce de Leon Ave. entrance to the building from 10 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. During those hours the Briarcliff entrance should be used for all preschool business.

Druid Hills United Methodist Preschool 2008-2009 Calendar

Thursday	August 28	Parent Orientation 7:00-8:30pm
Friday	August 29	Meet & Greet--Students Meet Teachers
Tuesday	September 2	First Day of School
Wednesday	September 3	Meet & Greet Coffee in Quillian Room Meet & Greet Coffee in Quillian Room
Wednesday	September 10	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Friday	September 12	Welcome Back Ice Cream Social 1:30
Wed or Thu	September 24 & 25	Fellini's Pizza Day
Fri-Fri	October 3-9	Book Fair
Friday	October 3	Fall Potluck
Friday	October 10	Teacher Workshop GAYC—School Closed
Thursday	October 16	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Wed or Thu	October 29 & 30	Fellini's Pizza Day
Saturday	November 1	Fall Fling (DHUMP Festival)
Wednesday	November 12	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Wed or Th	November 19 & 20	Fellini's Pizza Day
Mon – Fri	November 24-28	Thanksgiving Break
Mon & Tue	December 1&2	Barnes & Noble Book Sale
Thursday	December 11	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Wednesday	December 17	12:45 pm Winter Celebration
Thu – Fri	Dec 17 – Jan 2	School Closed/Winter Break
Monday	January 5	Children Return to School
Wednesday	January 14	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Monday	January 19	Closed MLK Day
Wed or Thu	January 28 & 29	Fellini's Pizza Day
Monday	February 2	09-10 In-House Registration Begins

Monday	February 9	09-10 Open Registration Begins
Thursday	February 11	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Fri – Mon	Feb 13 & 16	Mid-Winter Break/Presidents' Day
Friday	Feb. 27	Teacher Workshop GA.P.A.School Closed
Wed or Th	February 25 & 26	Fellini's Pizza Day
Wednesday	March 11	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Friday	March 20	Bloomin' Bash
Wed or Th	March 25 & 26	Fellini's Pizza Day
Mon – Fri	Apr 6 - 10	Closed for Spring Break
Thursday	April 16	PTA's Mug & Muffin
Wed or Thu	29 & 30	Fellini's Pizza Day
Friday	May 1	May 2010 Tuition Due
Mon-Thu	May 4-8	Book Fair
Wed. or Thu	May 13 & 14	Fellini's Pizza Day
Friday	May 15	Teacher Appreciation Luncheon School Closes at 12:00
Wednesday	May 20	End of Year Celebration 12:45 PM
Summer Camp I	June 1-26	2009
Summer Camp II	July 6-31	2009