



Child Development Center Parent Handbook



A Five Star Licensed Center
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Mission Statement

First United Methodist Church of Salisbury Child Development Center, founded in 1968, is a non-profit organization committed to providing quality, Christian early education and childcare for the residents of Salisbury and surrounding areas. We endeavor to afford our young learners with a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment that meets the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of each individual child. By actively forging partnerships with caregivers, we support family goals and cultivate a sense of community that empowers our parents. We strive for each of our children to enter kindergarten with an awareness of self-worth and the tools to achieve their full potential.

Introduction

The center is licensed by the State of North Carolina as a **Five-Star** rated childcare center serving children three to five years of age. The teachers are approved and accredited by the Division of Child Services.

Each child enrolled in our Child Development Center is presented with a variety of learning opportunities daily, including both structured and supervised free choice. All children are encouraged to explore and experience their world in a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment. All activities and materials are designed to be age-appropriate and to meet the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of the child. ***The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*** is used for all children that enables them to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. This state approved curriculum includes biannual developmental assessments. These assessments enable our staff to plan specific areas of growth according to the child's need. The assessment results are shared with the parents through individual parent conferences.

As a church-based childcare center, we also make every effort to teach and model Christian values. The children who participate in our program are introduced to Biblical teachings that we believe will instill in them a sense of self-worth and responsibility to others. Our weekly chapel services, conducted by church staff, give children an opportunity to hear stories, sing songs, and learn Bible verses that will enhance their spiritual development.

We are happy that you have chosen the First United Methodist Church Child Development Center for your child. We look forward to serving you and welcome any suggestions you might have.

Enrollment

The First United Methodist Church Child Development Center welcomes families and children of any race, color, creed, and religion to participate in our program. The process of enrollment begins with a visit to our center. Parents may contact the center's director for an appointment. We are always happy to give a tour of our center and to describe our program to visitors.

We encourage parents to include their child in the visit. It is important to us that the child feels as comfortable with our center as the parent. We also want to provide the child an opportunity, along with his or her parent, to ask questions.

If the parent and child wish to continue with the enrollment process, they will receive an enrollment packet that includes program information, an application, and various forms required for registration. These will be reviewed with the director and specific instructions will be given regarding their completion. The applicant is advised to take the packet home for review before proceeding further in the process.

Registration and Tuition

A one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$30.00 is required at the time of enrollment. Tuition is due Monday, prior to services rendered, according to the following payment options:

1. Weekly: \$120.00 - Due each Monday, for the week
2. Bi-Weekly: \$240.00 - Due every other Monday, at the start of the two-week pay period
3. Monthly: \$520.00 - Due on or before the first of the month
(Note: The monthly rate is pro-rated for 4.33 weeks in a month).

Parents may be eligible for full or partial tuition assistance from the Department of Social Services (DSS). Those who qualify for partial assistance will be responsible for paying the balance of their child's tuition, due on the 1st of each month. Please note: if DSS only pays 1/2 or 3/4 time childcare and the child attends full-time, the parent must pay the parent fee and the difference between partial- and full-time enrollment.

Payments are to be made by check, cashier's check, or money order made payable to First United Methodist Church of Salisbury Child Development Center and either given to the director or dropped in the locked deposit box on the office door. Cash will not be accepted. Parents will receive a receipt of their payment within 48 hours. The parent is responsible for payment of tuition for the whole week, even if the child is absent for any part of that week. Under no circumstances will the week be prorated. When tuition is more than two (2) days late, a late fee of \$10.00 will be applied.

Hours of Operation

The Child Development Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am until 6:00pm. Parents are encouraged to have their children at the center by 9:00am in order to allow the teacher and child to carry out their daily routines in a predictable manner. Parents should call by 9:00am to notify the director or teacher if their child will be absent.

When a late arrival or late pick-up is anticipated, parents should notify the director. A late pick-up fee of \$10.00 will be charged for every 15-minute period the child is late, after the first 5-minute grace period. The fee is to be paid immediately at pick-up. The parent should receive a receipt and the person taking the fee should give it to the director. The director should turn in the money to the church business administrator for deposit in the CDC account.

Holiday Closings

The Child Development Center will observe the following holidays and teacher work days:

New Year's Day	1 day	Independence Day	1 day
Martin Luther King Day	1 day	Labor Day	1 day
Good Friday - Workday	1 day	Veteran's Day - Workday	1 day
Easter Monday	1 day	Thanksgiving	2.5 days
Memorial Day	1 day	Christmas	3 days

Note: Full tuition will be charged for weeks in which a holiday occurs.

Inclement Weather Policy

If the Rowan-Salisbury School System is closed due to inclement weather, the FUMC-CDC will be closed. If the Rowan Salisbury School System is on an abbreviated schedule (2-3 hour delay) the center will open accordingly (2 hour delay-8:30am, 3 hour delay-9:30). The CDC reserves the right to adjust its own schedule when the Rowan-Salisbury Schools have extended closures when safety allows.

Vacation Policy

Families may choose one (1) tuition-free week to use during 12-month period from enrollment date to anniversary date. This vacation week may be used only for a week in which the child does not attend the center. It cannot be divided for any reason nor carried over from year to year or between sibling.

Return Check Policy

When a check is returned by the bank, marked "Insufficient Funds," the parent is notified and a \$30.00 NSF fee is applied to the child's account. The parent is responsible for redeeming the bounced check and the NSF fee in cash within 48 hours of notification. After a second returned check, another \$30.00 NSF fee is charged and the center will no longer be able to accept checks from that parent. All future payments from that parent must be made in a cashier's check or money order. If the balance is still outstanding after that period, the center reserves the right to discontinue care of the child and/ or refer that parent to the proper legal authority for criminal prosecution.

Termination of Enrollment

Should a parent choose to withdraw a child from our program, a written two-week paid notice is required. Termination of services may also occur due to: non-payment of tuition (tuition that is two weeks past due is considered non-payment); physical/verbal abuse directed toward staff or children, chronic abuse of center policies; persistent behavioral patterns that are disruptive to the program or dangerous to other children; or the inability of the staff to adequately care for or meet the child's needs in a group

setting. Biting will not be tolerated; we feel this is a very serious issue. There will be three steps followed ensuring that the biting policy is carried out.

1. Should a child bite, the teacher will notify the parents that day.
2. Should the same child bite a second time, a conference will be scheduled with the director.
3. If a third bite occurs the child will be terminated from the center immediately.

Safe Arrivals and Departures

The First United Methodist Church Child Development Center is committed to the safety of children enrolled in the program, the staff, and the parents. All access doors into the facility are locked during operational hours and the staff electronically monitors the center's main entrance. Monitoring cameras are located in each classroom and on the center's inside playground.

To further ensure the children's safety and well-being, parents are required to accompany their child into the center, noting the time of arrival on the *Daily Check-In Form*. Each child must also be signed out at the time of departure. Individuals other than the parent must be authorized in writing by the parent in order to pick up a child. Proper identification will be required before releasing the child.

Fundraisers

Occasionally the center may choose to initiate a fundraiser that has Board Approval. The goals of the fundraiser are for keeping tuition costs low and to garner additional funds for use in the classroom. Children should not sell items without the parent present. Participation in the fundraiser is optional.

Activities Outside the Classroom

From time to time, the teachers may also choose to take the children on a nature walk around the outside of the facility or may walk across the street for story time at the Rowan County Public Library. Permission forms are required for student participation and parents should be notified each time prior to activity.

Nutrition and Food Service

All meals are carefully planned so as to give each child a balanced diet. Breakfast, lunch, and snack are served by the teachers and are intended to be happy, informal times to socialize. All meals meet the nutritional guidelines set forth by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus are posted weekly on the bulletin board and on-line at the Child Development Center Website. All food brought in for celebrations must be store bought and in the container they were purchased in.

Opting Out Food Choice - The center will not provide any food or drink so long as the child's parent provides all meals, snacks, and drinks scheduled to be served at the center's designated time.

If you decide to opt out:

- You must provide all three meals (breakfast, lunch, pm snack and drink).
- Once you opt out, you cannot switch your decision according to what is on the menu
- If you should not provide all food and drink for your child, there will be a daily charge of \$6.00.

Health Requirements

North Carolina Child Care law requires a recent physical examination by a licensed physician be submitted to the center prior to the first day of school. Current immunization record is also required at time of enrollment. All required forms are on file at the Child Development Center.

Wellness Policy

A child's physical health plays an important role in his or her ability to derive benefit from the daily activities available at our center. Consequently, parents should make arrangements to keep their child at home when illness is suspected and is accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Fahrenheit temperatures of 100 degrees or higher
- Intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash accompanied by fever
- Head Lice
- Any communicable disease (consult a physician for guidance)

Should a child become ill at school, staff will contact the parent to make arrangements for immediate pick-up. The center is not able to adequately care for a child experiencing any of the above symptoms. A child may return to school when he or she can participate in all group activities (including outside play) and meets one of the following requirements:

- Is free of all symptoms for at least 24 hours.
- Has been on a prescribed antibiotic or other appropriate medication for 24 hours.
- Has a note signed by a licensed physician stating the child is not contagious and is well enough for school attendance

Medication Policy

The staff at the Child Development Center encourages parents to administer medicine at home. If this is not possible, a Medication Permission Form can be obtained from the director or teacher. Medication Permission Forms are only valid for one week. Medication will be locked up at all times.

Accidents and Injuries

While every precaution is taken to prevent accidents and injuries to children in our care, minor scrapes, and bruises are a common occurrence of childhood play. If your child is hurt, the teacher will notify the parent immediately. Our trained staff can

administer first aid and CPR. In the event of a serious injury, parents will be notified by the director and the center's emergency plan will be implemented. You are welcome to talk to the director concerning the emergency plan which is posted in the director's office and all classrooms. Please note: parental consent for emergency transportation and treatment is part of the enrollment process and the consent waiver is included in the Parent Agreement.

Emergency Procedure

If an emergency occurs requiring medical attention, the director will contact the parents. If neither parent can be contacted, we will take the child to Novant Health Rowan Medical Center's Emergency Room or designated preferred hospital. Staff will remain with the child until a parent arrives. An authorization form, signed by the parent, is required to provide medical care. All costs and fees incurred for any medical care or treatment are considered the responsibility of the parent. The church, the director, and the staff are not responsible for any claims or costs that arise from an emergency situation that may occur in connection with the operation of the center or from any illness that may be contracted by the child during the period of enrollment.

Discipline Policy

The discipline policy at the Child Development Center is intended to encourage responsible and appropriate behavior. To accomplish this, our staff actively employs redirection when the child is experiencing behavioral problems, followed by positive reinforcement and praise when appropriate behavior is observed. If inappropriate behavior occurs, a conference will be scheduled with the director and teacher in an attempt to explore other avenues of encouraging acceptable behavior in the child. Should behavioral problems continue, the child may be temporarily suspended or permanently terminated at the discretion of the Board and Director.

Child Abuse and Neglect

It is the responsibility and legal obligation of the director and staff of the Child Development Center to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

Conferences and Visitation

Parents are required to attend conferences during the year to discuss the progress of their child. The Child Development Center also practices an open-door policy. We encourage parents to visit the center at any time during the hours of operation announced, or unannounced.

Board of Directors

The Child Development Center of First United Methodist Church of Salisbury is governed by the Board of Directors representing parents, church members, and center director, and Director Children's Ministries. The chairman will act as the liaison to the Church Council and Staff Parish reporting the operation of the center for approval of policy, procedures, and guidelines.

Parental Feedback

The Child Development Center staff believes an atmosphere that encourages an open exchange of ideas and concerns is essential if the children are to benefit fully from their participation in the program. Parents are invited and encouraged to be actively involved with the activities and programs their child is involved with daily.

Confidentiality

Information that may be considered confidential will be requested by the program on an "as needed" basis only. This means that the information is used either to comply with current licensing criteria or is needed to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. This type of information may include addresses, phone numbers, medical or emergency information, etc. All verbal and written information shared by parents and caregivers with our program is considered confidential. As such, these records are securely maintained in the director's office.

Quiet Time

Each child will have a rest period of two hours daily during which it is expected that he or she remain quietly on his or her cot. However, no child shall be forced to sleep. A mat and sheet will be provided by the center. Parents are asked to bring a small blanket (no pillow please). Blankets will be stored in the child's cubby and will be sent home each week for the parent to launder and return the next school day.

Clothing Needs

In addition to outside play, daily activities at our center include sand and water play, glue, paint, play dough, and other materials that could soil clothing. These activities should be considered when dressing children for school each day. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and returned to the parent at the end of the day. One change of clothing, properly labeled with the child's name should be available at all times. Parents should dress their children in clothing that is appropriate for the season. Coats, jackets, and gloves for winter and light, breathable clothing for the warmer months should be available for outside play.

Personal Belongings

Each child will be assigned a cubby to hold his or her belongings, including an extra set of clothes, and an item for weekly show and tell. All items must be labeled. Children should not bring toys to the center. Coats and jackets cannot fit in the cubbies and should be hung on the coat rack in the hallway. Parents must check their child's cubby daily, as the teacher and the director will regularly place paperwork and communications there. Parents are responsible for all information left in cubbies. Chapstick, lip balm, sunscreen or other over the counter medication cannot be stored in cubbies, as they violate our medication policy. If a parent wishes for their child to use such products, they must fill out an appropriate permission slip. Under no circumstances will food be allowed in the cubbies. The center is not responsible for any personal belongings. Lost or misplaced articles that cannot be identified are regularly collected by the staff and placed in a special drawer labeled "Lost and Found."

Potty Training

To be enrolled at First United Methodist Church of Salisbury Child Development Center, your child needs to be completely potty trained. We do understand that accidents will happen sometimes. If your child has been enrolled at the center for two weeks and the teacher feels that the child is not completely potty trained, the center will temporarily suspend enrollment until potty training is achieved.

Cleaning Schedule

Various areas of activity in the classrooms are routinely cleaned throughout the day. Tables are thoroughly cleaned with soapy water and disinfected daily. Sheets are removed from the children's mats weekly and laundered with hot water, detergent and bleach. Blankets used for quiet time are sent home weekly with parents to be washed and returned to the classroom the next day. Classrooms equipment and materials are cleaned regularly either by washing and spraying with a disinfectant or by sanitizing with water and detergent at a temperature of at least 185 degrees Fahrenheit.

Safe Sanctuary Policies

The First United Methodist Church of Salisbury Child Development Center abides by the Safe Sanctuary Policies at all times.