

St. Stephen's UMC Preschool



2018-2019

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to St. Stephen's UMC Preschool

For 49 years St. Stephen's UMC Preschool has endeavored to meet the needs of the community. At St. Stephens, we are committed to providing a safe, warm, and engaging environment that values the uniqueness of every child. Although the dynamics in each classroom varies to reflect the ages of children, the children's interests, and the teacher's style, a basic philosophy remains constant throughout our program. At St. Stephen's, we aspire to meet and exceed the developmental needs of all children in our care. Every effort is made to ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop to their full potential in every developmental domain. We utilize scaffolding and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learning styles and varied developmental levels. We also utilize a variety of play based curriculums and child guided approaches to create a learning environment that is engaging, stimulating, and fun. At St. Stephen's we are committed to setting children up for success and a love of learning.

Thank you for choosing St. Stephen's UMC Preschool. We look forward to experiencing much fun, laughter, and learning with you and your children.



Our Curriculum is Designed to:

- Use play to encourage children to explore, expand abilities, follow directions, sequence steps and develop age appropriate skills.
- Provide routine to give children security and teach organizational skills.
- Promote positive verbal, physical and social interaction with peers.
- Encourage use and coordination of the whole body and all the senses.
- Provide a variety of open ended activities that promote the independence and creativity of every child.
- To build a sense of community and respect for all living things.
- Prepare children with the necessary skills to make the transition from preschool to elementary school

Our Approach to Discipline

Successful classroom discipline begins with clear and consistent expectations, boundaries and routines. Affective discipline strategies promote self-control, teach responsibility, and help children make thoughtful choices. It is vital that the child's self-esteem and dignity are preserved. Every child is unique so we may have to try a variety of strategies for different children. Creativity and patience are vital in creating a successful discipline strategy. It is also vital that you have a clear understanding of each child's developmental level. One of our main goals for discipline is to help children learn self-regulation.



St. Stephens UMC Preschool Calendar 2018-2019

August 29	Sneak Peek (M-F, MWF, WF)
August 30	Sneak Peek (TWTh, TTh)
September 3	Labor Day
September 4	First Day of School (M-F, TWTh, TTh)
September 5	First Day of School (MWF, WF)
October 8	Columbus Day - No School
November 5-6	No School - FCPS are closed
November 21-23	No School - Thanksgiving Break
Dec 24-Jan 4	Winter Break
January 21	No School - Martin Luther King Day
January 25	No School - FCPS are closed
February 4	No-School-FCPS are closed
February 18	No School - President's Day
April 5	No School - FCPS are closed
Apr 15-Apr 19	Spring Break
May 23	Last Day of School (TWTh, TTh)
May 24	Last Day of School (M-F, MWF, WF)
May 27	Memorial Day

The preschool will be closed when Fairfax County Public Schools are closed. If there is a prescheduled early release, we will operate under normal hours.

Our Programs

<p>Toddler Program: (18 mos by Sept.30, 2018)</p> <p>TTh 10:00-2:00 \$290/mo WF 9:00-1:00 \$290/mo</p>	<p>Young Four Year Old Program (4 by Dec. 31, 2018)</p> <p>MWF 9:00-1:00 \$405/mo</p>
<p>Two Year Old Program (2 by Sept. 30, 2018)</p> <p>MWF 9:00-1:00 \$405/mo TTh 10:00- 2:00 \$290/mo</p>	<p>Four Year Old Program (4 by Sept. 30, 2018)</p> <p>MWF 9:00-1:00 \$405/mo TTh 10:00-2:00 \$290/mo TWTTh 10:00-2:00 \$405/mo M-F 9:00-1:00 \$598/mo</p>
<p>Three Year Old Program (3 by Dec. 31, 2018)</p> <p>MWF 9:00-1:00 \$405/mo TTh 10:00-2:00 \$290/mo</p>	<p>Brainy Bunch (3 and toilet trained)</p> <p>MWF 1:00-3:00 \$205/mo</p>

15% Sibling Discount

Enrollment Ratios: All Classrooms will have two teachers with the following maximum enrollment:

- One to two years of age (8-10 children)
- Two to three years of age (10-12 children)
- Three year olds (12-14 children)
- Four year olds and older (14-16 children)

As part of our program, St. Stephen's offers **Speech and Language Screenings** for each child. The Speech and Language Screenings are conducted by a licensed Pediatric Speech Pathologist.

Music and Movement

Music and Movement is every Tuesday through Friday. Our program helps to develop mindfulness, core muscle strength, flexibility, cardio fitness, and music appreciation.

Spanish

Once a week all the children go to Spanish class. From 1 to 5 years old, the children enjoy a language lesson tailored for their age group. They learn to greet each other in Spanish, use the names of colors, numbers, and letters and learn the Spanish words for their family members. Every lesson includes a fun game or a song to reinforce the theme. The words for the month are included in the monthly parent newsletter so that families can practice at home.

Social Skills and STEM

Once a week our PreK classes meet for Social Skills and STEM. The first half of the school year, the children breakdown into small groups to explore the ideas of citizenship, self-advocacy, and resilience. The children also learn to use friendly voices, kind words, and learn helpful actions. The second half of the school year, our time is spent on STEM. The children have the opportunity to explore hands on science and engineering projects using magnets, ramps, and prisms. We cover the ideas of buoyancy, magnetism, energy, mass, light and color. Our ability to work as a team is strengthened with every lesson.

Brainy Bunch

Brainy Bunch is an after school program where the children participate in literacy, cooking, character building, math, games, languages, science exploration, sports, esteem building, social development, theater, nature, and STEM. All Brainy Bunch participants are automatically enrolled in all after school activities that St. Stephen's offers.

Enrollment Information

Enrollment is confirmed when the preschool has received:

- **Registration Form**-completed and signed by parent or legal guardian
- **Registration Fee**- \$85.00 (non-refundable)
- **Activity Fee**- \$75.00 (non-refundable)

The following forms are required for enrollment:

- Certified Copy of Child's Birth Certificate
- Virginia State Physical and Immunization Record
- Emergency Care Information
- Tell Us About Your Child
- Medicine Administration Form
- Emergency Medicine Authorization Form

Tuition

Tuition at St. Stephens is an annual tuition, with winter and spring breaks factored in. Since our children attend school September through May, we have divided the annual tuition into nine equal payments. Your first payment, May deposit, is collected in advance and is due on or before June 1st, 2017. This payment will be applied to your account, and used as your final monthly payment.

You may make tuition payments online or at the preschool. If your payment is received after the 10th of the month, there will be a \$10 late charge.

Withdrawals

Should you need to withdrawal your child during the school year, you must submit written notification at least thirty days prior to your departure. Once appropriate documentation is received by the school office, your advanced tuition payment can be used as your final monthly payment.



ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

We would like to hear from you if your child will not be in school on a particular day. Please call the School Office at **703-978-9024** to let us know if your child will be absent.

Please contact the school if your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease. We appreciate your consideration for the health of your own child, as well as that of all the children at St. Stephen's.

When to Stay Home: If your child has a fever, diarrhea, or is vomiting they need to stay home. Your child needs to be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has an illness that can easily be passed from one student to another we may require a note from a physician stating your child is no longer contagious and may return to school.

If you have any questions or wonder if your child is able to come to school, please call the School Office: **703-978-9024**

Special Health Concerns and Allergies

If your child has a special health condition, health related need, or specific health care procedure that affects the school day, please contact the School Office prior to starting school, so that a health care plan can be arranged.

Medicines at School

If a child needs an EPI-Pen, Inhaler, or Benadryl at Preschool, parents must provide:

- "2" EPI-Pens, Inhaler, or Benadryl
- A written Medical Authorization Form completed by the physician
 - A separate form for each medicine is required
 - The Medical Authorization must specifically match the prescribed brand or generic type of medicine.

Medication must be in the pharmacy box appropriately labeled with:

1. The child's name
 2. The doctor's directions for the dosage to be given
 3. And does not expire before the school year ends
 4. A Printout with symptoms and side effects of the medicines.
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- The Preschool staff is not able to administer Benadryl, but will keep it on-site for the paramedics or parents to use.
 - The Preschool staff is not able to administer any daily or preventive medications-prescriptions or non-prescription (including, but not limited to Tylenol, cough syrup, diaper ointment, sunscreen and topical insect repellants).
 - A child may never have medicine in his/her tote bag.



Inclement Weather Policy

The Preschool follows Fairfax County Public Schools schedule for **inclement weather**. In the event Fairfax County Public Schools has a delayed opening or an early release due to **inclement weather**, St. Stephen's will follow this schedule:

M-F, MWF, WF Classes

Fairfax County	St. Stephen's
2 hr delayed opening	11:00-1:00
2 hr early release	12:00

TWTH, TTh Classes

Fairfax County	St. Stephen's
2 hr delayed opening	11:00-2:00
2 hr early release	12:00



Snow Make Up Days

- The 2 day classes will have 1 make-up day after the 4th day missed due to inclement weather. The make-up day will be the Tuesday after Memorial Day.
- The 3 day classes will have 1 make-up day after the 6th day missed due to inclement weather. The make-up day will be the Wednesday after Memorial Day.
- The 5 day class will have 1 make-up day after the 7th day missed due to inclement weather. The make-up day will be the Tuesday after Memorial Day. If an 8th day is missed due to inclement weather, there will be no additional make-up day.



Lunch and Snack

Children will bring their lunch from home to eat at school. All lunch items should be packed in a lunch sack or lunch box with the child's name on the outside. Please label everything to include thermos, containers, and utensils.

Snack is provided daily in all of our classes. A snack calendar is posted on the bulletin board outside of your child's classroom. If your child would like to share a snack with the class, please add your name to the snack calendar. Your teachers will suggest healthy snack choices and may ask for some food items to be avoided due to children's allergies.

Visiting the Preschool

For the safety of every child in the preschool, all Visitors need to report to the Preschool Office where they will sign in and receive a Visitor lanyard or sticker.

Tote Bags

Each child will receive a special St. Stephen's tote bag when they meet their teachers during "Sneak Peek." Please bring your child's tote bag to class every day. Their tote bag is the carrier of all things important. Wonderful masterpieces designed by your child will be sent home in the tote bag, as well as important communication from your child's teacher and school.

Extra Change of Clothes

All children should have a change of clothes in a labeled plastic bag at school. Some teachers may ask that the change of clothes stay in your child's tote bag. Please check your child's tote bag daily to see if a new set of clothes is needed.

Special Events

We have many wonderful events that happen at St. Stephen's during the year. A special presenter/performer will visit the preschool once a month. We enjoy visits from the dentist, magicians, musicians, fire fighters and paramedics just to name a few. We also have "theme" rooms in Music and Movement every month. Our students visit Space Camp, a Dinosaur Museum, Winter Wonderland, play in Santa's Workshop and Fall Festival and learn about their community in the Our Town theme room.

Back to School Night

We welcome all parents to an evening learning about your child's day at St. Stephen's. Your child's teachers will speak with you about your child's classroom and all the wonderful things they have planned for the year. This is an adult only event.

Halloween Parade

What fun we have parading through the school in the costumes we made in our classrooms. We stop by each classroom and receive a small snack.

Thanksgiving Feast

Each class prepares a special dish to bring to the Thanksgiving Feast. All of the classes feast together in this wonderful celebration of Thanksgiving. Because of space limitations, this is a student only event.

Holiday Tea

This is a very special, annual event at St. Stephen's. The children sit with their families as we gather in the sanctuary to sing holiday songs, we then make our way back to the individual classrooms where the children have prepared a special holiday snack for their guests.

Buddy Night

An evening event where each child may bring one "buddy" to share their classroom with. Buddy Night is only for our three year old and PreK classes. We find this event to run too late for our toddler classes.

Founders Day

On a Saturday in May we celebrate the founding of the preschool by giving the preschool a party and inviting all of our families. Please bring a picnic lunch and enjoy all of the festivities!

Noah's Ark

Once a month our older classes listen as our Pastor Abi tells them a bible story. Noah's Ark is the last half hour of the school day and everyone is welcome to attend.



THE RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION STATUS AT ST. STEPHEN'S UMC PRESCHOOL

St. Stephen's UMC Preschool has a religious exemption from licensure. In compliance with the Code of Virginia regarding exemption from licensure, we are to disclose specified information to families in our program.

Section 63.1-196.3 of the Code of Virginia exempts child day care centers operated under the auspices of a religious institution from licensure. If a child day care operated under the auspices of a religious institution is not licensed, certain documentation must be filed annually with the Department of Social Services. In addition, the Code of Virginia outlines the additional requirements the exempt child day center must meet, including disclosure. These items include criteria for hiring of faculty, location, capacity, and insurance coverage.

We are registered with and inspected by the Fairfax County Health and Fire Departments and the Division of Licensing Programs, Division of Social Services for the Commonwealth of Virginia