

NAVARRE UMC PRESCHOOL STAFF HANDBOOK

NAVARRE UMC MISSION STATEMENT

“To Develop Each Person Into a Fully Devoted Disciple of Christ.”

WELCOME

Welcome! We are glad you have joined our preschool staff! This handbook has been written and approved by the preschool board, and we hope it helps you better understand the NUMC Preschool ministry.

Each person employed by NUMC preschool has committed themselves to the awesome task of leading children. Employees are expected to uphold the values and policies set forth in this handbook, in order to maintain the quality care that has been established previously. Each minute children are in your care should be spent ON the children, to further their development and help them discover more about themselves and others. We intend to employ people who love the Lord, enjoy and are skilled in working with children, and value the philosophies, policies, programs and benefits our preschool has to offer. We hope that employees feel comfortable and confident in their working environment, and we encourage open communication.

PRESCHOOL STANDARD

It is our intent to uphold the Navarre UMC Mission Statement (above) at all times. In this spirit, the preschool board, administration and staff are accountable for the Christian development of the students. In the planning and employment of ALL areas of the preschool, we will be prayerful and mindful of the following verse from God's Word:

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” -- Phillipians 4:8

AIM/PURPOSE

Our preschool exists as an outreach ministry of Navarre United Methodist Church to the children and parents of the congregation and the surrounding community. We value and celebrate each child with unconditional love, care and support. We welcome children from all races, faiths, and nationalities. It is our goal to provide children with a well-balanced, developmentally appropriate, Christian environment in which he/she will feel a sense of belonging and grow to become ready for a lifetime of learning. We strive to be in partnership with parents/guardians, to achieve these goals.

Our Preschool:

- *Upholds the truths of the Holy Bible
- *Teaches that Jesus loves all of us, no matter what
- *Models love and caring for others, prayerfulness, joy and thankfulness
- *Supports children in the development of their relationship with God
- *Helps to lay the foundation for a life-long relationship with Christ
- *Affirms each child's self worth/encourages creativity and uniqueness
- *Validates and encourages the appropriate expression of feelings/emotions
- *Focuses on the “whole child” to promote learning, exploration and discovery
- *Plans for success in the following aspects of development: spiritual, social/emotional, physical, cognitive, language
- *Promotes sharing, love, kindness, honesty, obedience, responsibility, good health, valuing the rights of others and

- caring for all of God's creations
- *Recognizes and provide for the preschool child's need to learn through play and hands-on experiences
- * Provides experiences that are relevant and meaningful to a young child's life
- * Provides a nurturing, secure, and clean learning environment
- *Provides choices with appropriate boundaries
- * Provide sufficient supervision to allow for giving consideration to individual needs and interests
- *Maintains state licensing and employs a qualified and well-trained staff (license # C01SR0021)

PRESCHOOL BOARD

Our preschool is governed by a board of church members, who act as a liaison between church council and preschool administration. Voting members of the board include nominated representatives from three major church committees (Pastor-Parish Relations, Trustees, and Finance), one church congregation representative and two preschool parents. Non-voting members include the church pastor, the children's minister, the preschool director and assistant director.

Board member responsibilities include:

1. Attend meetings
2. Review/approve policies, procedures, class structure, curriculum and physical space
3. Oversee preschool operating budget, including the approval of administrative/staff salary and student tuition recommendations
4. Review/approve programming plans
5. Review/approve staffing/personnel
6. Review/approve major decisions
7. Act as a sounding board for directors and staff
8. Maintain confidentiality

SPECIFIC JOB DESCRIPTIONS

1. PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR-The person selected for this position will serve NUMC by directing, coordinating and guiding the preschool ministry of the church and providing leadership to and supervision of staff members and volunteers involved in this ministry.

A. Education & Experience-It is preferred that the person hired for this position have a degree in child development, early childhood, or elementary education, and at least three years' experience working in the field. The director must meet state licensing standards.

B. Accountability-Director is accountable to the preschool board and Children's Minister of NUMC.

C. Responsibilities-The responsibilities of the director will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- *Administer the day to day operation of the preschool in keeping with its policies and standards
- *Recruit, interview, hire, supervise, train, evaluate, and terminate personnel in the best interest of NUMC.
- *Develop and implement a comprehensive training program for staff members
- *Develop and train a pool of competent substitute teachers to ensure continuity of program. Arrange for substitutes as needed.
- *Conduct individual and group conferences with staff on a regular basis and keep a record of these
- *Administer the work of the preschool by encouraging teamwork and mutual support and providing leadership and nurturing to staff members
- *Maintain all state licensing standards
- *Maintain all required staff records

- *Be on the premises during all hours of operation or designate staff over 21 years of age to be “in charge”
- *Keep abreast of new research and developments in education and child development, maintain a professional library, and participate in related professional and community organizations
- *Coordinate the use of shared space and equipment with directors of other church programs and with volunteer workers and administrators of the church
- *Prepare staff and parent handbooks annually, or when policy changes are made. Hold orientations and meetings for both groups to familiarize them with policy
- *Assist in planning and supervising curriculum units, classroom schedules, and use of outdoors, hall bathrooms or other shared spaces
- *Be available to assist teachers as needed with classroom management, parent involvement, and areas of concern
- *Enroll children in compliance with program policies.
- *Interview parents of prospective enrollees, arrange for a tour of the facilities, classroom visits, and provide information about the class/program
- *Be available for counsel with parents. Keep them informed of program activities, upcoming events, and church information
- *Plan/administer a program for parent participation/volunteering and education. Develop and coordinate short-term classes or workshops for parents/volunteers
- *Be available for counsel with staff, concerning any aspect of their responsibilities. Help staff plan and carry out a balanced program concerned with spirituality, good health habits, safety in all activities, fire and storm drills, rest and relaxation, academic growth, physical activity, and other identified needs of children
- *Be aware of children with special needs and adapt the program to include them whenever possible
- *Know community resources when referrals are needed to help families with physical or emotional concerns
- *Be active in the community as a representative of the church and its preschool
- *Ensure that classrooms and facilities reflect a professional and Christian environment
- *Communicate the preschool program to the congregation and community. Work with appropriate committees, officers and leaders in carrying out the preschool ministry of the church
- *Attend required meetings of the church. Including, but not limited to: Church staff meetings, Church Council meetings, Children’s Ministry meetings
- *Establish departmental goals and objectives by prioritizing related programs, managing the use of facilities, planning an appropriate budget, delegating tasks and evaluating progress regularly (all of which must be approved by Church Council before being formally adopted)
- *Authorize payment of payroll and accounts payable
- *Plan and equip space, indoors and outdoors. Keep an inventory of equipment and supplies-supervise maintenance, repairs, and replacements as appropriate
- *Other duties as assigned
- *Oversee all duties of assistant director and other staff

2. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR- The person selected for this position will serve NUMC by assisting the director in coordinating and guiding the preschool ministry of the church, and providing leadership to and supervision of staff members and volunteers involved in this ministry.

A. Education & Experience-It is preferred that the assistant director have a CDA Credential or a Bachelor’s Degree in child development, elementary education, or related field and at least two years experience working or teaching in a child care setting. The assistant director must have experience in administration (i.e. office, clerical) and management (i.e. supplies and teacher resources) as it relates to child care/preschool setting. In addition to fulfilling minimum education and experience qualifications, employment is subject to an acceptable credit report.

B. Accountability: The assistant director is accountable to the Preschool director.

C. Responsibilities: Shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *To function as the director in his/her absence
- *Maintain all required student records

- *Collect tuition & fees
- *Input tuition data, generate and distribute monthly statements/bills
- *Keep inventory of equipment, supplies & teacher resources
- *Order office & preschool supplies (per budget approval by director)
- *Generate/maintain approved substitute list and provide it to teaching staff
- *Keep supply of staff and parent handbooks/make edits as needed
- *Assist teachers as needed
- *Assist director in enrollment process (i.e. meets with & enrolls prospective students, arrange/provide tour of facility and classroom visits, provide any requested info. about the school and its programs)
- *Be available to interpret the preschool program to groups within the church and community
- *Other duties as assigned

3. CLASSROOM TEACHER - The person selected for this position will be responsible for the supervision and management of a class of no more than 16 students, class size depending on the age group of the class and state licensing standards.

A. Education & Experience - Each teacher shall have a CDA, Bachelors Degree, or Masters Degree in an appropriate major subject area. Each teacher shall have prior experience in working with children, and shall be able to meet all licensing requirements. Teachers should be mature and sensitive in working with children, parents, and other staff members. This person must have a warm and friendly personality, be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, be able to relate well to children, and be willing to fulfill responsibilities in accordance to the school's philosophy.

B. Accountability - Teachers shall be accountable to the preschool director.

C. Responsibilities - The responsibilities of the classroom teacher will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- * Planning, supervising, and implementing the program for the class in accordance with the policies and philosophy of the preschool.
- * Providing the best possible learning environment for the children assigned to the class; working for the best interest of the preschool
- * Gearing the program to meet the needs of individual children with concerns for their interests, handicaps, special talents, and individual style and pace of learning.
- * Considering individual children in relation to their culture and socioeconomic background.
- * Treating children and fellow staff members with dignity and respect.
- * Helping children to become aware of their roles as integral members of a group.
- * Being responsible for the ordered arrangement, appearance, decor, and learning environment of the classroom.
- * Working with teacher assistants to ensure that general housekeeping tasks are completed on a regular basis.
- * Participating in recommended training programs, conferences, courses, and other aspects of professional growth.
- * Implementing methods for effectively utilizing the services of classroom assistants.
- * Planning and implementing methods of establishing a positive liaison with parents of students.
- * Communicating with parents through monthly newsletters, phone calls and/or conferences about children's school adjustment/behavior and classroom information.
- * Assisting in the ongoing evaluation procedures needed to assess the developmental levels of the children.
- * Assisting in public-relations events sponsored by the preschool.
- * Maintaining a professional attitude and loyalty to the school at all times
- * Turn lesson plans in to director the Friday before the planned week
- * Other duties as assigned

3. TEACHER ASSISTANT - The person selected for this position will be responsible for assisting a classroom teacher in the general supervision and management of a class of no more than 16 children, class size depending on the age of the class and state licensing standards.

A. Education & Experience - Each assistant must be a high school graduate, at least eighteen years of age, with good academic skills, an interest in learning about working with children, and willingness to work under the supervision of a classroom teacher. They must meet all licensing requirements. This person must have a warm and friendly personality, be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, be able to relate well to children, and be willing to fulfill responsibilities in accordance with the school's philosophy.

B. Accountability - Assistants shall be accountable to the classroom teacher and to the preschool director.

C. Responsibilities - The responsibilities of the teacher's aid will include, but will not be limited to the following:

- * Assisting in planning and implementing the daily program under the direction of the teacher.
- * Assisting in planning and preparing the learning environment, setting up interest centers, and preparing needed materials and supplies
- * Supervising the classroom when the teacher is not in the room.
- * Acting as head teacher in her absence
- * Working with head teacher to ensure that general housekeeping tasks are completed on a regular basis.
- * Assisting the teacher or director in any other appropriate ways.
- * Maintaining professional attitudes and loyalty to the school at all times.
- * Treating children and fellow staff members with dignity and respect.
- * Attending all staff meetings and recommended training programs and conferences.
- * Participating in professional organizations that work for the improvement of early childhood education.

5. AFTERNOON STAFF: Persons selected for this position will be responsible for the care and general supervision of mixed age groups of no more than 22 children, class size depending on state licensing standards. Afternoon staff must be willing to work until the close of the day (6:00 P.M.), and must be available to work alternate shifts on school breaks.

A. Education & Experience- Afternoon staff must be at least 18 years of age, with good academic skills, an interest in learning about working with children, and a willingness to work together with other staff members to create a positive environment for children.

B. Accountability- Afternoon staff shall be accountable to the preschool director.

C. Responsibilities- The responsibilities of the afternoon staff will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- *Working with other afternoon staff to create a favorable environment for children
- *Providing and planning for smooth transitions for nap time, snack time, playground time and room transitions
- *Working with other staff members to make decisions about the learning environment, setting up interest centers, activities, and scheduling
- *Keeping a mindful eye on the ratio, and ensuring that the preschool is in compliance with state standards at all times
- *Working together to see that all afternoon classrooms are cleaned appropriately (trash taken out, carpets vacuumed, toys sprayed) before the close of each day
- *Ensuring that sign-in sheets are filled out appropriately by each parent, and turning them in at the end of each day
- *Maintaining a professional attitude and loyalty to the school at all times

JOB DESCRIPTION: ALL STAFF

Notice to Staff - You have been selected for your position because of special qualities, talents, or skills which are needed to make up a well balanced administrative, teaching, and support preschool staff. Each member is part of the whole staff, and all are dependent upon one another. Relationships are circular and what affects one affects all.

Although specific responsibilities may vary according to your primary job description and your list of

individual responsibilities, all staff persons are charged with the total responsibility of working together in a united manner. The goal is to achieve harmony and mutuality throughout the school, with respect, tolerance, patience, honesty, trust, and friendship.

We want you to be proud of your role in this preschool. You are hereby each charged with the responsibility of seeing to it that the reputation of our preschool as an outstanding educational environment for children and their families is enhanced and maintained.

****All preschool employees must complete the required 45 hours of training and provide requested screening documentation for background screening, as governed by the Department of Children and Families****

Personal Qualities of Each Staff Member

- 1. Friendliness** - Maintains a positive attitude towards others, acknowledges the presence of others with a greeting, and is alert to the moods and needs of others.
- 2. Honesty** - Is truthful about hours, sick days, other absences, and other school matters. Takes responsibility for own errors, is trustworthy, and respects the property of others.
- 3. Voice Modulation** - Refrains from use of an abusive, sarcastic, or uncontrolled tone of voice.
- 4. Punctuality** - Arrives at work at the agreed -to specified time, and honors the time limits of breaks, knowing that others are dependent on one's promptness.
- 5. Dependability** - Performs responsibilities as promised. Does not require constant reminders. Utilizes working hours to do actual work for the school, seeking out tasks to be done if necessary, rather than using a lax period to take care of personal obligations.
- 6. Integrity** - Cooperates in the maintenance of wholesome interpersonal relationships, free of gossip about one another or about school families. If there are questions about actions of a particular staff member, talks directly to that person or discusses the matter, in confidence, with the Director.
- 7. Positive Attitudes** - Refrains from complaining attitudes. Brings complaints to the Director or to other supervising staff member.
- 8. Presentability** - Is poised, well mannered, neatly and appropriately dressed. Well-groomed and clean. Follows general guidelines of staff handbook.
- 9. Patience** - Maintains self-control in dealing with others.
- 10. Active and energetic** - Maintains an evident interest in job.

Relationship with Children

- 1. Individualization** - Demonstrates concern for the personal differences between individuals in relationship to their needs, interests, development, and capabilities.
- 2. Knowledgeable** - Plans age level developmentally appropriate activities; Has a thorough understanding of the development of young children.
- 3. Resourcefulness** - Demonstrates creativity and resourcefulness in planning programs and in use of materials.
- 4. Flexibility** - Is able to work with both individuals and groups of children with equal skill.
- 5. Personal Manner** - Bends to eye level frequently when talking with a child. Is able to help each child build self-esteem and healthy self-concept.
- 6. Professionalism** - Uses appropriate language, and relates behavior to growth and development.
- 7. Discipline** - Uses non-punitive methods of discipline, and offers guidance in a positive manner.
- 8. Creativity** - Keeps the program operating smoothly with a variety of activities, fostering exploration, investigation, and creativity.
- 9. Responsibility** - Assesses each child's growth, development, and performance, recording some observations for each child, taking special note of changes, and maintaining appropriate records as have been requested.
- 10. Relaxation** - Utilizes stress-reduction techniques in helping children and adults to an inner awareness and calmness.
- 11. Tolerance** - Treats all children equally, with respect and empathy. Avoids prejudicial attitudes.

Relationship with Adults, Including Parents & School Community

- 1. Friendliness** - Maintains a friendly, yet at the same time, professional relationship with parents and coworkers.
- 2. Respect** - Respects others' rights to their individual points of view and ideas. Does not push own opinions on others.
- 3. Integrity** - Maintains confidentiality of information.
- 4. Tolerance** - Treats all parents equally, not showing favoritism, accepting all at their individual levels. Supports cultural differences in extending the curriculum.
- 5. Helpfulness** - Works in a comfortable manner with parent helpers, volunteers, and teacher aids, offering guidance in positive ways.

Demonstrates Concern for and Awareness of the Total School

- 1. Safety & Health Consciousness** - Gives primary consideration to the safety and health of the students when planning the environment.
- 2. Knowledgeable** - Prepares environments that are appropriate for the particular children involved, both individually and in cooperation with one another. Is able to justify the presentation of a particular environment, materials, or activity by explaining its relationship to the educational or personal growth of a child or children.
- 3. Orderliness** - Keeps materials, supplies, and equipment well organized to present an attractive, orderly, and inviting appearance to the classroom or any other area being used.
- 4. Carefulness** - Respects the use and care of materials and equipment; is not wasteful.
- 5. Responsibility** - Assumes personal responsibility for small problems in the environment which others have neglected or have not been aware of (ex: trash, repairs, etc.)

Demonstrates Professionalism

- 1. Personal Growth** - Is committed to the idea of continued personal and professional growth as an educator. Maintains a professional membership in job-related organizations. Pursues personal or formal study and/or reading in the field of child development and education.
- 2. Loyalty** - Supports the philosophy of the preschool ministry in both words and actions.
- 3. Realism** - Is able to look at self-behavior as a possible cause of the problem when things do not always go smoothly.
- 4. Confidentiality** - Avoids malicious gossip at all times; respects confidentiality of both oral, written, and observed information.
- 5. Cooperation** - Is committed to the concept of team spirit, recognizing the school as one total group rather than a series of separate groups. Generously shares ideas, materials, time, and services, thereby helping other persons to achieve their very best.
- 6. Responsibility** - Is always ready to share responsibilities with others, to assume others' responsibilities in emergencies, and to put the needs of the preschool as a whole over petty differences of opinion.
- 7. Supportiveness** - Is aware of the school policies and supports them. If not in agreement, knows that policies can be discussed with Director and at staff meetings, and reserves those times for doing so rather than spreading discontent among coworkers.

Evaluation

It is suggested that you frequently evaluate yourself on these job requirements. These will form the basis of your official periodic evaluation by the Director. You can use the following code:

- 1 - Never or seldom, 2 - Occasionally: Weak in this area/need to improve
- 3 - Usually but not always: Average
- 4 - Most of the time, 5 - Always: Strong in this area
- 6 - Outstanding in this area: Help others to achieve this level

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ETHICS

Teachers and other preschool staff will be privileged to confidential information as they work with the children and their families. A strict code of ethics must be maintained to ensure the private nature of divulged information.

Confidentiality of Records

1. Keep all records about children and families locked up overnight.
2. Do not give out address and phone numbers of students to others without parent permission.
3. Children's files should not leave the preschool office. Parents have a right to ask to see their child's file. This should be done in the presence of the Director or Assistant Director.
4. Personnel files are also confidential. Staff members have a right to ask to see their own files at any time. This should always be done in the presence of the Director. Personnel files are kept locked up.
5. Do not give out staff phone numbers to parents or others with out the permission of that staff member.
6. Payroll records are also confidential, available only to the accountant and the Director. Staff members may ask to see their own payroll information at any time. These files are kept locked up.

Ethical Issues

1. The Director will get written permission to photograph children for preschool/class use. Additional permission is needed to use photographs of children in flyers, advertising, or for any other purpose. Permission forms are kept on file in the Directors office.
2. Tape record or videotape children only if you have obtained a written release to do so. Tape recording should be treated with the same confidentiality as you treat written files.
3. Furnish information to other parties only if you have written permission from the person about whom (or about who's child) the information is requested.
- 4. When to break confidentiality:**
When a child is endangered, either in health, neglect, or abuse, you may report certain confidential facts without permission to proper authorities.
- 5. When children impart information to you that implies abuse or neglect, you are legally obligated to report that to the appropriate authorities.**
6. Avoid discussing one family with another family in the area or in the school.
7. Both children and adults have the right to be corrected privately. Do not do so in front of other staff, volunteers, visitors, parents, or students. Incorrect behavior should be discussed privately with the persons, whether adults or children, who are directly involved.
8. Children have a right to display feelings. If they lose control, they have the right to be allowed a private place for expressing their emotions - without an audience - but with an adult nearby to give reassurance when needed.
9. It is unethical to pursue one's personal business while being paid to supervise a child or group of children. Family members and friends should not drop by to see you during work hours on a regular basis. Personal phone calls are not permitted except in the case of an emergency or health related matter. Cell phones should be used during breaks only and NEVER on the playground.
10. Questions that you have regarding policy or personal matters of a child's family should be asked of the Director rather than of another teacher or staff member.
11. Children should not be required to participate in any activity or to abide by a policy that is not good for them. (ex.: trying to force a child to taste a certain food)
12. Persons working with children should refer to their Director parent requests for information that could be used to inappropriately discipline a child.
13. Personal information about families, such as recent separation or divorce, an arrest, a serious illness, or loss of employment should be divulged to other staff working with that child only to the extent of what they need to know to support that child. Those who seldom have contact with the child may not need to know family details. The staff in all instances must make careful judgment. Be sure the Director is aware of all such situations.
14. Avoid repeating stories about families that children tell you. Although the stories may have some truth to them, they may be distorted. They should be treated as privileged information. You may want to make a written note of it in your communication log, but be sure it is kept confidential.

15. Avoid judging a family or imposing your own values on a child if you have different beliefs than that family. Act "in the best interest of the child" as a guideline, but only if the best interest is not to expect the child to adhere to your values if they are in conflict with the families' values. (ex.: a family may not want their son to dress-up in ladies clothing)
16. Never discuss a child when other children or parents are present.
17. Never discuss children within their hearing. Wait until after class time!
18. Do not discuss one parent's handling of a situation with another parent.
19. Please do not talk among yourselves in the classroom or on the playground.
20. Most problems with ethics are self-resolved if gossip is avoided at all costs - except in the case of child endangerment.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

1. Neglect - It is especially urgent that all staff persons be alert to any signs that a child is:

- A. Left alone at home; left with a young sibling in charge
- B. Not bathed or cleaned over a long period of time.
- C. Not fed at home.
- D. Left locked in automobile while parents are busy with own pursuits.
- E. Not given medical attention for serious illness.

2. Verbal Abuse - In determining verbal abuse, it is difficult today to clarify between verbal abuse by one or more person's in the child's home and the language of verbal abuse picked up from inappropriate television programs.

- A. Uses violent and extreme verbal abuse in dealing with others.
- B. Acts out violence and extreme verbal abuse in dramatic play activities.
- C. Is extremely withdrawn.
- D. Overly aggressive.
- E. Depressed.

3. Physical Abuse

- A. Numerous bumps, bruises, cuts, scratches on body.
- B. One portion of the body extremely red, as though struck.
- C. Burn or scald marks.
- D. Numerous breaks, fractures.
- E. Lengthy stories by parents or guardians about how a particular trauma happened.
- F. Refusal by child to explain how a trauma happened.
- G. Drawing back, retreating, when approached by an adult.
- H. Putting hands up in front of face as though protecting self when approached by adults.
- I. Dressed in long sleeves or long pants on a hot day.
- J. Bizarre actions which may indicate child has been given illegal drugs.
- K. Any change in normal behavior patterns.

4. Sexual Abuse

- A. Reluctance to attend school or to return home, or to go wherever the abuse may be taking place
- B. Pain, itching, bleeding, or bruises in genital or anal areas.
- C. Discharge from vagina or penis: blood on undergarments.
- D. Need for frequent urination.
- E. Difficulty or discomfort in walking or sitting or both.
- F. Unusually high interest in sexual matters.
- G. Masturbation in front of others: increased and excessive masturbation.
- H. Over tired, listless, sleepy.

- I. Withdrawn.
 - J. Change in relationship with peers.
 - K. Inflicts pain on self: accident-prone
 - L. Refusal to eat.
 - M. Reversion to infantile behavior.
 - N. Renewal of bedwetting, possibly wetting underpants as well.
 - O. Evidence of a venereal disease.
 - P. Acts out sexual abuse in dramatic play activities with peers, in housekeeping and doll areas, or even through drawings
 - Q. Hesitancy to ride a tricycle.
 - R. Someone other than parents brings child later than usual more than once.
 - S. Any change in normal behavior patterns.
 - T. Unusual stories told by the child, designed to draw attention by reporting imaginary traumatic happenings at home. This can be a way of saying "help."
- * Be especially concerned when there are clusters of the above warning signals.***

5. Reporting Abuse - Legally, the Director and other staff members have the responsibility of reporting any suspected cases of abuse. Remember, you don't have to have proof - you only need to have the suspicion, based on observations you have made - not on hearsay.

CURRICULUM/PROGRAM GOALS

Our teachers are trained in developmentally appropriate practice and Florida's Early Education standards. They are responsible to plan for success in the following areas of development: spiritual, social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language. Teachers utilize the Creative Curriculum assessment tool (the Developmental Continuum) to track their students' progress and to plan for their individual differences and needs. Teachers will help foster students' spiritual development through scripture as well as visits to chapel and the Godly Play classroom.

We strive to help children learn to value others as well as themselves, that ALL people are uniquely created by God. We celebrate the differences between people in communities and groups, just as we recognize and encourage the many personalities and cultures within our preschool staff and families. No child shall be expected to adhere to values that conflict with his/her family's values. (Ex.: The preschool staff members go by their first names instead of their last names. If a family prefers, their child has the right to call the staff by their last names.) Likewise, there are always choices in our classrooms. No child shall be forced to participate in any activity. (Ex: Trying to force a child to taste a certain food or participate in a project.)

CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

Planning for individual needs requires flexibility in scheduling the classroom curriculum. Also, children's interests are built-in motivators for learning. For this reason, teachers are free to explore and wonder with their students and plan their own classroom curriculum. We have a variety of resources available for supplemental activities. Teachers are expected to use their professional training, creativity, the teacher library as well as outside resources to provide a wide variety of age-appropriate experiences for the children in their classes. Teacher should be in contact with parents regularly to inform them of class happenings. Teachers are responsible to submit these documents as well as lesson plans to the Director. Lesson plans should be posted in the classroom at all times.

CREATIVE CURRICULUM

Navarre UMC Preschool uses The Creative Curriculum, from Teaching Strategies, Inc, as a framework on which to build developmentally appropriate lessons and plan for the individual child's needs. This framework starts with a foundation of years of theory and research that inform decision making in the early childhood field – the work of **Piaget, Maslow, Vygotsky and Smilansky**. There are five components to this framework:

1. **How Children Develop and Learn:** Each student is assessed throughout the year in terms of their social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. We use the Developmental Continuum, a tool for observing children's development and tracking their progress as a way of planning for the individual child.
2. **The Learning Environment:** The structure of the classroom is what makes it possible for teachers to teach and children to learn. Teachers create a classroom community where children learn how to get along with others and solve problems peacefully. This community includes established schedules and routines, organized choice times (interest areas/centers), small and large group times.
3. **What Children Learn:** Preschool children learn content and skills best through play and daily experiences. This play is not without purpose! Students will learn content in the following areas: Biblical, literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. The state of Florida has established Learning and Developmental Standards for children of all ages. It is the teacher's job to be sure his/her classroom teaches content in ways that respect these developmental stages of preschool children.
4. **The Teacher's Role:** Teachers use careful observations of their students, their knowledge of the early childhood field, and various resources to plan and employ a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom.
5. **The Family's Role:** We desire to develop a partnership with every family and work together to support children's optimal development and learning.

SCRIPTURE

Classes will follow a monthly scripture schedule. The purpose of this scripture is to help children begin, at this early age, to understand that God's words come from His Book, The Bible, and that those words have meaning in their lives. Children will practice "writing God's word upon their hearts," through discussion and song. Teachers are responsible to make this scripture a regular part of the class day.

GODLY PLAY

Godly Play is a unique and engaging Montessori-based method of Christian education. It encourages children to wonder about God and become more fully aware of the mystery of His presence in their lives. Teachers and their students will explore together religious language, stories of Christian tradition, sacred stories from the Old and New Testaments, stories told through Parables, and stories about the liturgical cycle. The process of "wondering" together prevents Storytellers from forcing an interpretation of the stories on the kids. Instead, children are free to enter into these stories, to be contemplative, and to relate them to their own personal experience. The Director is responsible to cultivate the environment of the Godly Play Classroom, and creating a schedule for classes to follow. Also, the Director shall ensure that props are prepared and made available to teachers, as well as information and scripts distributed to teachers ahead of time.

CHAPEL TIME

Children will visit the sanctuary for "chapel time" each week. We want students to experience being part of a community in church: sitting in the pew and worshiping God in a variety of ways: prayer, singing, puppet shows, stories, etc....topics will follow the **Scripture and Godly Play schedule, found at the back of this handbook.**

A WORD ABOUT PLAY

We believe that PLAY is a child's WORK. Years of theory and research have proven that young children are experiential creatures. They must experience a concept before they can internalize it. For this reason, children will not be doing worksheets in our preschool. Worksheets do not develop creativity. In some cases they may actively inhibit the learning process in children. The practice of worksheet and "drill" type learning is a huge disservice to young children, and may even cripple their development and crush their excitement about school and learning in general. In November 1984's issue of YOUNG CHILDREN (NAEYC), Carol Seefeldt says, "Asking children to complete worksheets may be a form of stealing. Every time children are asked to fill in a worksheet, they are being robbed of opportunities to think and learn by doing, to experience individualization of instruction, and to learn to cooperate."

Children will learn concepts through the active, intentional planning of qualified teachers and staff. Teachers are responsible for planning and preparing interest areas around the classroom. These interest areas are planned specifically with a developmental goal in mind. Children will have choices and adequate time to "work" on skills that will promote readiness to enter into the elementary grades later. Children will use all five senses to experience the concepts we introduce, including numbers and letters. It is our intention that children who come through our program become independent, creative, empathetic individuals who enjoy learning and interacting appropriately with others.

OPENING DAYS OF SCHOOL

The opening days of school are very important because they give us an opportunity to establish a good pattern for the year to come.

1. Orientation to School - This is done on the child's first visit. However, it will continue for at least three or four weeks - until the children and staff get to know one another well. Remember the children have every reason to be apprehensive. The building is an unfamiliar place, the routines are new, and the people are strangers. The children need much reassurance that this is a friendly and helpful place.

- * Smile, Smile, Smile.
- * Speak softly and precisely.
- * Let the children know that you are gentle, interested, and dependable.

2. Orientation to Activities and Play Materials

- * Explain in a simple, matter-of-fact way how various materials may be used.
- * Ask returning students to show the new ones how the materials and equipment can be used.
- * Introduce only a few of the items each day.
- * Explain the misuse of materials and equipment as well as their uses.
- * Explain that each thing should be put away before taking out another. If you do this from the first day of school, the rule will be enforceable throughout the year.

3. Orientation to Routines - Take plenty of time to explain the procedures for various routines. Speak slowly and use simple terms.

4. Orientation to One Another

Names - Using the children's names frequently is one of the important ways you can make the orientation to the school as pleasant as possible for the child. See that each child has an easily readable nametag to wear during the first weeks of school. Say the children's names often, in as pleasant and gentle a voice as you can. Help the children learn each other's names.

- * A good introductory name game is to clap the syllables of each person's name. For example: Ma-ry Ben-nett. Repeat two or three times for each person.
- * Play "teacher." Stand across the room and call a child to come to you. That child calls another child to come. Continue until all children have been called.
- * Roll a large ball to one child, calling out the name of the one who is to catch it. That person rolls the ball

and calls the name of another child, and so on.

5. Health and Safety Rule/Procedures - In order to establish a classroom atmosphere in which children can have true freedom to set their own paces, establish health and safety rules early. Always enforce the rules. Do so pleasantly, but firmly.

6. Behavioral Problems - We need to refrain from punitive measures when we are trying to help children solve behavior problems. Our purpose is to help them retain control of their emotions and actions - not to stop them from expressing feelings and moods.

- * Children who lose self-control need your help. In fact, their actions may be the only way they know to reach you.
- * When children display unacceptable behavior, it is usually because they want something. It may be a toy, a turn, or a touch. They hope that their actions will help them to get what they want. You can help them learn to ask for things they want in more acceptable ways.
- * Remember at all times that children are vulnerable. Another child, the adults in their lives, or the school as a whole may all or separately be just too overwhelming.

7. Director's Assistance - Please let me know in what ways I can be of help to you. Don't hesitate to call me into the classroom at any time. The children must always come first.

ABOVE ALL, CHILDREN NEED YOUR LOVE, PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

What we teach is not always apparent to the casual observer. We set the stage in order to guide the children. Through adult guidance and association with their playmates, children are being prepared for self-control at the pace they can absorb. They become aware of their own worth both as individuals and as members of their peer group, while learning to respect the rights of others and to conform to rules/regulations. We attempt to maintain an atmosphere of freedom, friendliness, and creativity. Adults are ready to help when they are needed.

A. Setting the Stage

1. Materials should be inviting for creative expression and cooperative play.
2. Be ready to take the child's cue for new play, games, or activities.
3. Arrange the learning centers neatly.
4. Vary the arrangement from time to time.

B. Creating a Favorable Climate

1. Tense children can not participate freely. Help them to relax by being interested in them.
2. Speak slowly, simply, quietly. Smile freely, and bend down to their eye level.
3. Do not feel you must be busy all the time, but you must be constantly aware of what all the children are doing - and be ready to step in when needed.
4. Relax and enjoy yourself. We appreciate your presence.

C. Setting Limits: How and Why

1. Setting limits gives children the security of knowing that their strong emotions will not lead them to do things that they will later regret. Children know an adult will take the responsibility of stopping unacceptable behavior until they are able to do so for themselves.
2. Teach the children about safety, care of property, good health habits, and consideration for others.
3. Allow the children to make as many decisions as possible within the necessary limits.
4. Explain the rules in a cheerful, sympathetic manner to make them understandable and acceptable to the child. Avoid repetition. Say what you have to say once after first being sure the child is paying attention. Be consistent, firm, and fair.
5. Enforce the rules in a positive, non-personal way.
6. Understand the reasons for a child's behaving in a disruptive manner (such as hitting, kicking, biting, throwing things, defying, or running away). Behaviors may be caused by any of the following:

fear	jealousy	loneliness
fatigue	confusion	hyperactivity
anger	need for toileting	over-stimulation
curiosity	boredom	sleepiness
insecurity	shyness	embarrassment
hunger	illness	

**Children may also be trying out negative behavior because the need to "fight controls" is normal at certain stages of development.

D. Handling Difficult Situations - In spite of limits that you set, difficult situations arise.

1. Remain alert to the total situation. Attempt to foresee and forestall trouble. Redirect an uncooperative child to another activity. Redirect the entire activity into a more wholesome direction.
2. Allow children of comparable size and ability to work out their own solutions. Encourage the shy children to stand up for themselves. Encourage aggressive children to verbalize. Encourage all children to use words to solve problems.
3. Help children understand one another's actions.
4. Treat toilet accidents casually.
5. Try to ignore improper language. Sometimes we say, "talking nicely". (The use of gerunds such as "talking", "waiting", or "sharing" usually gets an immediate response.)
6. Do not allow children to strike you. Restrain them gently and say, "I don't like to be hit".
7. If one child requires too much adult attention, that child should be temporarily removed from the group. Do so gently without punitive action. Your purpose is to help the child. We call this period "Time Out", and say "Let me know when you feel better inside". (Time to renew feelings)
8. When in doubt, it is sometimes best to do nothing unless health or safety is involved.

E. Giving Directions

1. Be sure you have the children's attention.
2. Give positive directions that leave the children no choice of interpretation.
3. Give a choice of three things when possible. (It's easier to make a choice from three items than from two.)
4. Warn ahead of time before changing an activity.
5. Never plead, threaten, or strike (even your own child).
6. Invite participation - never force it.
7. Direct the child to a new activity when the present activity is completed.
8. Use a quiet voice as much as possible. Get down to the child's level when talking with him or her.

F. Painting - Put aprons/smocks on the children. Print their names or help older children print names on their papers with crayon. Allow the children to select their own colors from those which have been made available for that day, their own painting techniques, methods of painting, and so on. Invite children to paint, but never force them to. Have children wash their hands after painting.

G. Storytelling - Select your story according to the understanding and age of the group. The older children like stories with a plot and stories with humor. The younger ones prefer familiar stories and simple picture books. We try to teach the children that stories may also come from books without pictures. Know the story and enjoy it yourself. If you have a favorite that you can tell well, use it often. If you like it, the children will like it, too, no matter how often they hear it. We have a supply of STORYTELLING TOOLS in the copy room. These include books, felt stories, books on tape, puppets, etc... You may check these out as often as you like.

If the story just isn't going over, drop it and switch to another activity - perhaps finger games, songs, or whatever you do well. If you are going to read a story, look it over first and be familiar with it. Whatever approach you use, remember that it isn't the story that counts: it's you. Involve yourself with the group. Be a part of it. Talk to the children - not at them.

PERSONNEL/OPERATING POLICY

1. Salaries - Salaries will be based upon professional training, abilities, length of employment, experience, and job responsibilities. Each employee will be given a compensation statement at the start of each school year. See Director separately if you have questions. You will be paid every two weeks in keeping with the church's payroll. Payroll is delivered electronically by direct deposit, every other Monday. The time clock is located in the preschool copy room. It is the staff member's responsibility to sign time sheet before it is submitted, clock in and out daily, keep hours to the agreed-upon schedule, and to be sure the information is accurate.

Time sheet manipulation to receive credit for hours not worked = grounds for dismissal on the first offense

2. Vacation/Sick Leave is best used as follows: See NUMC Personnel Handbook for eligibility. Part time staff's vacation is best used during holiday or school breaks, when a substitute will not be needed; Full-time staff's vacation is best used during the school year when more substitutes are available. Try to arrange doctor, dentist, etc. appointments around your work schedule. Do not come to work sick or if you have been sick in the past 24 hours. **It is the employee's responsibility to be sure leave slips are turned in promptly – these are required in order to be paid for time off.**

3. Substitutes/Absences - Occasionally it is necessary for an individual to be absent due to illness or emergencies. Please give the director as much notice as possible when a substitute is needed. Each staff member will have an updated staff roster at all times. If you are unable to reach the preschool director or assistant director, use the roster to call your own substitute. Note changes on calendar in office. The students need the consistency of a reliable staff. **Please keep your absences to necessities.**

4. Training: Regardless of their previous education and experience, all employees will be expected to continue the study of and training in early childhood and teaching techniques in order to keep up with new research and knowledge. This continued study and training may take place on the employee's own time outside regular working hours, unless training falls within regular working hours. Methods may include, but are not limited to; in-service training at or away from the preschool, attendance at professional conferences and meetings, attendance of related workshops, enrollment in education courses at local colleges, etc. Teachers and Assistants shall attend courses required by Department of Children and Families for licensing (45 hours), and a minimum of 10 hours in-service training per year, for professional growth. Staff is responsible for turning proof of their hours in to the Director.

5. Staff Breaks: All staff members are entitled to a 15-minute break daily. Breaks should be taken only when a regular staff member or substitute is in the class to watch the children. Children should not be left under the care of a parent or other volunteer. Breaks should not exceed designated length. No cigarette smoking inside the building or on the playground.

6. Staff Meetings - Due to extended preschool/school-age hours, staff meetings will be held in the evenings, on a regular basis. All employees are expected to attend, and shall be paid for it. Full-time employees should rearrange work schedule to compensate for extra hours.

7. Safety – Student safety is our number one concern. Some of the ways we ensure the safety and protection of our students and staff:

- A. **TRAINING:** Staff are well-prepared for emergencies by completing the required 40 hours of training at the beginning of employment, and attend a minimum of 10 hours inservice training each year thereafter.
- B. **BACKGROUND CHECK:** Every staff member and volunteer will be thoroughly screened at the start of employment.
- C. **SAFE SANCTUARIES:** Every staff member and volunteer is required to attend a Safe Sanctuaries training session. Safe Sanctuaries is a program of “guidelines, policies and procedures implemented to create an environment in which children, youth and the adults who work with them can have boundaries of safe space.” (<http://www.gbod.org/ministries/family/safe>)

- D. SECURITY CAMERAS: Security cameras are installed throughout the preschool building and playground areas. These cameras are used to monitor the entrances to the building, classrooms and playgrounds. They are in no way connected to the internet. The monitor is housed in the preschool office and is used by administrative church staff only.
- E. SUPERVISION: The Department of Children and Families requires that a staff member directly supervise each child at all times. Do not leave your class unsupervised for any reason. Do not allow children to return to the building from the playground without an adult to go to the bathroom or due to an injury.
- F. DOORS: Classroom doors and back door (to parking lot) should be kept locked at all times. Doors should not be left propped open. **Do not permit the children to go to the hall bathrooms alone.**

8. Special Events - School-wide special events (open houses, orientations, Preschool Sunday, parent nights, etc...) are important and foster a sense of community among staff, parents and the church. All preschool employees are expected to attend special events and will be paid. Full-time employees should rearrange work schedule to compensate for extra hours.

9. Conferences - Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held in January or February to go over the student's progress and at any other time a teacher or parent requests. They can be held before and after school, or on the teachers designated conference day. A telephone call may be sufficient in some cases. The following suggestions will be helpful when you meet with a parent to discuss a child's progress or special problem.

- * Be prepared for the conference. Take note of specific behavior and situations that have happened at school that the parent should be aware of.
- * Open and close the conference on a positive note.
- * Help the parents bring up the concerns they have about their child and the school. A good question to begin with is, "What does your child tell you about preschool?"
- * Do not alarm the parents needlessly. If there is a real problem, you must tell the parent about it, but if at all possible emphasize that it is a common problem of children this age. If the problem concerns the child's behavior, tell the parent that it is the behavior you disapprove of and not the child.
- * Don't make the parents feel guilty by implying that it is the parent's fault the child has problems.
- * Help the parent come up with suggestions that may help the child.
- * Parents usually ask for advice because they feel you are an authority. Don't fall into the trap of giving only one suggestion. Parents usually will try what you suggest and then come back and report it doesn't work. If the parents do press for suggestions, always give more than one, while emphasizing there may be many other ways of handling this problem.
- * Arrange the conference at a time and place where you will not be disturbed.
- * Don't waste the parent's time. Stick to the topic. A thirty-minute conference is usually adequate.
- * End the conference with a summary statement emphasizing the suggestions that were made for the teacher and parents to work on. Set a time to re-evaluate the situation. It will not always be necessary to meet with each parent to report general progress. You can give the parents a choice about whether or not they would like a conference.

IN THE HALLWAY DURING DROP OFF AND PICK UP TIME IS NOT AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO HOLD A CONFERENCE – YOU RISK BREAKING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THAT CHILD/FAMILY

Use discretion and common sense when you speak with a parent. How would you feel if you were that parent?

10. Shared Space - Remember we share these rooms with church nursery, Sunday school, etc. Each of us performs a different type of job within the building, but all of us are in the business of loving children! To help foster a sense of community between all areas, please remember to be flexible. Leave the rooms friendly and usable for children, covering only a minimum of toys, computers, and consumable materials. Labeling shelves will help children and

adults leave the room the way you left it. If people who share your room are not being courteous, please let Director know. Remember-FLEXIBILITY!!

11. Waxing Floors-Periodically throughout the year, staff will be required to help prepare the classrooms for waxing, painting, renovating, etc.....

12. Professional Courtesy - Please remember, you are a professional. Cooperate with the Director and other staff members in those activities involving the whole preschool. Treat other staff members with love, care, and respect.

13. Personnel Differences - Grievance Procedure: If a problem arises the staff member will 1) go to the person you are having a problem with and try to resolve the issue, 2) go to the Director-written explanation of grievance is requested and necessary for the director's involvement, 3) go to the Christian Education Minister, 4) go to the Preschool Advisory Board. In the event of lack of agreement on procedure between members of the preschool staff, the Director and Board will make the final decision. ****Inform the Director in cases of unreasonable behavior, parent complaints, or other problems, which should be handled by the Director or Board for the best interest of the preschool.**

14. Inventory – Preschool staff will take an inventory of classroom materials, furnishings, toys, supplies, etc. at the end of each preschool year. The supply closet and playground equipment should also be inventoried at this time, and the Director may require the staff's assistance in this matter. **Turn in the inventory to the director.**

15. Safety Responsibilities

1. Anticipation - Anticipate possible hazards and take necessary precautionary and preventive measures.
2. Supervision - Responsible and adequate supervision is the most important factor in the prevention of accidental injury.
3. Guidelines - By offering guidelines, including prohibitive rules, you can teach children some principles of self-protection. All rules must be explained to the child in simple, precise language. The rules will only be effective if the child is helped to understand correct and incorrect actions.
4. Time - Allow plenty of time so that rushing and hurrying do not cause accidents.
5. Understanding - Staff must have an understanding of the needs of children. Children have a natural tendency to explore, climb, build vertically, jump, seek adventure, etc. Children are naturally curious. They frequently act on impulse. It is our responsibility to see that we have prepared the preschool environment so that safety restrictions are minimal and thus, more easily emphasized.
6. Trust - Understanding must be accompanied by a strong sense of trust in children and faith in their ability to recognize your trust and to respond to it in a positive manner by more readily reacting to required safety precautions. Trust, however, does not in any way imply that you expect them to have the same ability to judge for themselves the safeness of their actions. Such judgment will only come through a combination of responsible and helpful supervision coupled with their growing maturity.

16. Safety Rules - We always tell children about the common dangers that concern them. We try to use words that are simple enough for them to understand and we repeat them often. Our safety rules include the following:

1. Such things as scissors and screwdrivers must be handled with care. Young children must stay seated when using them. Older children should learn they must be carried with the pointed end turned down. They must always be put away immediately after use.
2. Sharp objects, small objects, rocks, sticks, toys, etc. should be kept out of the mouth. They can be dangerous if swallowed. Also, they can cause injury if the child falls down with something sharp in the mouth.
3. Only those electrical gadgets that are a part of a learning center may be handled by children. Wall plugs and electrical cords are not to be tampered with.
4. Matches are not to be used by children at any time.
5. Children must stop and look very carefully in both directions before they cross a street. Small children

may not cross until an adult says it is safe. They must walk carefully - never run.

6. Playground equipment should be used with care. We explain to children that these rules prevent everyone from getting hurt.

17. Bathrooms - There is a bathroom located between every two classrooms. If it is occupied and a child can not wait, he/she must be accompanied by an adult to the hall bathrooms. If bathroom congestion gets to be a problem in the classroom, you may want to consider scheduling a bathroom break in your daily schedule, and take your class to the hall restrooms at this time. See the Director to schedule a hall bathroom time. Adults should not use the classroom bathrooms.

18. Outside Playtime - The Director will provide you with a playground schedule. Please keep to your scheduled time.

MORNINGS: No more than two classes and four adults will be scheduled on the large preschool playground at a time. No more than twenty children and four adults should be on the toddler playground at a time.

AFTERNOONS: Staff should follow the same ratio guidelines as indoors.

At any time during the day, one staff member should never be left alone outside with children while injuries are tended to or for potty emergencies. Have the children go to the bathroom before going outside. Please do not sit and socialize on the playground. Adults should monitor children at major play stations - jungle gym, swings, sand box, and trike path. Encourage the parents to volunteer during playground time, the more eyes and hands to help out the better.

19. Provision for Vigorous Indoor Activity During Bad Weather - When the weather keeps the children from playing outdoors, you should give them an opportunity for some vigorous indoor activities. At such times the rhythmic activity and music activity can be extended, alternating with short rest periods, to give the children a time to rest. You may encourage children to jog, jump, roll on the floor, rock on their stomachs, spin like a top, hop, skip, and make other similar movements. You might even allow them to shout for a few minutes, this will help them keep their voices at an appropriate level for the indoor environment at other times.

When pursuing vigorous activities indoors, be sure the children don't become overheated, over stimulated, or overtired. Allow plenty of rest time between each activity. Near the end of time, slow the activities down gradually, before stopping to rest. Allow a cool down time, give the children a drink of water, and have a quiet/rest time.

20. Drinking Water - Active children frequently get thirsty. For their physical comfort and good health, take water breaks while indoors and outdoors. Do not use classroom sinks for drinking water. The water cooler will be filled by the assistants and placed outside if the temperature for the day will reach 70 degrees F. or hotter. Staff will serve the 1's and 2's water approximately half way through playground time, or if requested at other times. Older children can serve themselves with supervision, but some may require assistance. Disposable cups are to be used and thrown out after each use.

21. Dress for the Weather - It is easier to remove unwanted jackets than to not have one when one is needed. Encourage parents to send jackets. Bring them out on cool days and take them off if the child becomes too hot. After physical play if necessary dry children's faces, necks, and arms with a cool damp cloth, and have them rinse their hands in cool water. Have a quiet time for five minutes. Children are also encouraged to wear tennis shoes or shoes with rubber soles. Shoes must be worn at all times, especially when riding wheeled toys. Parents are encouraged to dress their children in play clothes, so that nice clothes do not become soiled at school.

22. Child That Needs to Stay Indoors - Sometimes a parent may ask to keep a child indoors during the playground period. A note from a physician is required for a child to remain indoors. In general, if a child is too sick to go outside on a given day, then he/she is too sick to be at school. Our ability to oblige depends on room arrangements, the total number of children present on a particular day, the number of adults available for supervising children, etc.

The child who needs to stay indoors may be able to visit in another class during this time if ratios permit, or look at a book or do another quiet activity in the Director's office. The parent or guardian can be requested to have a new physical, reaffirming that the child is able to participate in all school activities, indoors and outdoors.

23. Playground Safety Rules

1. Gates must be closed and latched at all times.
2. The children may throw only balls or beanbags. Objects such as sticks, rocks, and toys are not thrown.
3. No objects are allowed on the slide. Children may slide only in the sitting position.
4. Children may not climb on or over the fence.
5. Children must hold on when using any moving play equipment.
6. Report to the Director any damaged equipment, needed repairs, or insect issues.
7. Children are not allowed to go out of the playground except when accompanied by a staff member.
8. Trikes are not used to bump people or things. We do not use helmets due to safety on the equipment – helmets pose a danger to children while playing on the equipment.
9. Children should not push other children on the swings.
10. Staff should be sure to COUNT CHILDREN before, during, and after all transitions!

24. Health/Injuries: Please let assistants tend to problems so Teachers may focus on the class. The staff member witnessing the injury needs to fill out an accident report. All injuries require an accident report, even minor ones. Reports should also be written if a child's temperature is taken. Have parents sign them, so we have documentation of what happened and that the parents were informed, and turn in all forms to the Director. Make a xeroxed copy for parents if they need one to keep. If someone other than the parents pick-up the injured child that day, make a copy before sending the report home to give to the Director. Notes sent home are sent in confidence, fold and staple or tape them with the parents' name on the outside. Make sure the Director is aware of all serious or potentially serious injuries at the time they occurs. First Aid Kit and Accident Forms are located in the hallway kitchenette. If you use the last form , please make additional copies.

FOR THE PROTECTION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF, GLOVES ARE REQUIRED FOR ANY STAFF COMING INTO CONTACT WITH BODILY FLUIDS

25. First Aid - A copy of a First Aid manual is kept with the First Aid supplies in the hall First Aid cabinet. All staff members are required to become certified in First Aid and CPR at the earliest possible date. These courses do count toward the inservice hours needed each year. General First Aid instructions:

1. Take all complaints of illness or injury seriously.
2. Keep calm. Notify Director of serious situations.
3. If the injury or illness is serious, call paramedics, then parents, in that order. Call child's physician if necessary.
4. Emergencies should be taken care of in this order:
 - A. Breathing has top priority. Clear Airway.
 - B. Stopping any bleeding has second priority.
 - C. Treat for shock after breathing and bleeding have been dealt with.
5. Do not move child if there is a possible injury to the back or neck.
6. Check child's emergency card for name of physician, or any special instructions.
7. Continuously reassure the child.
8. If child has stopped breathing, activate CPR while someone calls 911.
9. Ice packs are made of small household sponges that are wet, encased in a ziploc bag, and frozen. Please replace bag after use.
10. Complete incident report to send home with the child. If physician needs to be seen complete insurance forms and give parents needed insurance forms.
11. If a parent cannot be contacted, try other numbers on enrollment form for emergency contacts. As a last resort, call police if needed. All parent sign an Emergency Release at the start of the school year, so we have permission to proceed if the parents cannot be reached.

26. Reasons to Call an Ambulance/Paramedic:

1. Ambulance drivers and attendants have first-aid training. They also handle many accident cases and therefore have practical experience in treating many kinds of injuries.
2. First Aid can be given to children even before they are taken to the hospital.
3. First aid can be given to child while on the way to the hospital.
4. Ambulance drivers and paramedics have access to important medical information and services. They can select the hospital in the area that is best equipped to handle specific types of problems. They have access to Poison Control Center and can obtain information on antidotes and first-aid precautions.
5. If an accident happens at school and the parents are not available, the paramedics will usually notify the police, to cover the legal aspects of transporting the child.
6. If the ambulance is called and then not needed, many will not charge for the false alarm. If the problem is taken care of before they arrive, then they should be notified. The ambulance will usually continue and check out the situation and verify they are not needed.

27. Indications of a Possible Health Problem - There are indications of possible health/emotional problems that the staff needs to be aware of. The following conditions, when observed by a staff member, should be reported to the Director. Arrangements should be made to discuss the matter as soon as possible. Referrals should be made if needed.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| sudden pallor of skin | clammy, sweaty appearance |
| sudden flushing of skin | vomiting or gagging |
| excessive trips to toilet | swelling |
| headaches | change in appearance of eyes |
| stomachaches | constant sneezing or coughing |
| crossed eyes | listlessness |
| poor vision | sleepiness |
| tilting head on steps | unusual aggressiveness |
| poor hearing | unusual loudness of voice |
| unclear speech for age | temper tantrums |
| scratching of skin | tics or grimacing |
| runny nose | abnormal gait; limp |
| rubbing of nose | convulsions |
| wheezing; shortness of breath | blacking out |
| overweight | |

28. Vision - If your observations indicate the possibility of a child having a problem seeing, the parents should be notified immediately. You may have noticed a difficulty in picking up small objects, or difficulty moving through the room without bumping into things and people, or that the eyes seem to cross at times.

29. Hearing - Until the age of three, the detection of potential hearing problems is very difficult. Again, observation is one of your best clues. Children who do not seem to be developing speech appropriately for their age, or whose responses to verbal directions are below average, should be suspected of having a hearing deficiency. Check out those children who speak with a jargon of their own.

30. Emotional Health - Our staff needs to be sensitive to the emotional well being of the children. The staff needs to be able to recognize signals of possible emotional disturbance.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| listlessness | frequent tantrums |
| easily distracted from activity | lack of interest in surroundings |
| lack of interest in other children | inability to relate to adults |
| destructiveness | extreme nervousness |
| extreme irritableness | cries easily |
| frequently drops things | frequently bumps into things |

frequently stumbles	unusually shy, quit
unusually aggressive, loud	frequently hitting or biting others
frequently hiding	frequently attempting to run away
inability to rest or relax	inability to move rhythmically to given beat
excessive need to urinate	excessive thirst
excessively inattentive	overanxious about doing what is expected,
seldom laughs or smiles	or doing things right
has frequent headaches	unable to locate parts of body
has frequent stomach aches	unable to move freely
falls asleep during playtime	unable to follow directions
unable to move freely through classroom or obstacle course	

Many of these symptoms may indicate physical problems. Some may be signs of perceptual-motor problems. However, symptoms caused by physical or perceptual difficulty may lead to emotional difficulty unless they are corrected. Please remember that these symptoms need not be taken too seriously if they only occur on occasion. The child may be only trying to determine what behavior is acceptable and how to gain control. When these symptoms seen in clusters, there may be cause for concern.

31. Other Problems - Your observations of the child's development should extend to all areas. Observe such things as size and growth, movement, responses, behavior, learning ability, sensory awareness, coordination, and social relationships.

*If you suspect anything is wrong, you must tell the child's parents or guardians. They have the right to know immediately if there is even the slightest possibility that their child needs to have appropriate screening tests by qualified professionals. ***ALERT THE DIRECTOR BEFORE ANY SUCH CONVERSATIONS TAKE PLACE.***

32. Administering Medication - Medication will be administered to a child only upon written request of the parent. The medication must be in its original container with the child's name on it and directions for use clearly marked for the child's age group. Prescription medications must be made out to the child. Over-the-counter medications also require permission; including diaper rash creme, ointments, powder, sunscreen, etc. Medication forms are required before any medication is administered. **Medications should be kept in the designated, locked office cabinet until it is used or taken home.**

33. Welcome Letters - Each teacher will mail welcome letters to each student in the class welcoming them, informing them about your class orientation, and telling them a little about what they will do in the class. Letters should be written to the students, not to the parents. They should be mailed out by the first day of teacher planning week. Follow up with a phone call the day prior to the orientation to make sure letters are received, ask and answer questions, see will not be able to make it that day, etc. Give a sample letter to the Director.

34. Student Orientation – All staff should be present at student orientation to meet the students. At student orientation, teachers should hand out class information to parents. Give a copy to the Director. Mail the information letters to those not coming to orientation. The information letter should contain information about class policies on discipline, birthdays, snacks, etc. This is a time for the children to meet you, their classmates, get familiar with the classroom, and for parents to turn in forms needed for their child to attend the preschool. **Have curriculum guides available for parents to view.** If possible, select a room mother. She can assist with Open House, class parties, field trips, etc. Recruit volunteers to help during playground and computer time.

35. Class Set-Up - The preschool staff begins setting up their classrooms one week prior to the opening of the preschool. Assistants should clean all toys at this time and assist the teachers as needed with set-up. There will be a staff meeting on the first morning of the set-up week. Department of Children and Families requires each teacher to **post a list of all students in the class and a copy of your class schedule. This should be done before student orientation.**

36. Lesson Plans - Teachers are expected to **turn in** a copy of their lesson plans to the Director and **post them** in the classroom **each Friday** for the upcoming week. First set of plans are due on Thursday of set-up week. Make daily plans in accordance with the philosophy of the preschool and the needs of the children assigned to the class. Plans should be clear and easy to follow by anyone who helps in your classroom. Plans should include evidence of your assessments on the children. Do this by indicating which developmental areas you are working on. Also, be sure to teach to the students' individual learning styles. *It is not the student's job to "bend" to your way of thinking, it is the teacher's job to make learning interesting and fun for the students!* Sharing ideas with other teachers is a great way to expand on your own ideas.

37. Attendance - Teachers keep up with attendance daily. All students are to be signed in and out by the adult transporting them each day. Parents of any student absent for 2 or 3 consecutive class meetings should be called by the teacher. **Attendance sheets are turned to the Director at the end of each day.**

38. Newsletter/Calendars/Communication - It is essential that we keep parents informed about our program. Teachers should send home a monthly calendar telling about what has been happening in class, about upcoming events, reminders about school /class policies, information about changes in procedures/policies, helpful hints on child rearing, information on home projects, words to songs and finger plays taught in class. Phone calls, e-mails and notes to parents can be used as needed. Each teacher will provide parents with a copy of their discipline policy. Each teacher shall maintain a communication log throughout the year. Remember this is confidential information just like your students' face sheets. Turn them in to the Director at the end of the school year. **The use of internet-based communication is encouraged!**

39. Bulletin Boards - Teachers are responsible for maintaining the bulletin boards outside and inside the classroom. Teachers should plan for these and delegate the job to their assistants. You may be asked to leave a portion of a bulletin board for Sunday school use. Cork Strips have been provided in the hall for displaying the students work, please use them. Do not affix anything to the hallway walls or doors.

40. Classroom Maintenance - The children should help clean up toys and materials they use on a daily basis as a part of their learning experience. Please be realistic in your expectations based on the age level you are teaching.

FOOD - All food items should be stored in ziploc bags or sealed containers. They should be stored on a shelf specified only for food items, and not under a sink. **Food items should be stored in the hall kitchenette and copy room only, not in the classroom cabinets.** Be careful not to store cleaning items on the shelf above food. Paper items should not be stored on the shelf with food or cleaning items, under cleaning items, or under sinks. Food should not be stored in the main supply closet.

STAFF - Classroom staff should work together to keep facility clean, sanitary & presentable. Assistants should deep clean toys prior to school opening, on scheduled planning days, and prior to the start of summer camp with soap and water. On a daily/weekly basis, toys are dumped out of containers and sprayed with bleach water. For the 1 and 2 year old classes, spray all toys daily. For 3 and 4 year old classes, it is a good idea to post a schedule and clean one or two centers each day, due to the volume of toys in those classrooms. Toys seen in a mouth are put aside to be washed with soap and water and sprayed with bleach water after school. Bleach water is made by morning staff and kept in the hall kitchenette. Refill your spray bottle as needed. If there is none left, follow directions posted in the kitchenette to make fresh bleach water. Director will provide a schedule of daily "assigned duties" for the purpose of all working together to maintain the clean, sanitary atmosphere of the school. Take out classroom/bathroom trash daily. Wipe up spills/accidents in bathrooms and in classrooms. Each day, rooms should be swept, carpets vacuumed and tables/counters wiped down.

The 1 & 2 yr old classrooms will use separate, designated bottles of bleach water for food/diaper services and toys

41. Teaching Materials - This includes all art and paper supplies, etc. will be kept in the large closet off the Director's office. Please let the Director know when supplies are running low. Write needed or requested items in the book kept on desk in office. Food items should not be stored in this closet. Please help keep our closet clean and neat by returning items to proper places.

42. Supply Purchase - The Director will make all major purchases. Please write down suggested/needed items and/or requests in the green book in office. Staff may spend the amount allocated on the chart below for their class without approval. Turn in sales receipts, attached to a paper indicating the total amount spent, and what it was spent on. Reimbursements turned in by Tuesday will be available by Friday of that week.

MORNING CLASSES - \$50.00 PER MONTH

AFTERNOON CLASSES - \$25.00 PER MONTH

VPK ENRICHMENT CLASSES - \$15.00 PER MONTH

43. Dress Code – As staff members, we are representing Navarre United Methodist Church. It is necessary for employees to present as favorable an appearance as possible. For this reason, the preschool staff should dress in a professional yet practical manner. No worn-out jeans with holes, bare midriffs, t-shirts with crass advertisements or phrases, sweat suits, low necklines etc. Shorts, dresses, and skirts should come to the tip of your middle finger. Undergarments should not be visible under clothing. Clothes should not be tight fitting in appearance. Staff who do not comply with these criteria will be asked to change clothes.

44. Student Birthdays - Teachers can be creative in their celebrations of students' birthdays. We encourage parent participation/planning when addressing a child's birthday. Teachers can allow parents to bring in treats for Birthdays. Be sure to allow for allergy issues. Inform parents of your birthday policy. Invitations to parties held outside of school must be sent to all students in the class or none at all.

45. Field Trips/ Short Excursions - Four year old and school-age classes will go on occasional walking field trips during the school year. Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips. Children three years and under will only participate in on-campus field trips. A permission form signed by a parent or guardian is mandatory for a child to attend a field trip. A child not attending a field trip will be asked to remain at home for the day. Younger siblings are not generally allowed to attend field trips, due to safety. All parent chaperones must be screened, trained, approved volunteers to attend field trips with the class.

Outings on the church grounds, outside the licensed preschool building/playgrounds are considered field trips and do require a general permission slip. These outings include, but are not limited to, chapel time, nature walks, zoo mobile visits, fire truck visits, water play days, field days, bubble play, sidewalk chalk drawing, picnics, etc. Please be sure to sign your permission form, in your introductory packet of information, so your child doesn't miss out on such activities.

Excursions on the back half of the church property are encouraged, as long as the children are kept well away from the highway and are supervised by two staff members at all times. Walking trips serve to familiarize the children with the church grounds and the environment, or to make observations. Ideas for walking trips include going to look at trees, flowers, rocks, puddles, animals, etc. Pebbles, leaves, sticks, and other nature items may be collected for use in the science center or for art projects.

46. Computers - Computers are so much a part of our everyday life. Our school has acquired several computers, used primarily by the children for playing perceptual recognition games, which foster reading readiness, math skills, problem-solving skills, memory practice, etc... Not only are these game fun for the children, but also they familiarize the children with computer and they become eager to learn other computer skills. The computers extend learning beyond the teacher's daily lessons, and enrich our curriculum. Because of the sedentary nature of sitting before a computer, each classroom will be equipped with one computer, and children will be limited to 15 minutes per session.

47. Arrival -

Part Time Students- Core classes will begin at 9:00AM. Children should be dropped off no earlier than 9:00AM. If children arrive earlier parents should be asked to wait with their child until 9:00. Children should not walk in alone. All children must be signed in and out each day. After they have been signed in, the preschool and its staff are responsible for them until they are signed out. **Parents are to be welcomed into your classroom whenever desired. If they become “regulars” we will encourage them to be screened and trained as a volunteer.**

Full Time Students- Full time students can arrive as early as 7:00 A.M. and as late as 9:00 A.M. (preferably!) Above policies pertain to both full-time and part time students. Teachers must pick students up from early care classrooms no later than 8:45 AM.

48. Dismissal - Children will not be released to anyone not listed on their enrollment sheet as an emergency contact. Be sure to check identification if a person whom you have not met comes to pick-up a child. If you are unsure about releasing a child to an individual, do not do it. Come see the Director. It is the responsibility of the staff to make sure no child is picked up without a staff member's knowledge and that no child is released to any unauthorized person. If a part time student is not picked-up by 1:10 (morning classes) or 4:00 (extended care) bring them to the Director's office. If a full time student is not picked up by 6:00 P.M., one staff member should wait with him/her to the office, while the other prepares the room for closing. There will be a \$1.00 per minute fee assessed for children not picked up on time. After the second late pick-up, the charge increases to \$3.00 per minute.

49. Staff Children – We hope to be able to make it easier for parents of young children to work here. We do this by providing childcare at discounted rates and providing nursery (when possible) for events and meetings which happen outside of the regular preschool schedule. Staff discounts are as follows:

Daily staff members: Staff who are regularly scheduled/assigned to a classroom shall pay only 50% of the monthly tuition rate; Extended care utilized for work purposes shall be free of charge. Extended care utilized outside of work purposes shall be full-price. These staff will not be charged registration or activity fees.

Substitutes: Substitutes shall receive a 25% discount on the monthly tuition rate; Extended care utilized for work purposes shall be free of charge. Extended care utilized outside of work purposes shall be full-price.. These staff will be responsible for all registration and activity fees charged at the time of enrollment.

Payroll deduction: All staff are offered payroll deductions as an option to pay for their child's tuition. If a staff child's account becomes 30 days past due, payroll deductions will become mandatory.

Drop Off & Pick Up: Staff should drop off their own children no earlier than 8:45 AM and pick them up no later than 1:10 PM. Do not leave staff children unattended for any reason at any time.

50. Rest/Relaxation/Quiet Time - Young children respond best to programs that alternate active play with quiet activities. It is sometimes necessary to give children some extra quiet time if they become over stimulated. Teachers often find it difficult to quiet children who have been playing busily and noisily. When they do quiet the children, it is often to give the teacher a break, not for the benefit of the children.

The purpose of resting is to offset fatigue, both mental and physical. The children need to be fully involved with the quiet time. They need to have help in being involved with relaxation. Relaxation is a skill that can be learned. Some suggested ways to help children become involved with relaxation are:

1. Create a restful, relaxing environment
2. Tell a quiet story
3. Tell an eye-closed story
4. Sing soft lullabies

5. Play gentle music
6. Resting ways: head on table or on mats on floor
7. Rhythmic movement resting games
8. Finger games, looking at books, quiet conversation
9. Teach muscle tension ("tight") and relaxation ("loose") by going through parts of the body, one by one

51. Fire Drills - Fire drills will be conducted at the preschool at least once a month. The purpose of a drill is to accustom children to evacuating a building in a prompt and orderly manner, without panic. Fire exit routes and procedures should be posted in each classroom, near the door.

Procedure for Fire Drills:

1. Fire alarm rings - signaling to leave the building
2. Leaving the building - Teachers lead the children calmly but quickly from the building, with the goal of evacuating the premises in one minute. Do not stop to put on coats or shoes, or to turn out lights. Assistant brings up the rear of the line. ***DO NOT FORGET TO COUNT YOUR KIDS***
3. When safely outside - Teachers check their class rolls, ensuring everyone is accounted for. Director checks with teachers. Classes wait until the signal is turned off and Director signals them to return to the building.
4. Returning to building - Classes return through same route by which they exited.
5. After returning to building - Discuss with children what to do if their clothes catch on fire at any time.
 - * "Stop where you are"
 - * "Drop to the ground"
 - * "Roll over and over again until the fire is out"
 Practice: STOP, DROP, ROLL many times.

52. Parking Lot Safety - Parking lots are a source of danger to young children.

1. Enter and leave the parking lot with extreme caution. Be on the lookout for wandering children.
2. Take walks to the parking lot with your class and discuss safety precautions:
 - A. Always hold your parent's hand.
 - B. Don't run ahead of your parent.
 - C. Don't talk and play in the parking lot.

53. Staff Planning Days - The Preschool Planning Days will be held the same days as those of Santa Rosa County Schools. All staff members are expected to work on planning days, even if they do not fall on an employee's regular workday. Hours for planning days will be the same as regular workdays. Employees will receive their regular hourly pay for planning days. If other arrangements can not be made for childcare on these days, employees will be permitted to bring their children to work with them on planning days. Children must remain in their parent's classroom, must be supervised at all times by an adult, are not permitted to run up/down halls, must follow regular school rules, and should not interfere with the ability of the staff to get their work done. Child care will be provided during staff meetings or training that fall on planning days.

54. Preschool Emergency Weather Policy - The part time preschool follows the lead of the Santa Rosa County Schools. Do as they do in the event of severe weather. If they close their schools for severe weather then we will close. If damage to the area is severe, the Director will inform you of when to report to work. Listen to local radio stations and/or Channel 3 News for a list of school closings. **In the event of evacuation, staff are required to report to the Director for contact information.**

55. Secret Pal - Each staff member will have the opportunity to participate in our secret pal program. Feel free to deposit secret gifts, notes of encouragement, etc....to brighten your secret pal's day!

56. Staff Parties - The preschool staff holds annual Christmas and End-of-year parties. Secret pal gifts are exchanged. Gifts should cost \$20.00 or less. White Elephant gifts/ornament exchanges or a Yankee Trade are other options that are sometimes used at these parties. Parties are held outside of regular staff hours either at the church, a staff member's house, or at a restaurant.

57. Speaking to the Media - See the church handbook for more information.

****Thank you for choosing to be a part of our preschool staff. We look forward to many, many smiles and great years with you!**

Navarre United Methodist Church Preschool Employee Personnel Handbook

~I have received and am responsible for the information included in the NUMC Preschool Staff & The NUMC Employee Personnel Handbooks for the 2010/2011 school year.

NUMC Preschool Staff Handbook

(Staff signature)

(date)

NUMC Employee Personnel Handbook

(Staff signature)

(date)

Navarre UMC Preschool
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