

**GRAY UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL
HANDBOOK**



Gray United Methodist Church Preschool

2108 Oak Street

P.O. Box 8068

Gray, Tennessee 37615

(423) 477-8436 Center

(423) 477-3792 Church Office

Fax (423) 477-8360

Hours of Operation: 7:30a.m. – 6:00p.m.

Monday-Friday

Director: Carol Thompson

(preschool/@grayumc.org)

Our Mission Because we believe that children are a gift from the Lord, Psalms 127:3, and today's families need assistance in "rearing their children" Gray United Methodist Church Preschool desires to provide for the families of Gray United Methodist Church community a weekly childcare ministry, regardless of race or religion. This ministry's primary focus will be to provide a healthy, cheerful, and loving atmosphere, which will maximize each child's individual spiritual, physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development.

Our Teachers Our teachers are specially chosen for their dedication to meeting the developmental and educational needs of children. Each member of our staff meets the qualifications set by state laws and completes a full orientation and submits to a background checks. Our teachers are required to attend sixteen hours of professional development session each year.

Our Education Philosophy We believe that the first five years of childhood are the most important in development and learning. Our educational curriculum is designed to help children reach their fullest potential. Our preschool programs feature fun, developmentally appropriate lessons and activities that help develop the whole child physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Each child is encouraged to explore and discover at his or her own pace. Each day children have an engaging variety of learning activities and fun play experiences to choose from, planned with the specific age and interests of your child in mind, and with the goal of preparing your child for the next level of learning.

Our Goal The goal of Gray United Methodist Church Preschool is to minister to children and their families, by providing a loving, safe, secure, and healthy environment for their children. We want to build collaboration among our parents, teachers, and the director to help build the future of our children. We want to encourage spiritual growth of the whole family and help ur children to grow up to be better world leaders. It our belief that God created each child as a special and unique being with a need to love and know God. The childcare facility and the church will work together to develop a love for God, His word, and their families.

Licensing We are licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services. Gray United Methodist Church Preschool is an equal opportunity provider. We accept applications for admission and employment without regard to race, religion, gender, national origin, color, creed, physical or mental disability or any other protected status.

Gray United Methodist Preschool reserves the right to change existing policies or introduce new policies pertaining to center operations at any time.

Age-Specific Programs



Daily supplies to be provided by Parents Include: (24 Months – 4 years old)

Two sets of **clothing** that can be left at the center

Blanket (Clean blanket must be provided every Monday.)

Disposable **diapers** or **pull-ups** (as needed)

Wipes (If your child is potty trained, please send at least one package of wipes once in the fall and once in the spring)

Box of **Tissue** (At least once in the fall and once in the spring)

PRESCHOOL Preschool at Gray United Methodist Church is an exciting time of discovery. Special programs for each age and stage of development are designed to grow along with your child. Children are introduced gradually to the key concepts that build literacy using Letter Books, stories that are educational and Biblical, through out their daily activities. Concepts become progressively more advanced as children master the skills they'll need to excel in their school years. Along with reading, math and science basics, children develop creativity and self-confidence through music, dramatic play and social interaction.

PRESCHOOL 24 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS OLD Early learning strikes a balance between the nurturing care children received as infants and toddlers and the structure and independence that will define their early preschool experiences. Children are introduced to learning through a series of projects using dolls, ball, pets, blocks, and puppets that encourage investigation of a specific topic over time.

PRESCHOOL 3'S Preschool Readiness emphasizes basis recognition and beginning math and science concepts. Your child will have plenty of time to explore activities and exercise curiosity about engaging themes that change monthly and are linked to our Letter of the Week Letter Books. Take-home activities give you and your child a way to extend the learning experience and have fun time together.

PRESCHOOL 4'S Preschool at Gray United Methodist Church is designed to give your child the foundation to be ready for school. Our Literacy-based program teaches advanced letter and word recognition. Monthly themes and weekly

activities further your child's development in all areas, including math, science and social interaction.

LEARNING PROGRAM Here at Gray United Methodist Preschool we provide additional outside Learning Programs when available (ex; Compu Child). With these programs, a fee may be required that goes to the program not to the Preschool. Gray United Methodist Preschool is not responsible for the fee, although if you have any complaints, you must see the Center Director. All outside learning program coordinators must submit to a background check before learning programs can begin.

DAILY OPERATIONS

MEALS AND SNACKS We provide two snacks daily, breakfast and an afternoon snacks. All of the snacks are nutrition and healthy snacks. The Tennessee Department of Human Services request that a healthy lunch be provided for each child. We have a staff member that is hired to cook a healthy, warm, and well-balanced lunch. We do not allow children to bring soft drinks into our center. We cannot withhold food that we serve from your child. If your child has any allergies to food, please bring in a note from your child's doctor, and you may need to provide the special food necessary for your child. We will do our best to accommodate to your child's needs.

Addendum: Please do not bring fast food for your child. It creates problems because the children are too young to understand why they cannot have McDonalds, Pals, etc... It also prepares them for when they enter school. Several schools are cutting fast food from being brought in to the students.

PERSONAL ITEMS Your child will be playing with fun, educational toys at Gray United Methodist Preschool every day. Therefore, to avoid loss or breakage, we ask you to keep your child's toys or special personal items at home. Occasionally we have Show and Tell, your child may bring in an item as long as it is safe and labeled with his or her name. If your child loses anything, contact your Center Director immediately. We'll be glad to look, but we cannot be held responsible for lost or damaged items.

BIRTHDAY we'd love to help celebrate your child's birthday. We welcome any commercially prepared treat you would like to provide, but please send enough treats for every child in your child's classroom. Please discuss and schedule your plans with your Center Director.

CLOTHING Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothes, as well as rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes to the center, because a full day at Gray United Methodist Preschool can include such activities as singing, painting, dancing, eating and playing, both indoor and outdoors. We also ask you to supply a change of clothes, just in case of an accident. If your child is three or under please supply them with two changes of clothing at all time. To avoid losing any

items please label all clothing that might be taken off or changed during the day, including bathing suit, towels and hats. We cannot be held responsible for lost or damaged clothing.

DISCIPLINE POLICY Learning self-control is just a normal part of growing up. Our policy is never to embarrass or ridicule a child when he or she misbehaves. Corporal or physical punishment is never allowed at Gray United Methodist Preschool. Instead, we use positive strategies that strengthen the self-esteem of children. Most situations can be handled by redirecting a child to another more appropriate activity. This approach is called "positive redirection".

When necessary, we use a procedure called, Time-Out. This gives a child time to think about their action before returning to their group activity. This is a positive form of discipline that teaches appropriate behavior while allowing a child to make the decision to improve his or her behavior. When a child is placed in the "Thinking Chair" the period of time is one minute for each year of your child's age (example; if your child is four the maximum time would be four minutes).

HOMEWORK Gray United Methodist Preschool provides hand-on, take-home activities, so children and parents can extend the learning experience and have fun together; Parents can best support their child's learning by reading with their child each day, starting with infants and toddlers. In fact, reading to your child is the single most important thing you can do to foster literacy development.

OUTDOORS PLAY We consider the outdoors an extension of the classroom. Our playground includes outdoor spaces and equipment designed for active play and exploration to provide your child with exercise, fresh air and different learning activities. (We also have a gym that provides extra indoor play space during bad weather). Supervision is always a priority. Please note, sunscreen or sun block must be authorized and provided by a parent. We do not intend on taking the children outside when it is extremely cold. However, there are days that we will go outside when it is a little chilly. Therefore, please make sure your child has a jacket and/or coat and it is labeled with his/her name.

REST PERIODS After hours of exciting, educational and fun activities, your child needs rest. Most states establish a set rest period for preschoolers that usually range from 1 1/2 to 2 hours. We provide a mat and a sheet. You will need to provide a clean blanket every Monday. Please label them and wash them every week. If your child likes to rest with a pillow, you may send a small pillow. It must be able to fit inside their cubby.

PARENT AND TEACHER PARTNERSHIP As part of our promise to provide the kind of care and education you want for your child, we feel you should be involved every step of the way. That's why we encourage you to visit anytime and join us for special family events at the center. We also have Parent/Teacher Conference where issues and solutions can be openly discussed. We schedule

these three times a year. In addition we have an open door policy. You can come in and talk to the teacher and director at any time. Please note that it will be best to schedule appointment to be assured that the teacher and director will be available.

We at Gray United Methodist Preschool publish a newsletter about news and events that are coming up. To keep up to date with daily happenings and special events, please check out our Parent Boards and pocket charts.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT At Gray United Methodist Preschool we are always in the communities and neighborhoods of our center. We participate in fund-raising for local and national charities. The Center Director will inform you of community activities that the center will be sponsoring.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES Gray United Methodist Preschool policy is to accept children in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), its regulations, and any other applicable local, state or federal laws pertaining to the provision of services to those with disabilities. We review each child's situation on a case-by-case basis. Please discuss your child's needs with the director prior to enrollment. For more information about enrolling a child with special needs, you may contact our Director at 423-477-8436.

NO SOLICITATION We are very strict in prohibiting any distribution of literature or products at Gray United Methodist Preschool. Please see the Center Director.

BABYSITTING We discourage our staff members from providing private childcare or babysitting services on their own time. If a staff member does provide babysitting services, the staff member is acting in his or her individual capacity. If you would like a member of our staff to provide babysitting services, both you and the staff member must sign a release. We will not be responsible for the performance of babysitting services by members of our staff, including the transportation of your child.

PRAYER We provide care for children from families with various backgrounds and beliefs. However, we do teach Christianity here at our center. Every Wednesday the Pastor from Gray United Methodist Church will come to our center and have Chapel. We also incorporate Biblical lesson plans with our education lesson plans every day.

TOILET TRAINING Teamwork is the key to mastering this often-challenging phase in child development. We will not start any toilet training until you decide the time is right. (Most children start at around two years of age). Once you start at home, we'll make every effort to coordinate our program with yours. We ask you to supply us with at least two complete changes of clothing, and an ample supply of disposable diapers and training pants for each day your child attends. If your child has just started toilet training, he or she may still wear a diaper at rest

time. Your child must be toilet trained before he/she can be admitted to the three year old class.

If you wish to change your child's diaper or take him or her to the restroom while at the Center, please follow the same hand washing and disinfecting procedures as the staff does. The diaper and toilet procedures are hanging on the wall in the bathroom.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Our center is officially closed on the following holidays:

Memorial Day	Good Friday
Thanksgiving AND the day after Thanksgiving	
Independence Day	
Labor Day	Winter Break (Dates will be announced)

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it will be observed on Friday or Monday. The Center Director will send note home in advance to let you know which day we will be closed.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

The Center cannot and will not accept sick children or keep a child who becomes ill while at the Center. You or your emergency person will be called in the event of an illness and you will be expected to come as soon as possible

- a. A child with a temperature of 100 or higher must be picked up as soon as possible. The child will not be readmitted until 24 hours after a normal temperature unless your doctor feel that the child is not contagious i.e. ear infection.
- b. A child with diarrhea and throwing up must also be picked as soon possible. The child may be readmitted when he can successfully eat normal foods.
- c. It is the parent's responsibility to ask their doctor when the child may safely return to the Center.

ALLERGIES Please inform the Center Director about any allergies your child may have, so that we can take the right precautions to protect his or her health. Gray United Methodist Preschool Allergy Information and Emergency Health Care Plan form must be completed prior to initial start day.

Every child enrolled in the Center must have a health appraisal to entry time. Immunizations must be kept current. Please advise the director when your child receives an immunization. Please note that all children will need to have a yellow immunization form provided by your doctor or your local health department before entering Gray United Methodist Preschool.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES We will keep you informed on any instance of contagious disease affecting children who may have had direct exposure at the center, and we will immediately report such diseases to the local health authorities. From time to time, we will also distribute educational literature about children's health issues. If a child is absent because of a contagious disease, he or she may not return to Gray United Methodist Preschool without a physician's written statement indicating that the child is no longer contagious and is able to participate in activities.

HAND WASHING We want to help teach your child valuable personal skills. That's why we require hand washing before and after eating, after bathroom visits and at any other appropriate time.

ILLNESS

Prescription Medication will be administered to your child when the following conditions are met:

- a. Permission slip is completed and signed by the parent.
- b. The date on the prescription is current (within the month for antibiotics or within the expiration date for medications which are so labeled; within the year otherwise).
- c. The medication is in safety cap container.
- d. The original prescription label is on the medication container.
- e. The name of the child on the permission slip and the container is the same.
- f. The dose, name of drug, and frequency of administration given on the label is consistent with parental instruction.
- g. A specific time to administer the drug is on the consent form (ex. 12:30 instead of "before nap")

Administering Nonprescription Medication. The responsibility of contacting a physician concerning minor health problems lies within the parents. Nonprescription medications permit relief of symptoms without physician contact; they are generally safe and effective when used appropriately, but may delay a parent from seeking necessary medical advice. The product labeling for nonprescription medicines provides a guide for treatment as well as when to seek further medical advice.

The Gray United Methodist Preschool seeks to provide an environment in which each child is comfortable and in good health. It shall be the policy of Gray United Methodist Preschool to administer certain nonprescription medication when requested by a parent of treatment of a noncontiguous condition so long as the following criteria are met:

- a. The nonprescription product is specifically labeled for use for children
- b. The dosage is determined by parent, pharmacist, or physician and is consistent with product labeling. The physician should suggest the dose appropriate for an individual child.

- c. The duration of treatment is consistent with product labeling (usually less than one week). Nonprescription medications should be administered AT HOME if possible; since most medications have duration of at least four hours, the staff of the Center should not have to administer more than ONE DOSE except in unusual cases.
- d. Nonprescription remedy produces no side effects (for example, hyper excitability). Which disrupt normal class activity.
- e. The staff feels comfortable that nonprescription treatment does not pose a risk to the child.
- f. Parents complete the appropriate paperwork instructing staff on nonprescription drug administration.

The Gray United Methodist Preschool staff will NOT administer the following nonprescription treatment:

- Anti-diarrhea medications
- Asthma medications, Laxatives
- Acetaminophen (Fever Reducer) A Child must be fever free without medication

Medication Storage. We are required to make all medications inaccessible to children by storing them in a locked container. Medications needing refrigeration must be put in a leak-proof locked container. We have designated the kitchen as the room used for medication storage. Please have a staff member show you the containers being used and where the keys are. When filling a prescription, most pharmacists will divide medication, which will eliminate the need for it to be transported each day.

If your child's doctor prescribes breathing treatments, please see the Director for a copy of the policy.

MEDICAL RECORDS AND VACCINATIONS

MEDICAL RECORDS In the interest of your child's health (and that of all the children at the center), you must submit your child's current medical and immunization records prior to enrollment. These records must be updated in accordance with state law:

VACCINATIONS The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has released recommended guidelines for vaccinating young children. Gray United Methodist Preschool follows the state immunizations regulations and recommends consulting your family doctor concerning medical matters.

CDC VACCINATION SCHEDULE GUIDELINES

Birth:	Hepatitis B (Hep. B)
2 month	Hep B; Polio (IPV); Diphtheria; Tetanus; Pertussis (DtaP) H influenza type b (Hib)
4 month	Hep. B IPV; DtaP Hib
6 month	Hep B; IPV; DtaP; Hib
12-15 month	Hep B; DtaP; Hib; Measles; Mumps; Rubella (MMR); Varicella (VAR)
24 month	Hepatitis A (in selected areas)
4-5 years	IPV; DtaP; MMR
11-12 years	Tetanus and Diphtheria

SIGNING CHILDREN IN AND OUT Each morning, when bringing your child in, we require you to sign in on our roster. Also, you must personally take your child to the teacher in the classroom. We will release your child only to parents or guardians with legal custody or persons over the age of 18 who are designated by you on the Emergency Contact and Child Release Authorization form. Every person who enters our center is required to sign in. When you return to pick up your child, we ask you to sign out. Adults other than parents will be required to show proper ID.

If you come to pick up your child later than closing time, we charge a late fee. If you are more than 30 minutes late and we are unable to reach your emergency contact, your Center Director will call Child Protective Services.

Custody Issues

To ensure that Gray United Methodist Preschool is in compliance with any court orders pertaining to the custody of your child, we require a certified copy of a custody order. We keep this information confidential and solely for the safety and well being of your child. If a new custody order is issued or if a restraining order had been issued against either parent, we will also need to have this information on file. It is Gray United Methodist Preschool policy to remain neutral in all custody matter and the Center may not serve as a visitation site.

SECURITY MEASURES

1.Gray United Methodist Preschool has a doorbell for the safety of the children. Please enter through the double doors. On some occasions, a staff member may open a classroom door and ask you to enter through their door.-This most often will occur during dropping off or when picking children up..All doors are equipped with an alarm buzzer as an additional precaution.

2.Roll checks are done for each age group during trips to the playground,before lunch time,nap time and during free play.

3.Children needing to use the large bathroom(s) or the water fountain will be observed at all times.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENTS We take every precaution to make sure your child is safe. This includes a comprehensive safety awareness program, as well as frequent inspections and maintenance of our building, playgrounds and equipment. But because children will be children, accidents may happen. When they do occur and we feel medical attention is needed, we will call you or your designated contact.

SAFETY DRILLS AND SEVERE WEATHER To prepare for fire, severe weather or disaster evacuation, we have regular drills and practices so your child can react in a safe and orderly manner. If an actual emergency requires evacuation of our center, we will notify you as soon as the children are safe. When the National Weather System declares a SEVERE WEATHER condition/ High Risk,,we will notify you to pick up your child and get to safety. HIGH,we will contact you so that you can pick your child up and get to safety.

SNOW SCHEDULE: We will no longer follow the Washington Co. Snow schedule. The staff will determine if the weather is a concern and make the decision regarding a delay in opening or in closing the pre-school for the day. If there is to be a delay/closing, the staff will call or text each family between 6:30 and 7:00 am. If you do not receive a call, that means we are open as usual!

TRANSPORTATION Gray United Methodist Preschool does not provide transportation. However, children who, regardless of age, weighing less than 40 pounds must ride in a car seat that meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

BEHAVIOR ISSUES Because we provide childcare and education in a group setting, we must be concerned for the welfare and safety of all of our children and staff. When a particular child or parent's behavior threatens the safety of, or becomes abusive toward other children in the center, we reserve the right to dis-enroll the child immediately. Behavior reports will be sent home with your child in the event that the inappropriate behavior starts to become habitual.

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD Should you need to withdraw your child, we require two-week notice. The two-week notice is important because it enables us to fill the spot that will become available. It also allows time for the children to prepare to say good-bye to each other. Sometime children or families may not adjust to the center environment. In these cases, we may ask the parent to withdraw their child. If we make that decision, we will usually give the family one week notice to withdraw. Certain instances may require an immediate withdrawal.

CHILDCARE RATES

FEE AND PAYMENT POLICIES As we continue to improve our facilities and resources, tuition fees are reviewed annually.

The center will serve hot lunches. The cost of the lunch is added to the weekly tuition. The lunches will be “kid-friendly”, but will also meet the USDA food guidelines. We will be ordering the food on a weekly basis according to the number of students enrolled, Therefore, the lunch rates will be applied even if your child is absent.

RATES \$130.00 Full Time 5 days Per Week (2ND Child discount \$110)
\$85.00 Full Time 3 Days Per Week (MWF) (2nd Child discount \$70)
\$60.00 Full Time 2 days Per Week (T TH) (2nd Child discount \$50)

REGISTRATION All enrollees will be required to pay a one-time \$35.00 nonrefundable registration fee.

SUPPLY FEE Effective May 26, 2009 - the supply fee is added within the weekly tuition. There will no longer be a separate fee.

TUITION AGREEMENT In accordance with your Enrollment Agreement, weekly tuition must be paid by closing time on the first day of attendance of each week or a late fee of week will be charged. **One day late, \$5.00 fee. After the 2nd day, it is a \$10.00 fee.** Please remember, that we are a non-profit organization, and your child’s tuition pays the teachers’ salaries.

All Checks, Money Orders, or Cashier’s Checks should be made out to Gray United Methodist Preschool or (GUMP).

Parents are required to pay the same weekly or monthly fee regardless of illness, vacations, snow days, or national holidays (with the exception of Winter Break).

SUMMERTIME ENROLLMENT Starting the summer of 2010- families will no longer be able to take the summer off and re-enter in the fall without prior approval .The center is turning down enrollees in the summertime and it is resulting in a loss of income due to two months of non-paying children. If you choose to enroll your children 2 or 3 days a week per summer, then your child can return to his/her usual routine if you properly notify GUMP in advance, we may have a request survey for you to fill out to accomplish this requirement.

RETURNED CHECKS A fee of \$16.00 will be charged for returned checks. We reserve the right to refuse any subsequent payment by check.

UNPAID TUITION Enrollment will be discontinued if tuition payment is not received. The Gray United Methodist Church Board or the Center Director will notify you if you are two weeks behind. Re-enrollment will require paying the full amount, late fees and the registration fee.

VACATIONS, SICK DAYS AND ABSENCE To maintain our high standard of quality, we budget for everyday costs related to our dedicated teachers and educational resources. To cover these costs, we charge a full week's tuition. Due to the high demands there will be no scheduled vacations, sick days or absence day without pay.

REQUIREMENTS

I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THE POLICY STATEMENT AND A COPY OF
“SUMMARY OF LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS”.

Name of Child

Parent’s Signature

Director’s Signature

Date: _____

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