

ORANGE United Methodist Church  
Preschool

PARENT HANDBOOK  
2024/2025

*1220 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
(919) 942-3495  
[prek@oumcmail.com](mailto:prek@oumcmail.com)  
[www.orangepreschool.org](http://www.orangepreschool.org)*

*Teaching the love and knowledge of Jesus to young children.*

## Orange United Methodist Church Preschool

### History

In the Spring of 1984, Orange United Methodist Church began ministering to the needs of parents in the church and community by providing quality morning care and preschool experiences for young children through a Mother's Morning Out program. The name of the program was changed to OUMC Preschool in 1989 as more age groups were incorporated.

Orange Preschool offers a quality educational program for young children, but more importantly it is a Christian preschool. All teachers are hired on the basis of their Christian faith as well as their educational qualifications. The daily curriculum includes prayer, Bible stories, Christian music, and celebration of appropriate religious holidays.

The program is currently serving 126 children. The preschool's reputation for excellence continues to attract the attention of parents looking for qualified programs in which to enroll their children. While Chapel Hill has numerous preschools, parents have regarded OUMC Preschool as providing the highest quality of care and nurturing of their children.

### Statement of Purpose

OUMC Preschool is an outreach ministry of Orange United Methodist Church. It is our purpose to provide a Christian preschool for children that will draw them and their families into a close relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. Under the guidance of qualified, Christian teachers, this school provides an educational program, which considers the developmental needs of the children and emphasizes growth in all areas: spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual.

### Orange UMC Preschool Philosophy

At Orange United Methodist Preschool, we recognize each child as a unique gift from God. Our primary objective is to provide a safe, loving environment that enables children to explore and develop their abilities comfortably and at their own pace. Through our nurturing environment, we hope to foster confidence and an enthusiasm for learning about the world around us that will last a lifetime. We encourage self-discipline, kindness, and community building, so that each child will learn to work well within a group.

### Curriculum and Goals

The curriculum is thematically based with a Christian component. The Christian holidays are celebrated, a blessing is said before snack, and we visit the Sanctuary once a week for music, Bible story and prayer.

The focus of the curriculum is age appropriate for each class. The overall goals include:

- Building self-esteem, social, emotional, and self help skills
- Development of fine and gross motor skills
- Experience with logical thinking, reasoning and problem solving skills
- Development of language and literacy skills
- Participation in imaginary play

## Music

Music is an important part of language development. It encourages listening, and provides repeating, imaging, and fast and slow concepts. Music and creative movement are offered one day per week for all classes. We have a wide variety of instruments for the children.

## Science

Our science program of exploration and discovery is offered one day per week for our 4-year-olds and 3-year olds. This hands-on time is used to investigate, observe, and test a hypothesis.

Below is a list of opportunities we provide all children in our care. Many of the experiences are similar for all age groups, with the children being able to take on more responsibility and use their materials in varying, more complicated ways as they mature.

The children will have the opportunity to:

## Spiritual

- Become familiar with worship and praise in the Church Sanctuary.
- Rejoice in the love of God by praying to, praising in song and talking about God.
- Celebrate Christian holidays.

## Social

- Build relationships with peers and adults.
- Resolve conflicts using words rather than physical contact.
- Encounter the joys and difficulties involved in group play. Sharing is HARD!
- Observe caregivers using and practice using courtesy and kindness to others through actions such as saying “please”, “thank you” or comforting someone who is sad.
- Become aware that life is made up of many rules that change according to the situation.  
Example – loud voices are for outside.

## Emotional

- Have hugs, cuddles and a warm lap to sit on whenever needed.
- Express their own emotions and witness others express emotions.
- Develop self help skills by being encouraged to help keep room organized, dispose of trash appropriately, wash hands, clear away own snack items when finished, and put on/take off necessary outside clothing.
- Say “I did it” and hear praise for their accomplishments.
- Make their own choices for daily activities from a number of centers. This values their ideas, strengthens decision-making skills, allows independence, and develops time management and a sense of time. (Example – a child chooses to spend all of his/her time building with blocks, but is upset when the paints are put away and he/she has no picture to take home. The next day he/she may use their time differently).

## Physical

- Identify various body parts and experiment with the movement of each using song, dance, music and fingerplays.
- Practice gross motor skills (running, climbing, jumping, etc.) through outdoor play.
- Strengthen fine motor and eye/hand coordination skills through numerous activities such as catching bubbles, coloring, stringing items, puzzles, stacking, cutting, weaving and playing with small manipulatives.
- Explore various materials using all the senses – sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch.

## Intellectual

- Play! We realize that an abundance of play at this stage provides a crucial foundation for academic skills needed later. Through play, children develop an understanding of the world around them, build relationships and explore (ultimately mastering) skills at their own pace.
- Explore language by speaking your own ideas, listening to others, singing, reading stories and observing words in a print rich environment.
- Express their creativity by making their own unique artwork. We provide a large amount of different art materials for the children to use to express themselves.
- Become familiar with numbers through counting items as a group, singing songs involving adding or subtracting items, estimating, viewing items grouped in different amounts and changing those groupings.
- Compare, contrast, sort, match and classify everything.
- Explore the natural world around us and then bring items inside for further study.
- Identify shapes, colors, and objects using items in our environment.
- Develop a sense of time by experiencing and discussing lengths of time such as a minute, hour, day, week, month, and year.
- Build and tear down using many materials such as wooden blocks, legos, pegs, and foam shapes. Building requires imagination, balance, understanding of basic physics and a sense of spatial relationships.
- Have ooey, gooey fun. Sensory experience such as sand, water, play dough, silly putty, cornstarch, clay, bird seed, macaroni and shaving cream brings out the scientist in all of us.

Orange UM Preschool teaching staff has years of experience in early childhood development. We endeavor to provide a foundation of concepts and readiness skills in our classrooms that will prepare your child for kindergarten.

Orange United Methodist Preschool is governed by a Preschool Advisory Committee of Orange United Methodist Church. All committee members are Orange United Methodist Church members.

#### Preschool Advisory Committee

##### Chairperson

Preside over monthly committee meetings. This position requires membership in Orange United Methodist Church.

##### Treasurer

Manages all accounts and gives financial reports at meetings. This position is held by the Financial Secretary of Orange United Methodist Church.

##### Secretary

Records minutes of each meeting and distributes typed copies to committee members in a timely manner.

##### Trustee Representative

Represents the trustee board of Orange United Methodist Church.

##### Parent Representatives

Brings to the committee any suggestions ideas and other communications from parents of the preschool.

##### Children's Ministries Representative

Represents Children's Ministries of Orange United Methodist Church.

##### Staff Parish Relations Committee Representative

Represents the Orange United Methodist Church SPRC.

##### Early Childhood Education Representative

Serves as a resource to the committee as it makes child development decisions.

##### Teacher Representatives

Brings ideas and suggestions of the staff to the committee.

##### Preschool Director

Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the OUMC Preschool.

Orange UMC Preschool  
Policies  
Registration and Tuition Information

Applications are accepted year around. A \$30 application fee payable to Orange Preschool is due upon submitting an application to the preschool.

OUMC Preschool operates for 37 consecutive weeks with breaks at Christmas and Easter. Starting after Labor Day and running through the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May. The calendar will be available on the website and printed copies May 1st.

Entrance Requirements

All children attending Orange UMC Preschool must have a medical form completed by their child's physician yearly. A copy of Official immunization records must be on file by the first day of preschool. All children must have the state required immunizations to attend Orange Preschool.

Children must reach the appropriate class age by August 31 of the enrollment year. There are 2 teachers in every class.

Operating Expense/Supply Fee/Snack Fee

The supply fee and Snack fee are paid at time of registration. Snacks are provided by the preschool. All payments are non-refundable.

One month's tuition is collected in advance (due May 1st) when accepted into the preschool program. This advance payment will pay for the last month of preschool (the following May).

Tuition is bank drafted on the 1st of each month, Sept - April.

If you are having difficulty making your tuition payment please contact the director immediately.

Class Composition and Tuition

<b>Class</b>	<b>Days/Week</b>	<b>Class Size</b>	<b>Tuition per month</b>	<b>Supply Fee per year</b>	<b>Snack Fee per year</b>
1-year-old	2 days	8	\$230	\$100	\$75
2-year-old	3 (M/W/F)	10	\$305	\$150	\$100
2-year-old	2 (T/Th)	10	\$230	\$100	\$75
3-year-old	5 (M-F)	12	\$455	\$250	\$250
3-year-old	3 (M/W/F)	12	\$305	\$150	\$100
4-year-old	4 (M-Th)	12	\$400	\$200	\$125
4-year-old	5 (M-F)	14	\$455	\$250	\$150

## One-year-old Class

Children must be 12 months old by April 1st, to enter the one-year-old class in the fall. The maximum number of children in this class is 8 with 2 teachers.

This class is offered Monday and Wednesday.

Supply fee is \$100

Snack fee is \$75

Tuition is \$230

Priority registration occurs in January. Priority for admission is as follows:

1. Currently enrolled
2. Church members
3. Siblings of currently enrolled
4. Community enrollment starts February 1st

## Scholarships

A limited number of scholarships are available to qualified students. Applications are available on the website at [orangeprechool.org](http://orangeprechool.org) or upon request from the director. Scholarship applications are due April 1st.

## Withdrawal Notice and Fee

If it is necessary to withdraw your child from the preschool, please notify the Director. **30 Day notice is required.** Parents are responsible for tuition through the end of the school year, unless a replacement is found.

## Repeating a Class

A child repeating a class will not get priority over new children except as recommended by teachers and the Director after parental consultation. Please advise the Director and teacher in September, if you are considering this as a possibility.

## Special Needs Children

The OUMC Preschool staff is not specifically trained to handle all special needs, OUMC Preschool will accept special needs children into the program provided the special needs can be met within the health and safety capabilities of the school. Because special needs are greatly diversified, teachers are constantly evaluating the children's progress and making referrals to parents whenever necessary. If an OUMC Preschool child is working with an outside professional, the child's teacher should have access to this professional to ensure the best possible learning environment for that child.

In the event that a special need becomes apparent for the first time during the course of a school year at OUMC preschool, the OUMC preschool staff will strive to collaborate with the child's parents in determining what evaluation may be necessary, and after a period of assessment, whether OUMC preschool remains an appropriate placement for the child. We, of course, will strive to keep all children who start a school year here in our program; however, there are occasions when this may

not be in the best interest of the child as determined by our staff and/or any professional consultant who is involved.

### Policy for Potential Dismissal

If a child does not respond to repeat disciplinary actions, is a threat to other children, or is a serious disruption to the classroom, then the following steps are taken:

1. A conference between parents and teachers is called with written documentation of the disruptions in the classroom.
2. A letter informing the parents of improvement or regression is sent two weeks after the initial conference.
3. A follow-up conference is held no more than four weeks after the first meetings. If the behavior has not improved, the child is dismissed from the program. If at all possible, a two-week grace period is given to the parents and the child so that arrangements can be made.

### School hours - 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Please be punctual. It is very important to your child to begin the day on time with his/her classmates. Pick up time is between 12:00 -12:05. A \$10 late fee will be assessed if your child is picked up after 12:05.

### Drop Off Procedures

Preschool drop off is at 9:00 am. We will have a check in table at the top of the sidewalk. Your child will be checked in and escorted to the playground by one of your child's teachers. In the event of rain or cold under 32° drop off and pick up will be in the fellowship hall. Good hygiene helps reduce germs. Have your child go to the restroom and wash hands before coming to preschool.

### Pick Up Procedures

#### **3-year-old and 4-year-old Classes**

Orange preschool uses a car line pickup system for our 3 and 4 year old classes. The car pickup line is in the back parking lot behind the playground.

1. Place school-issued name placards in the car window where they are easily seen. The best position is on the sun visor with a rubber band to secure.
2. Enter the 3-year-old lane to the right. 4-year-old lane to the left. Lanes will be marked with orange cones.
3. Pull your car all the way forward to the first cone.
4. A teacher will take your child to your car. You may pull around to the other side of the parking lot to secure your child in their carset.

If a person other than a parent picks up your child, they must be listed on your child's personal information sheet and show a valid driver's license. If your child is going home with someone other than the parent or babysitter, please complete the permission form indicating who is to pick up the child.



### **1-year-old and 2-year-old classes**

1's and 2's will be picked up from the playground. Please park in the front parking lot.

3's and 4's will be picked up in the back parking lot.

**All siblings** will be loaded with the youngest child. (ie: if you have a 4 yr old and a 2 yr old, we will have both children together on the playground.)

### School Closing

#### Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, emails will be sent out if there is a change to our regular schedule. OUMC Preschool will follow CHCCS school district inclement weather closings most of the time. Tuition will not be refunded for days missed due to inclement weather. It is Orange Preschool's policy **not** to make up snow days.

We are concerned about the safety of everyone driving on icy roads.

In case of inclement weather, please refer to WRAL [www.wral.com](http://www.wral.com); or WTVD [www.abc11.com](http://www.abc11.com) for an announcement of our school's closing. Please refer to WRAL or WTVD for closings rather than calling the Church office, teachers, or the Director.

We are listed under private schools and large daycares.

### Snacks and Lunches

#### Snacks

**All children will need to bring a water bottle to school everyday. Please label your child's water bottle.** All snacks are provided by the preschool. We will have a fruit or dairy and a cracker choice.

All allergies will be accommodated.

Notify your child's teacher, if you would like to celebrate your child's birthday with a special treat.

#### Lunch Bunch

This program is an extension of the school and provides an environment where children can enjoy lunch, friends and play. Each child is asked to provide his or her own lunch box and drink. Label the outside of the lunch box and any individual containers. Parents should pack lunches that will be safe without refrigeration during the morning. Remember to provide appropriate eating utensils if needed. Simple, nutritious meals are appreciated. Lunch Bunch is offered on Monday - Thursday, meeting from 12:05 until 12:55 p.m. Three and four year olds who are **fully potty trained** and can handle their bathroom needs independently may register for the Lunch Bunch program on the days they attend school. The cost is \$10.00 per day for drop in service and flexible scheduling.

Children will be picked up in their classrooms, guided through hygiene routines, and brought to the designated room by the Lunch Bunch adults. When picking up your child, please park in the front parking lot and pick up your child from the playground.

During inclement weather, lunch bunch will be held downstairs in classrooms, after children have finished eating they will be in the fellowship hall for pick up.

The program begins during the second week of school and ends the third week of May.

**Your Lunch Bunch payment will be added to your monthly bank draft.**

## Illnesses and Emergencies

### Illness

Children should not attend preschool if their disease, illness or injury presents a significant risk to themselves or others.

Parents should ask the following questions before sending or excluding children from preschool.

1. Does the child's illness keep him/her from comfortably taking part in activities?
2. Does the child need more care than the staff can give without affecting the health and safety of other children?
3. Could other children get sick from being near your child?

If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then the child should not go to preschool.

Illnesses for which a child should be excluded from preschool include: chicken pox, bloody diarrhea, fever, lethargy, sudden breathing difficulties, and any undiagnosed rash that is accompanied by fever.

**Children should not be sent to preschool if they have had the following in the previous 24 hours:**

- **Diarrhea**- watery stools or decreased form of stool that is not associated with change of diet with frequency exceeding 2 more stools above normal for that child.
- **Vomiting** - more than 2 times unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition.
- **Fever**

Children should not attend preschool for the following until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours:

- Purulent conjunctivitis - defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge
- Impetigo
- Strep throat

### Medications

Teachers are not allowed to administer any medications to children during preschool. Exceptions will be made when dealing with chronic illness such as inhalers, etc. Prescribed medication shall be in its original container with written instructions for dosage.

## Emergency Procedures

Our teachers are certified in CPR. A first-aid kit is kept in every class. If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child as soon as possible. If your child is injured or becomes ill and immediate medical attention is necessary, emergency assistance will be requested by 911. You will be notified immediately. It is very important that you provide us with a telephone number where you can be reached for any emergencies.

## General Classroom Information A-to-Z

### Birthday Parties

Parents are asked to be considerate when extending birthday party invitations to children in their child's class by either extending the invitations personally to all children in the class, or by mailing the invitations to the invited children. Your regard for this policy will help maintain a feeling of acceptance for all children in your child's class. We do celebrate Birthdays in the classrooms. Please let your teacher know if you would like to bring in a special treat.

### Clothing

Children should be dressed appropriately for school each day. Good shoes are essential for the playground. If your child does wear sandals to school they must have a strap to stay on their foot (No Flip Flops, or crocs). Each child needs a change of clothing to be kept at school in their cubby. Please change from a warm weather outfit to a cold weather outfit at appropriate times of the year. Be sure to label all of your child's belongings.

### Custody Procedures of Parents/Legal Guardians

We cannot accept notes from one parent telling us that the other parent may not see or take the child from the school. If one parent has custody of the child, and there is a potential problem, we must have an enforceable legal document for our files stating the identity of the legal guardian.

### Diapers

You are responsible for bringing disposable diapers and wipes for your child. Orange Preschool does not accept cloth diapers. Children in diapers are asked to bring in a box of diapers at the beginning of the year for your child. Children in our 3 and 4-year-old program will be expected to attend to their own toileting needs.

### Discipline Policy

The discipline policy of Orange UMC Preschool is designed to promote positive behavior management. Teachers reinforce acceptable behavior by praising the child for what he/she is doing.

Positive reinforcement encourages good behavior and helps the child feel good about him or herself. For the child who exhibits unacceptable behavior, the teacher may remove that child from the situation to help calm and refocus, then the child may rejoin the group.

### Backpacks

We prefer no backpacks to come to preschool. If your child has a backpack please keep them in your car. It is requested that toys and personal items be left at home unless it is important for your child in separating from home. Each classroom will give more specific guidelines for toys brought for Show and Tell.

### Field Trips

Occasionally, your child's teacher may arrange a field trip. These trips provide many new and exciting learning experiences. Trips will be completed during regular school hours. Parents will be responsible for arranging their child's transportation to and from the event. Field trips are contingent on parent participation and may be canceled due to lack of parental support. Siblings will not be allowed to attend field trips.

### Head Lice Policy

Head Lice is an easily treated condition that millions of school children get every year. It is not associated with any serious medical problems, and children from any family can get them.

If your child has lice, they must be treated with an effective medicated product. All nits must be removed from the hair. Children will be allowed back to preschool after they have been treated with an effective product **and all nits have been removed.**

### Parent -Teacher Conference

Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled in October. This conference is extremely important and all parents are strongly recommended to attend. You may request a conference at any other time during the school year. Teachers are available to conference with specialists and/or parents by appointment. Conferences can be in person or by phone.

### Pick up - changes to Normal procedure

Any change of plans in pick up, must be in writing. You may send by email if plans change during school hours. This does include persons listed on your emergency form.

### Playground

Orange United Methodist Church playground is reserved for preschool children only, during preschool hours. **Parents should remain outside the fence when dropping off or picking up child.** Parents and siblings may use the playground after school hours and lunch bunch hours, when teachers have accounted for all students and left the playground. If you use the playground, please respect the space and pick up all toys at the end of play.

### Use of Preschool Roster

The Orange student roster is published for the convenience of preschool parents and staff. Please protect the privacy of our families. Use of any of this roster information to solicit for any product, service or cause is prohibited.

### Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Please be aware that we are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. All Staff have been trained in Safe Sanctuaries which is mandated by the United Methodist Church Conference. Safe Sanctuaries is a program to ensure the safety of our children and youth as well as our teachers and volunteers.

### Policy for Action on Suggestions, Concerns, and Problems

This policy is written as a guideline for parents. In the event parents have concerns, suggestions or feel that there are problems at Orange UMC Preschool, parents should do the following:

1. Speak to the person with whom there is a problem.
2. If the parent is unable to speak directly to the person(s) for any reason, then the parent may contact the Director. If the concern involves policy issues please speak directly to the Director and if the issue is personal please speak to the Preschool Advisory Committee Chairperson.

The policies in this parent handbook are subject to change with appropriate notice to parents.