

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

PARENT HANDBOOK

Methodist Preschool



Excellence in Early Childhood Education

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Matthew 19:14

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY	3
GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION	4
MINIMUM STANDARDS & LICENSING REPORTS	5
TUITION & FEES	5
ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT	6
CLASSES & PLACEMENT	7
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE	8
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	9
COMMUNICATION	11
STUDENT SUPPLIES	11
CLOTHING & PERSONAL ITEMS	12
BIRTHDAYS & CELEBRATIONS	13
STUDENT EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT	14
HEALTH & WELLNESS	15
SAFE SLEEP POLICY	19
NUTRITION POLICY	21
BITING POLICY	22
GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE POLICY	23
CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS	24
SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICY	27
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	28
REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT	29
ADDITIONAL/EXTENDED POLICIES	30
STUDENT ILLNESS POLICY	32
BITING POLICY	36
NO NIT/LICE POLICY	37
STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY	39
METHODIST PRESCHOOL FOOD POLICY	40
(FOR 2s, 3s, AND PRE-K CLASSROOMS)	40
METHODIST PRESCHOOL INFANT & TODDLER FOOD POLICY	43
PARENT HANDBOOK & PROGRAM POLICIES AGREEMENT	47

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Excellence in Early Childhood Education

Methodist Preschool is a play-based early childhood Christian education center. We believe that children are a gift from God, created uniquely and individually. We also believe that children learn best through playful and engaging activities that center around a child's interests and unique learning style. Our program offers a theme-based curriculum that provides students with hands-on lessons that allow exploration and play, improves vocabulary through inquiry and discussion, develops problem solving skills, and enables the application of their learning to real world experiences. The Methodist Preschool curriculum aligns with the local school district's academic scope & sequence and Texas Education Association's Pre-K guidelines, and the exit guidelines exceed the requirements of school readiness recommended for kindergarten. Methodist Preschool's teachers are highly trained early childhood educators who have a genuine commitment to, and knowledge of, early childhood education as it relates to the individual child. Our program's low student-teacher ratios help teachers work one-on-one with every child in their classroom. All staff members participate in training throughout the year to stay updated on the latest child development research, early childhood education methods, child safety practices, and classroom management techniques. Communication with our families is a priority and we welcome, support, and encourage family involvement at Methodist Preschool. We provide a welcoming Christian environment that is developmentally supportive, loving, nurturing, professional, clean, and safe.

Methodist Preschool delivers excellence in early childhood education by providing a high-quality curriculum and environment, promoting Christian values, and preparing the whole child for a love of learning that will last a lifetime!

Canyon Lake United Methodist Church supports the efforts and mission of the Methodist Preschool program.

GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION

Canyon Lake United Methodist Preschool

Operation #1630458

Address:

206 Flintstone Dr.
Canyon Lake, Texas 78133 CLUMC
Email: office@canyonlakemps.org
Website: www.canyonlakemps.org

Administration

Director: Crystal Coffing
Assistant Director: Christine Damiani

Pastor: Polly Angle

MPS Board Chairman: Tina Platt

HOURS OF OPERATION

Methodist Preschool offers 2-day, 3-day, & 5-day preschool programs for Infants through threes and a 5-day PreK program with classes beginning at 8:00am and dismissing at 2:15pm. Early morning and after school programs are offered to extend the school's total operating hours from 6:30am – 5:30pm.

HOLIDAYS & WEATHER

Methodist Preschool loosely follows the Comal ISD's academic calendar. We are closed for extended school breaks and federal holidays. We also follow Comal ISD's school closings, or delayed hours, in the case of severe weather. If the schools are closed, Methodist Preschool may follow in accordance with CISD. Parents/Guardians will be contacted immediately should the preschool close for any emergency, such as severe weather or loss of utilities, or any situation that would severely disrupt student care and services making it unsafe to remain open.

TEXAS RISING STAR (COMING SOON)

Our center is in partnership with the TRS program. Texas Workforce Commission through the TRS program provides a quality-based child care rating system. This adopted quality rating and improvement system exceeds minimum child care licensing standards improving care offered to children and families. As a TRS program we improve the quality of our services by going above and beyond what's expected in all areas of our program. TRS requirements are based on the best developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education. There are three levels of certification based on the care the inspectors see during their evaluation visits throughout the year, two, three or 4 stars. Our TRS certificate will have our current star rating on it and will be displayed and announced on ProCare after each visit.

MINIMUM STANDARDS & LICENSING REPORTS

Methodist Preschool is licensed under the Texas Health and Human Services department of Child Care Regulation. Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers defines the preschool's basic requirements for operation within the state of Texas. Parents may view the State Minimum Standards for child care and view Methodist Preschool's inspection reports at any time. These can be viewed online at: www.dfps.state.tx.us

Or you may contact them at the following address or phone number:

Child Care Licensing Office (San Antonio)

3635 SE Military Dr.
P.O. Box 23990
San Antonio, Texas 78223-0990
(210) 337-3399

TUITION & FEES

Periodic fees and monthly tuition are paid for services provided and assist in funding the Methodist Preschool program. A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 will be required upon any enrollment of a student. You may hold a student's place in the program for the following year by paying a non-refundable reservation fee of \$100 when enrollment opens in the current school year. These spots are given on a first paid basis. Should all the spots fill, your child will be put on a waitlist and you will not be charged a holding fee until a spot becomes available. This fee will **not** be applied to your first month's tuition when the new school year begins in the fall.

In order to hold a spot for an infant that is not starting in August, the parent will have to pay half of the half day tuition fee for the desired days.

Should there be no one on the waiting list, you would not be expected to pay tuition unless someone wants to enroll in the infant room prior to your start date. At which time, you will have first right of refusal or pay the above tuition amount to hold the infants spot until they start school.

Tuition is based on how many days our program is open in a ten-month period, beginning in August and ending in May. It is prorated so that you have the convenience of paying the same amount each month. You will still be required to pay the full amount even if your child misses school days or there are scheduled school holidays. Tuition will be billed and is due on the 1st day of the month from September to May. A late fee of \$40 will be assessed if tuition is not received by the 5th of the month. If the family is receiving CCS, the due date is the 3rd of each month per their

agreement. Tuition not paid by the 5th of the month will result in a suspension of enrollment until the payment is submitted. If the past due balance is not brought current by the first of the following month, your child will be disenrolled from the program. Tuition pricing and a full list of fees are available on the website.

Beginning January 1, 2025 there is a fee for debit card processing. It will be 2.7% +.30 per transaction. This is a processing fee paid directly to Procare. You can avoid this fee and the credit card fee by using the ACH/Bank option. The fee for this is a flat 1.00 per transaction. PLEASE inform Laura Judd if you change the payment method so she can code your account properly and assess the correct fees. Please feel free to reach out to her with any questions @laura@canyonlakemps.org. Payments changed without a weeks' notice will be assessed the current fees until the following month.

TUITION ASSISTANCE, DISCOUNTS, AND REFUNDS

Tuition assistance is available for those who qualify through the Texas Workforce Commission. Please visit their website for more information:
<https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/child-care>

Sibling discounts are limited to a 10% reduction for the oldest sibling. Please see the financial manager if you have any difficulty in paying tuition rates or fees. If you choose to withdraw your child from the program for any reason, you must notify the program Director two weeks prior to disenrollment. Tuition refunds are at the discretion of the Methodist Preschool Board.

ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

Methodist Preschool enrolls children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age regardless of race, religion, gender, or financial status. The preschool program may also enroll children with disabilities provided that the child's required assistance does not extend beyond the qualifications of, exceed the resources available to the staff, or pose a safety hazard for staff and other students. Services provided to children are at the discretion of the Methodist Preschool Director. Methodist Preschool reserves the right to refuse or discontinue services to any child at any time for any reason.

Upon submission of the online enrollment form, parents/guardians will be required to complete the enrollment process to secure the child's spot on the class roster. Admittance into the Methodist Preschool program is completed by the following procedure:

1. Submit the registration fee through ProCare. After the registration fee has been confirmed, the child will be added to the roster in his/her class.

2. Set up an account through ProCare. Methodist Preschool (through ProCare) will send an email with a code to join the Methodist Preschool's group. Once the account is set up, a PIN is assigned so that the child may be signed in/out daily on the tablet at the front door.
3. Fill out the required documents provided to you through ProCare or in physical form. Parents/Guardians must provide Methodist Preschool with:
 - The child's most current immunization record. Parents must provide an updated copy when new immunizations are received.
 - A Physician's Healthcare Statement or letter from the child's physician before the child's first day enrollment that he/she is in good health.
 - An allergy and/or asthma action plan or physician's letter of health-related care if the child has any severe allergies, asthma, medical equipment, or special feeding instructions.
 - Vision and Hearing screening record for children 4 years and older
 - Signed Parent Handbook containing preschool policies and enrollment forms.
4. Once the registration fee has been collected, all required documents have been submitted, and a ProCare account is in place, the enrollment process will be complete.

Parents/Guardians will have access to their child's online enrollment profile on ProCare and must update any changes in personal information as well as submit updated immunization records or medical instructions. Only the parent/guardian enrolling the child may make any changes or additions to the admission and enrollment information. Failure to complete the enrollment procedures, provide the documentation listed above, or maintain updated information may prevent a child from receiving services and could result in the removal of the child from the program. To ensure a suitable fit for your family, Methodist Preschool reserves the right to implement a two week probationary period following enrollment.

CLASSES & PLACEMENT

Class placement is based on the student's age as documented on or before September 1st of the current school year. If we feel that your child will benefit from a different class-age group, we will assess his or her abilities, inform the parent of our decision, and obtain approval for the placement.

Student age: Program class:

6 weeks– independently mobile - The Garden
Independently mobile – 18 months - Sky Room

18 – 23 months - The Hive
2 years-Preschool 2's
3 years Pre-Kindergarten 3's
4-5 years Pre-Kindergarten

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Infants/Toddlers – Children will become accustomed to routines in a loving, play-based academic and social setting that will encourage the growth of their physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual selves.

Preschool 2's – Students enrolled in these classes will participate in a pre-academic schedule that includes play-based instruction and student-focused exploration. This class is designed to prepare young children for group-centered activities.

Pre-Kindergarten 3's – Students will build academic-readiness skills that are age-appropriate, play-based, and student-centered. Teachers will foster physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual growth by providing whole-class and individual students lessons.

Pre-Kindergarten – This class allows students to learn through play, whole body instruction, and hands-on experiences. Children will participate in classroom mentorship opportunities, incorporate problem-solving strategies, and apply learned concepts to the real world around them. This class is designed to prepare children for kindergarten and complies with TEA's Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

We have a no cell phone policy to help keep our children safe and promote better communication during drop off and pick up time for staff, parents and their children. Any adult driving is to be off the phone before entering the parking lot of the school. Any adult picking up at the door is to be cell phone free and ready to greet their child and hear about their day. If an adult is on the phone the staff member will go to the next family in line until you are off the phone and ready to receive your child. Our class schedules are packed with activities specifically planned for your child. It is important that your child attends regularly and arrives on time for their enjoyment and to reach their learning potential. All students are required to be present in class by 8:30am. A late drop off fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed for consistent tardiness. If your child will be absent, or late due to a scheduled appointment, you must notify the center through ProCare as soon as possible.

Please use the purple Methodist Preschool doors to drop off and pick up your child. Park in front of the awning and ring the doorbell for a staff member to greet you and sign in on the electronic device provided. We request that you stay in your vehicle until you have pulled in front of the awning and hold your child's hand until they are safely

in the preschool doors. To pick up your child, please follow the same procedure if children are not on the playground. Please be patient after ringing the doorbell and someone will be with you shortly. Your child must be released to you as the parent or guardian or to an authorized person listed on your child's ProCare account using their assigned pin number. Please do not give them yours. If your child is to be picked up by anyone other than a designated person on ProCare, the center is to be notified prior to dismissal via ProCare. Upon arrival for pick up, this person will be required to show identification by means of TDL# or photo I.D., and the information provided will be kept in your child's file for future reference.

Half Day students may begin dropping off for the Preschool day at 8:00am. Dismissal for Preschool is 2:15pm. Early Morning Care is available from 6:30am – 8:00am. Students will be signed in by parents and taken to the classrooms at the start of the preschool day by the teachers. If you drop off before 8:00am, your child will be taken to the morning care room and parents will be charged accordingly. Extended care is available from 2:30pm – 5:30pm. Students will be taken to the after-school classrooms at 2:30pm and will need to be picked up by 5:30pm. Half Day students not picked up by 2:30pm will be taken to the Extended Care classrooms and parents will be charged accordingly. Full Day students may begin dropping off at 6:30am and must be picked up by 5:30pm. A late pick-up fee of \$5 per minute will be assessed for any student picked up after 2:30 for half day care or 5:30 for extended care.

Our teachers need time to prepare for the day's activities or tend to other children currently in the classroom, so we request that you keep conversations with them brief during arrival and dismissal times. Also, please utilize ProCare for communication, even if you verbally told a staff member. Discussions about your child are very important to us, so we ask that you schedule a time to talk in depth with your child's teacher or the Director after school or during office hours.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Preschool

At Methodist Preschool, our teachers will work one-on-one with every child in our classrooms every day. The preschool will staff teachers who are highly qualified early childhood instructors who have a genuine commitment to, and extensive knowledge of, quality early childhood education. All staff members will participate in training throughout the year to stay updated on the latest child development research, early childhood education methods, child safety practices, and classroom management techniques. The preschool will maintain continuity of care by assigning one lead teacher to each classroom during the preschool day, with aides visiting throughout the day so that children are familiar with them if they should need to step in and providing a method of communication between teachers of morning care and after school programs.

Assessments/developmental Milestones

Classroom teachers will offer a variety of age-appropriate activities that will meet and challenge the individual abilities of the students. Student progress will be documented and parents/guardians will be given copies of assessments and reports associated with their child on a monthly (Infants) and quarterly basis. Each parent will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging that they received their child(ren)s assessments. Supplementary learning may also be implemented to assist in engaging the family and child in active learning outside the classroom and help apply the skills learned in preschool to the world around them. Methodist Preschool teachers will encourage parents/guardians to participate in preschool related activities, and they will provide materials and resources that are relevant to each child's physical and academic growth and development. All staff will cultivate positive relationships and facilitate clear communication between other staff, students, and parents.

FAMILY

Regular preschool attendance and punctuality are necessary for students and teachers to maintain routines. Therefore, families will be requested to bring their child to school on their scheduled days and times according to their enrollment agreement. Should their child not be able to attend at their scheduled day and time, communication is required through ProCare. Families will support consistent and frequent communication essential for developing parent-teacher relationships and relay important information regarding their child through ProCare. Methodist Preschool families will be highly encouraged to participate in their child's academic growth and development while they are enrolled in the program. Extra-curricular activities or supplemental materials provided to families enhance the learning and development of the child by creating a connection between the people most important to the child and the environment responsible for their care.

Parents are welcome to visit us anytime. Methodist Preschool encourages our families to participate in their child's learning through volunteering and attending special events held at the preschool. Please sign in upon arrival. Also note that parent and non-parent volunteers for events will be required to submit a background check and be approved before being able to volunteer. The background check form is available on our website. Parent/teacher conferences may be requested at any time and scheduled through the classroom teacher and approved by the Director. Student observations, quarterly progress checklists, and formal assessments will be discussed with parents during parent-teacher conferences. Parents/Guardians will be required to provide materials necessary for the care and education of their child while attending Methodist Preschool to include meals/snacks, supplies, clothing, and/or diapers and wipes. Additional items may be requested on an as-needed basis.

COMMUNICATION

Methodist Preschool uses digital and published media to communicate with our families. Daily reports on meals, naps, bathroom/diapering, incidences, and other classroom activities are documented and sent through ProCare. Parents must use ProCare messages to relay any important information regarding their child. Your child's daily belongings may be sent home with items such as newsletters, upcoming events, returned student artwork, and important information. Parents are required to check the child's belongings daily to keep up with your child's work and any preschool news. The preschool entrance doors and front hallway information boards will post all calendars, newsletters, announcements, invitations, and other relevant preschool information. Parents must check these areas on a regular basis. Methodist Preschool has established a Facebook page and Instagram account and invites parents to "like" or "follow" the media to receive reminders, photos, commentary, and other upcoming events or important updates. The preschool's website is continually updated with new information, schedules, announcements, photos, and policy additions and changes.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

Parents will be invoiced a supply fee of \$100 first semester and \$50 second semester through ProCare. The supply fee will be due prior to the first day of school and required for registration completion.

Additionally, your child will need to bring a few personal items. Among the items needed are as follows.

READY FOR SCHOOL (AGES 18m- 5y)

- FULL-SIZE backpack - NO mini backpacks or bags.
- THREE full changes of clothing, including socks, and underwear bagged separately in gallon Ziplock bags (to be kept at school for emergencies)
- CHILD SIZE nap mat (to be kept at school) NO SLEEPING BAGS
- Rain boots to be kept at school for rainy day play. (For Classes 2's, 3's, & Pre-K)
- Insulated lunch box/bag - include ice packs, utensils, etc. NO hard case coolers
- Snacks and meals - labeled and sent daily

INFANTS (6 weeks – 17m)

- FULL SIZE backpack - NO mini backpacks or bags. Diaper bags must not be bulky and have room for all items being sent to/from school.
- THREE full changes of clothing, including socks, in 3 separate gallon Ziploc bags (to be kept at school for emergencies)
- Sleep sack (for under 12m) or Nap mat at the age of 12m NO SLEEPING BAGS
- Insulated lunch box/bottle bag with ice packs (for breast milk, formula, and/or baby food). NO hard case coolers.
- Bottles, meals, and/or snacks.
- at least 2 unopened cans of formula (if child drinks formula)
- at least 2 full sleeves of diapers in your child's size (each diaper initialed with your child's name)

The above list is not comprehensive. Please refer to separate policies regarding diapering, clothing/personal items, and meals. When student supplies are low, or a personal item has been lost or damaged, parents will be notified and must replace them. A notification system is set in place for replacing student supplies:

1. A written request will be sent through ProCare. Families are requested to bring in the item(s) on the child's next school attendance day. No other actions are needed.
2. Upon second notification, a note will be written and included in your child's folder indicating the item(s) to be replaced along with a notification on Procare. Depending on supplies available you may be required to bring items immediately.
3. If, after the ProCare and written notifications the child still does not have the item(s) requested, Methodist Preschool will charge a per item usage fee of \$3 per diaper.

CLOTHING & PERSONAL ITEMS

Please provide your child with a FULL change of clothes (including socks, underwear, and shoes) in his or her bag in case of accidents. For infants, toddlers, and potty-trainers, we request at least 3 changes of clothes (only one extra pair of shoes). If a child does not have extra clothing available, we may utilize the preschool's supply. Parents are requested to wash and return the item when the child returns to school. A \$3 per item fee will be assessed and parents will be charged accordingly if the preschool's item is not returned.

Your child should be dressed in comfortable play clothes appropriate to the season. All jackets must have zippers. NO pajamas or costumes - exceptions will be made on special days only. For infants and toddlers, staff must be able to easily change diapers without completely undressing the child. Older children must be able to undress independently. Girls must have shorts or leggings under their dresses. Tennis shoes are favorable. Please do not send your child in leather-soled shoes, slides, crocks, or flip-flops. Children need to run and jump with ease and safety! Sandals that buckle securely are allowed, but are often uncomfortable for children at recess when playing in the mulch.

Due to safety issues, families with twins, etc. must NOT dress them alike so that they can be easily identified at a distance on the playground.

Preschool can be messy and accidents can happen. You must label everything brought to the Methodist Preschool with the child's first name and last initial. This includes bags, cups, lunch boxes, coats, bottles, pacifiers, extra clothing (each item), etc. If items are not labeled, teachers will be required to put the child's name on the item in permanent marker. Diapers need to be marked individually with your child's initials. This is very time consuming for the teacher and takes time away from interacting with the children, so we thank you for doing this at home.

Because our staff cannot assume responsibility for lost or broken toys, children are NOT allowed to bring personal toys from home. A teacher may plan a special day for items to be brought that correspond with the curriculum. A note will be sent home letting you know the day and what type of items can be brought.

No hooded shirts or hoodies are permitted as they pose a strangulation hazard.

Necklaces and bibs that do not have a Velcro/snap closure ARE NOT PERMITTED. These pose strangulation hazards when children are playing and/or sleeping. Items will be removed immediately and kept in the child's backpack.

BIRTHDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

We love celebrations, and birthdays are among our favorites! Parents may bring a special treat for their child on his/her birthday, such as Strawberries and cream, cut fruit, cupcakes with light colored frosting, brownies, or cookies. However, all baked items must be store bought, and ask your child's teacher about any allergies that are present in your child's classroom. Party invitations must be handled in a discrete and respectful manner. Please understand that even small children can be very perceptive and very sensitive. Message your child's teacher if you wish to pass out invitations. We also love any other reason for a party! There will be several celebrations throughout the year for special occasions and holidays. Dates for these parties will be sent home with your child, noted on ProCare, and posted on the school bulletin boards in the hallway. We encourage all of our parents to participate in our festivities.

STUDENT EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

CURRICULUM & ACTIVITIES

All programs will offer a variety of age-appropriate activities that will accommodate the individual needs of the students. These activities will be designed to help the children grow cognitively, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Student progress will be documented periodically and kept on file. Parents will be given copies of all documents associated with their child. Supplementary learning will be implemented to assist in engaging parent and child in active learning outside the classroom and help apply the skills learned at school to the world around them.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Methodist Preschool conducts and records daily observations and formal assessments 3 times per year to document your child's developmental milestones and learning achievements. Results of the formal assessments are shared with parents/sent home. All observations, assessments, and progress reports will be kept on file. Parent-teacher conferences are held regularly after assessments are completed or upon parent request. Parents will be asked to sign and acknowledge receipt of assessment information. Infants will be assessed on a monthly basis.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING PROGRAM

A developmental screening program is implemented to let parents know how committed the preschool is to your child's growth and development. The Ages and Stages Questionnaires, along with well-established developmental checklists and cultivated progress reports, are used to assess the child's growth and development in a variety of areas. The screening promotes positive outcomes for all students by empowering parents with knowledge of what their child is doing at the age of the screening and helping to identify potential developmental delays and referring children to Early Intervention Services if needed.

SCREEN TIME

Screen time includes the use of TV, video/movies, iPads, iPhones, tablets, and smart screen technology. Students under the age of two years old will not have any screen time. Students over the age of two may receive up to 60 minutes of screen time throughout the day as long as the screen time content is age appropriate and related to the curriculum or planned activities. All screen time will be monitored closely while in use with students. Screen time will not be permitted during mealtimes or nap times and will not be used every day.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Outside play and vigorous physical activity is an important part of your child's development and will be a part of your child's daily activities.

Help your child enjoy this part of their day by dressing them appropriately. Physical activities include use of the playground equipment, dance or yoga instruction, races or group games, etc.

All students, including infants, will be required to go outside every day. However, we will not go outside if the temperature is too uncomfortable, or the weather is otherwise inclement. Instead, children will play on special indoor equipment. Please make sure children have shoes that will allow them to run and play safely indoors. We recommend closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes. If your child is not able to participate in regular preschool activities, such as physical play or outdoor recess, please consider keeping your child at home as we do not have additional staff to keep them separate from the class/group.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

MEDICATIONS

Medications may be administered at Methodist Preschool. New medication must be administered at home for at least 24 hours before the student can return and before the medication can be administered by M.P.S. staff. Parents are required to fill out a Medication Administration form in order for us to administer medication to your child. This form is available on our website. Medications must be in their original container with the child's name and prescription label on the container. Over-the-counter-medications must have a prescription from a health care provider to be administered at preschool. Please check expiration dates as expired medication will not be accepted. Holistic and homeopathic medications not approved by the FDA will not be administered at Methodist Preschool without a health care provider's prescription. Medications or topical lotions will only be applied for their intended use, as stated on the packaging. Essential oils will not be administered at any time. Parents must administer any new medications at home prior to the child attending Preschool for at least 24 hours. This precaution is necessary to monitor any allergic reactions.

ALLERGY & ASTHMA

Children with severe allergies or children requiring asthma medication will need to submit an Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan or an Asthma Action Plan filled out by the child's health care provider to keep on file. These documents are required before any administration of medications given by the staff, and are available on our website. As we have several children with asthma this is a non-smoking environment. Therefore, smoking of any kind is not permitted on the premises including the parking lot and grounds. We also ask that you please refrain from smoking in the car before drop off as the smoke clings to clothing and backpacks causing breathing issues for our students with asthma. Thank you in advance for helping keep our students safe and healthy.

STUDENT ILLNESS

Students must not come to school if they are ill. The following conditions require exclusion from the preschool:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Pink eye
- Head lice
- Strep throat
- Ringworm that cannot be covered
- Any other communicable disease

If you have more than one child attending MPS and one becomes ill then the other child must stay home as well.

Please refer to the Methodist Preschool Illness Policy for a complete list of illnesses and the procedures required. Parents/Guardians will be required to sign the illness policy agreement which is available on our website.

Anesthesia Policy

For the health and safety of children in our care, any child who has undergone surgery requiring anesthesia must remain at home for 48 hours following the procedure. This policy is in place to ensure we are not liable for any unforeseen effects of anesthesia and that children can comfortably participate in our preschool environment upon returning to school.

REST TIME

It is required by the state of Texas that licensed child-care centers provide a time of rest if the center is in operation for more than five hours per day. Therefore, children enrolled at Methodist Preschool will take a supervised rest time daily. Even if your child does not require a nap at home, he or she will be taking a quiet rest every day.

Children are not required to sleep, but must rest quietly for a minimum of 30 minutes. Teachers will provide quiet, solitary activities for children who do not sleep. Children will not be permitted to sleep longer than three hours, but will not otherwise be disturbed. Teachers will not be allowed to deliberately keep a child awake. Respectfully, we ask parents to avoid picking up during nap time. Please pick up before 12:30 pm or after 2:15 pm to prevent disruption of student sleep and staff schedules.

LICE

Methodist Preschool maintains a "No Nit" policy for the management of head lice. The advantage of a No Nit policy prevents the continuing infestation that occurs and eliminates confusion of whether the nits are old/dead or new. Families are encouraged to carry out the most effective prevention measures at all times and the safest most thorough control measures possible. Resources are available in the Resource Center and on the preschool website.

DIAPERING & TOILET LEARNING POLICY

Infants and toddlers will have diapers changed/checked every hour while in care at Methodist Preschool. Parents/Guardians must provide a full package of diapers with Velcro tabs (no slip-on style) and wipes to keep at school. Each diaper must be labeled with the child's first & last initial on the fold. Diaper creams and ointments may also be sent and applied per parent request. Documentation of each diaper change/check and application of cream will be on ProCare to view at any time. If the child's diapering supplies are low and replacement is required, parents will receive written notification through ProCare and/or paper notation. If the child is changed using preschool supplies, a \$3 charge per diaper will be assessed and parents will be billed accordingly. When your child displays signs of readiness at school, we will begin the process of toilet learning. We will notify you when we feel your child is ready to begin the process at Methodist Preschool. It should be a positive experience for your child. Problems in toilet learning usually arise because adults do not pay attention to the child's lack of readiness.

- We will try toilet learning with your child for a minimum of 10 days. During the first and second week we will set a reminder timer every 30 to 45 minutes, and in a kind and encouraging way say to your child "It's time to use the potty." We prefer to use neutral methods such as timers and gentle statements to remind children to use the potty rather than ask them if they need to use the potty. Children are always allowed the option of saying "no." If your child refuses to use the potty, we will not force him or her.
- Here we use a child-size toilet. While we understand that this may not be an option for all families, we recommend that you use something similar at home (standard potty with a fitted child seat) so that your child has consistency and continuity during the learning process.
 - If your child exhibits signs of not being ready, such as not showing interest or having too many accidents, after 10 days we will return to diapers. We will then continue to evaluate your child's readiness until we all agree that he or she is ready to try again.
 - If your child is afraid of the toilet flushing, we will ensure your child is away from the toilet or out of the room before flushing. If your child is very afraid of the process, we will return to diapers and wait to try again until we all agree your child is ready.
 - Please let us know what words you would like us to use with your child for toileting. We want to be consistent so that your child understands and is not confused.
 - For boys: do you want him to sit or stand?
 - The weekend before we start here, have your child start wearing regular underwear at home during the day. Continue having your child wear underwear rather than diapers at home throughout this process.

- If you feel you need to, let your child sleep in a diaper at night. We recommend taking them to the potty at least once during the night.
- We prefer that you not use training pants/pull ups. Your child will be more aware when she or he has had an accident in regular thin cotton underwear. For the same reason, we don't put children who are toilet learning in diapers at naptime.
- Pull-ups delay and extend the toilet-learning process. For this reason, we do not use them here at our program. We recommend that you do not use them at home, either.
- Please know that we feel it is helpful to leave the bathroom door open to increase children's interest in the toilet. We leave the door open here at our facility.
- Please continue this process at home and give your child verbal encouragement.
- We recommend that you do not over-praise your child or offer treats or candy. Your child's inner sense of pride and accomplishment is the best reward.
- Dress your child in loose-fitting clothing that is easy for your child to manage without assistance. Pants or shorts with elastic waste bands that are easy to pull up and down are perfect. No overalls or t-shirts with snaps between the legs are permitted, as they can be frustrating. No dresses or skirts because children can not see to pull down their underwear.

Three- and four-year-olds must be able to use the toilet independently, and need to be able to tell the teacher when they need to use the restroom. We understand accidents can happen - especially if a child is so engrossed in their play and learning! Therefore, we have regularly scheduled restroom breaks throughout the day to help your child stay accident free.

Once enrolled in the Pre-K 3s or Pre-k class, if your child demonstrates that they are not yet potty-ready for school, a monthly fee of \$50.00 will be added to their tuition until readiness is shown, and they may be asked to wear disposable pants until they are potty-ready at school. We are dedicated to working with you to ensure your child's success in our school setting. Please be aware that if your child has a bowel movement accident, the pair of underwear will be cut off and disposed of for sanitary reasons.

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Methodist Preschool is committed to providing infants with a safe place to grow and learn. For this reason, a safe sleep policy is upheld for infants up to 1-year-old. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a safe sleep environment and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The staff, substitute staff, and volunteers will follow the recommendations for safe sleep.

PRACTICES

All infants are put to sleep on their back in their assigned crib as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used unless a completed Alternative Sleep Position Waiver is on file. A waiver notice will be posted on the infant's crib.

While infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, when an infant can easily turn over from back to front and front to back, they can remain in whatever position they turn themselves into after being placed on their backs to sleep. Preschool staff will make a note of the infant meeting this developmental milestone and inform parents and the other staff by labeling their crib.

When infants are in their cribs, they will be within sight and sound of staff at all times.

A staff member will do visual checks on the sleeping infants aged 12 months or younger every 15 minutes. We will be especially alert to monitoring a sleeping infant during the first weeks the infant is in childcare. We will check for:

- Normal skin color.
- Normal breathing by watching the rise and fall of the chest while sleeping.
- Signs of overheating flushed skin-color, increased in body temperature (touch the skin)
- Restlessness

Steps will be taken for the infant to avoid overheating, the temperature of the rooms where infants sleep will be monitored and will be kept at a level that is comfortable, which is between 68-75 F degrees. There will be no excess bedding or over-dressing of children. Infants will not be swaddled and swaddling apparel is not allowed. This includes all products/items with the word "swaddle" in the name or description. We do not allow garments that restrict movement. Sleep sacks will be allowed as long as they are not weighted in any way and do not restrict arm movement.

When an infant is awake, they will be removed from cribs immediately and have supervised "tummy time." This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally.

All parents/guardians of infants will receive a written copy of our Safe Sleep Policy That will need to be signed.

before enrollment. They will review the policy with staff and sign a statement saying they received and reviewed the policy. All questions will be discussed and reviewed with the director.

ENVIRONMENT

Our program will use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines for safety-approved cribs and firm mattresses. The crib will have a firm mattress covered by a tight fitted sheet and will be free from mobiles, loose bedding, toys, and other soft objects.

Infants will not be placed to sleep on any soft surfaces.

Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib. Siblings, including twins and triplets will be placed in a separate crib.

The crib will have NO toys, blankets, pillows, wedges or other infant positioners, pillow-like toys, bumper pads, quilts, sheepskins, loose bedding, towels, wash clothes, stuffed toys, or other objects. Nothing may be placed with a sleeping infant aged 12 months or younger.

Methodist Preschool will allow pacifiers. Please NO soft toys, ties or strings attached to the pacifier. Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep. If the pacifier falls out of the sleeping infant mouth during their nap the pacifier will be removed.

Pacifiers will be cleaned between each use, checked for tears, and will not be coated in any sweet or other solution. Pacifiers cannot be attached to the child or have a stuffed animal attached.

Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing

Infants that fall asleep in a location other than their crib will be promptly removed and placed in their crib on their back.

Infants will be promptly removed from car seats by their parents/guardian at drop off. Infants 12 months and younger are prohibited from sleeping in sitting devices, including but not limited to, car seats, strollers, swings, and infant carriers. Infants that fall asleep in sitting devices will be moved to an appropriate sleep place and placed on their back.

TRAINING

All infant and toddler staff, administrative staff, rotating staff, and volunteers will be trained on safe sleep policies and practices every year.

Documentation that staff, administrative staff, rotating staff and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individual's file.

Before they are allowed to care for infants, all staff, administrative staff, rotating staff and will be trained in First Aid and CPR so they know how to respond to an unresponsive infant/toddler.

NUTRITION POLICY

MEALS

Parents/guardians must send a healthy, shelf-stable snack (or two if the child is enrolled for a full day) and a healthy lunch with your child daily. Cookies, fruit snacks, candy, sugary drinks, etc. are not allowed per food policy. Children two years and up are prohibited from bringing pouched food items as they are not age appropriate. All staff will follow best practices for the healthy development of young children when serving meals.

Methodist Preschool is unable to refrigerate or heat the children's food items. Please include all ice packs if needed for your child's lunch and snacks. Please have all foods easily accessible for your child to encourage independence during meals. The preschool staff will assist your child in opening packaging and beverages if necessary, but will first encourage your child to try to open it independently (for ages three and up). Glass containers are not permitted for any child of self-feeding age.

Parents are responsible for documenting your child's allergies on their ProCare profile. If a food is found in their lunch or snack that contains a documented allergen, that food will not be provided to the child, and you may be called for a replacement item.

Extensive preparation (i.e. cutting, peeling, or mixing foods) cannot be performed by MPS staff, and we will be unable to serve anything deemed as a choking hazard. Please refer to the Food Policy on our website for a list of these items.

Water will be available at lunch and snack times and throughout the day to all students. Parents will be notified if their child does not have lunch or snack and will be required to bring one immediately. Please see school Food Policy pertaining to your child, located on the schools website.

PARENT RESOURCES

Methodist Preschool is not responsible for the daily nutritional value of the child's lunch or for meeting the child's daily food/nutritional needs.

Methodist Preschool will provide resources and information on child nutrition upon request and in the Parent Resource Center. Resources on child nutrition and healthy eating, such as sample menus and portion sizing, will be sent home regularly throughout the school year and are available in the resource center.

SAFETY PRACTICES

All staff are educated on food allergies and take precautions to ensure children are protected. Parents will be issued information on common food allergies, and preschool families will be informed of any severe food allergies in their child's classroom. On days that Methodist Preschool provides meals or snacks for special occasions, or a child brings a celebratory item, the food must be commercially prepared (no homemade items).

INFANTS & TODDLERS

Please refer to the Infant & Toddler Food Policy available on our website for our program's procedures for feeding infants and toddlers.

BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding mothers will be provided a comfortable place to breastfeed their child. Resources on breastfeeding are available in the Parent Resource Center or upon request.

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/resources/index.htm>

BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff and is not tolerated at Methodist Preschool. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names and personal information of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water and an ice pack applied if necessary. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The "Accident Report" form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child "NO. DO NOT BITE."
2. If appropriate, the child will be placed in time out for no longer than the child's age (one year old, one minute).
3. The parents are notified.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child inflicts a bite in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark multiple times in one day, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any further biting incidents. Additionally, the child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
2. Having a child who bites in classes although age appropriate, is very stressful for everyone in the classroom. Should the child attempt to bite or bite other children multiple times a day or the center does not have the appropriate number of staff that day to dedicate a person to shadow the child at all times, the child may be sent home for the remainder of the day.
3. If a child continues to inflict bites in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark despite everyone trying multiple strategies to prevent the biting the parents may be asked to make other day care arrangements as we have to consider the well-being of all affected.

GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE POLICY

The staff will guide your child in a loving and Christian manner. Our staff will relate to the children with courtesy, respect, and acceptance. Your child's teacher will show competency, good judgment, and self-control in guiding your child's development and meeting his/her individual needs.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
 - Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - Apply rules consistently
 - Set up the classroom environment to prevent behavior
 - Redirecting behavior using positive statements
 - Reason with and set limits for the children
 - Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner

- Listen to the children and respect the children's needs, desires, and feelings
- Use storybooks and discussions to work through common conflicts
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

Harsh or physical punishment shall not be permitted. A caregiver may NOT:

- Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure.)
- Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)
- Use any strategy that embarrasses, hurts, shames, or belittles a child
- Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child
- Use food as a form of reward or punishment
- Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment

Withhold participation in a special event

- Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs
- Compare children
- Place children in a locked and/or dark room
- Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision
- Allow discipline of a child by other children
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups

CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Occasionally, children present dangerous behaviors in the educational setting. In such circumstances children may need more intensive interventions.

- Each classroom will follow a Challenging Behavior Site Plan. The plan will include the following:
 - A designated safe and appropriate place in the classroom and outside the classroom where an adult can take a child away from peers for the purpose of assisting the child to calm and self-regulate. A staff member will always remain with the child. Children will not be placed in seclusion.
 - When dangerous behaviors occur, staff will communicate the incident to the director. The director will contact the child's parent to debrief the incident.
 - Continual communication with parents and guardians must be maintained concerning the child's behavior and ongoing documentation and progress reports are required. Staff will be sensitive to different cultural beliefs and values, and conversations will be framed around school readiness, our program objective, and parents will always be kept informed of their child's progress.
- Challenging behaviors will be documented using an Incident Report (available on ProCare) when appropriate.

- Staff will notify the director and share behavior concerns with families in a timely manner and will work with families to develop strategies and interventions. Conferences will be scheduled for recurring disciplinary issues.
- When challenging behaviors persist or are dangerous to self, others, or property, staff will work with family to develop a Behavior Plan and will meet to discuss potential referrals for additional services.
- The Behavior Plan will be individualized based on information collected by the family and teacher staff. It is developed by the family, preschool team, and any specialists from partnering agencies as needed, and it will include a description of the behavior, strategies for when the behavior occurs, prevention strategies, and a plan to meet regularly to discuss and modify the plan as needed.

If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her and strategies and interventions to deter the behaviors have not been successful, the Director has the right to terminate the care services for the child.

Risk of Injury and Developmentally Normal Behavior

Upon enrollment in a group care setting like Preschool, parents and guardians should understand that there is a reasonable risk associated with active play and interaction between children. While staff make every effort to ensure a safe environment, common childhood behaviors and activities may lead to incidents such as minor bumps, bruises, and falls. Additionally, developmentally appropriate behaviors, such as occasional pushing, hitting, or biting, can occur as part of children learning social interactions.

Our team is trained to manage these behaviors appropriately and to intervene swiftly, promoting safe and positive play. However, it is important to recognize that these are a normal part of child development and group care settings. Communication about any incidents will always be shared with parents to ensure transparency and collaboration.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Methodist Preschool supports families and children who may need additional accommodations to include home language, differing abilities and cultural backgrounds. Some reasonable accommodations we offer are as follows:

- We will accept children with special needs when it has the staff and program capabilities to provide an appropriate experience for the child. To request disability accommodation or special services, please contact the Director. Students who qualify for services or accommodations beyond our capabilities will be referred to outside agencies.
- If your child requires specific therapies during the day while in our care, we will provide a space to accommodate the therapy session and welcome the therapist to work with your child in their natural learning environment.
- We will complete supporting documentation from authorized medical professionals for any accommodations related to the child's physical and developmental needs.
- We provide materials and resources in the parent's/child's primary language.

- We support cultural inclusiveness and encourage families to share family photos showing the family diversity and tradition to be used in your child's classroom to help them gain a sense of belonging.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

If your child cries when you leave, please know that we all understand how you feel. It can be heart wrenching for a parent. A few suggestions that might help are as follows:

- Follow the same routine at drop-off every class day. Repetition helps children understand that you will be back!
- Please don't "sneak out" when your child isn't looking. It's best to hug them and say goodbye. They learn to trust that you will return.

Be assured that we will hold, hug, and love your child for as long as it takes for them to feel safe and secure. Usually, the child will stop crying at drop off time after a couple of weeks. Younger children may take a little longer. However, your child will pick up on your emotions, so stay happy and positive as you say goodbye. Don't hesitate to talk to your child's teacher or other parents who have gone through this if you need some extra reassurance.

FAMILY EDUCATION, SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES

Methodist Preschool conducts an orientation with the family prior to the beginning of the school year on Parent Night. If a child is enrolled after the first day of school, a private orientation is scheduled for the family. A signed and dated copy of the content of the orientation is kept in the child's file. The orientation includes the following:

- A tour of the facility
- Introduction to staff
- Parent visit with classroom teacher for an extended period of time to ensure that both the parent and child are comfortable
- Overview of the parent handbook
- Policy and procedure for arrival and departure
- Overview of curriculum used and assessments conducted
- The importance of child development and developmental milestones
- Overview of roles and responsibilities of families in the program
- The importance of consistent arrival time especially for the Pre-K class and the impact of how it disrupts other children's learning
- Explanation of Texas Rising Star Quality Certification
- Overview of family education, support, and resources available
- Our belief of limited technology use on campus to improve communication between staff, children and families
- Overview of the ProCare app

Our program provides our families and the community with information and topics of interest to parents. Brochures and handouts on topics related to early childhood education, child development, and community resources and agencies are available on our website and in the main preschool hallway. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please ask our staff for assistance. We will be glad to help you obtain any additional information. Information and resources will also be available during special family events and Meet the Teacher night.

SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICY

Student safety is Methodist Preschool's top priority. Several safety measures are currently in place that are designed to safeguard our students and staff and to affect positive student learning in the classroom. Though our nation has seen sad and frightening violence in our schools, churches, and public facilities over the past few years, Methodist Preschool is a safe place in the community for our students. The following precautions have been implemented for the safety and security of our campus, students, and staff:

CAMPUS SECURITY

Controlled Access: All exterior building doors remain locked at all times. Methodist Preschool doors are monitored by the Director and staff during the preschool day. Only designated persons for picking up students are allowed into the building. All other community visitors must enter through the main church doors and must remain in the front waiting area or proceed to their pre-approved appointment. All doors, inside and outside the building, leading to the preschool areas are restricted to staff personnel only during preschool operating hours. Church staff, volunteers, committee members, and the general congregation may only enter with a staff member present.

Preschool Visitor/Volunteer Registry: All visitors must sign in at the entry table before having access to the classrooms and may not enter without the accompaniment of a staff member. Frequent visitors are required to submit a background check to the Texas Department of Family Protective Services, which tracks a variety of information, to include Registered Sexual Offenders data. All regular preschool visitors and volunteers must fill out background check forms and be cleared before gaining access to the building. This form is available on our website.

Closed Circuit Television: We have cameras throughout our building to monitor activity inside and out. Through this system, we are able to maintain constant guard and record any suspicious activity. These cameras are monitored by the Canyon Lake United Methodist Church office staff and volunteers, as well as the Methodist Preschool Director.

Comal County Sheriff's Office Security Patrol & Neighborhood Watch Program. Canyon Lake United Methodist Church provides an office for the local patrol to conduct routine administrative tasks. The presence of the officers not only provides security for our students and staff but helps to deter any persons from attempting unsolicited access to the building.

EMERGENCY TRAINING

Methodist Preschool conducts a variety of emergency preparedness training for the staff. Such training includes "fire", "severe weather drill" for potentially dangerous weather; "reverse evacuation," for dangerous issues requiring an expeditious return to the building; "lockdown," in which an imminent danger towards students exists within the school property; and, "lockout," in which there is a dangerous situation away from the campus, but which could impact the campus (during lockout, routine within the school is maintained; however, doors are secured, with no one entering or leaving the

facility, and no outside activities, such as recess or field day, are permitted).

Additionally, all Methodist Preschool staff are trained in First Aid and certified in CPR to assist in any emergency.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of an emergency wherein the children are in immediate danger, teachers will be alerted to instigate the following procedure:

- Children will be organized in a quiet and calm manner in order to be moved to a designated location, based upon the situation.
- Teachers will have emergency bags with contact numbers to notify parents as soon as children are in a safe and secure setting.
- Transporting mode of moving the children will be determined by need/incident.
- Teacher will remain with the children at all times until picked up by parents. It should be noted that all parents are made aware of procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. They also have the director's phone number.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES (FOR DRILLS AND EMERGENCIES FOR LIMITED MOBILITY)

Staff will take young toddlers and limited mobility children and place them in the cribs in the toddler room. These cribs will be used to transport the children to the evacuation areas.

FIRE

Methodist Preschool will conduct a monthly fire drill. When the fire alarm sounds, teachers will gather the children and head to the nearest exit. Each teacher will take their tablet and an *emergency bag with them that will include a class list with children's names and parent contacts, a flashlight, first-aid kit, Kleenex, hand sanitizer, Ziploc bags, latex gloves, and a two-way radio*. They will assemble in designated areas to wait for further instruction from the Director. When the director has made contact with all teachers and all children are accounted for, the Director will shut off the alarm and instruct the teachers to resume their scheduled day. In the event of a real fire, the local fire department will be contacted. The director and the classroom teachers will contact the children's parents to come get them from school. Parents must sign out each child with the classroom teacher. The director will ensure that all children have been picked up and signed out before releasing teachers and staff.

SEVERE WEATHER

Methodist Preschool will conduct a severe weather drill every other month. Heavy rain can cause severe flooding in and around the Canyon Lake area. The Director will announce a severe weather alarm (by going from classroom to classroom). Teachers will collect their children and take their tablets and emergency bags to a designated area. When the director has made contact with all teachers and all children are accounted for, the director will instruct the teachers to resume their scheduled day. In

the event of actual flooding, children will be moved to the upper floor of the building (to the sanctuary). The director and classroom teachers will contact the children's parents to come get their children from school. Parents must sign out each child with the classroom teacher. The director will ensure that all children have been picked up and signed out before releasing teachers and staff.

CAMPUS EVACUATION

In case of an emergency wherein the children are in immediate danger, teachers will be instructed by the director to follow the emergency evacuation procedure. Children will be taken to our evacuation site. Teachers will take their emergency bags and tablets to notify parents as soon as the children and staff arrive at the site. Transporting the children will be determined by need/incident and could result in the use of staff vehicles. The director will ensure that all children are in attendance and loaded safely into the vehicles before departure. The children will be transported to the Cranes Mill Baptist Church parking lot.

Children will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than a parent or legal guardian who has signed them out and notified the director that they have possession of their child.

Dollar General
10397 FM 2673 Canyon Lake

LOCKDOWN

Students and staff will conduct a lockdown drill every other month. Should it be necessary for the preschool to go into lockdown (when an immediate threat or danger is present on campus), students and staff will be secured inside classrooms and all doors to the building will be locked and guarded. Police will be notified to assist on campus to remove the threat. Staff and students will not be allowed out of the classrooms until the danger has passed.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Suspected cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Department of Family and Protective Services to:

Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline
1-800-252-5400

Staff members are mandatory reporters and as such are required to directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. If a Methodist Preschool staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director

and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Methodist Preschool will cooperate with any DFPS investigation. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Termination of employment after a child abuse allegation is at the discretion of the Director and Preschool Board. For more information for parents reporting child abuse and neglect, please contact https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Contact_Us/report_abuse.asp

ADDITIONAL/EXTENDED POLICIES

Methodist Preschool requires the parent/guardian to review the additional, extended policies provided online. Signing the Parent Handbook Agreement indicates that you have read the policies and agree to their terms.

Methodist Preschool Biting Policy

Methodist Preschool Illness Policy

Methodist Preschool No Nit/Lice Policy

Methodist Preschool Attendance Policy

Methodist Preschool Food Policy

Methodist Preschool Infant & Toddler Food Policy

Methodist Preschool Potty Learning Policy

STUDENT ILLNESS POLICY

Children have a higher rate of illness when first enrolled in a new group setting; however, research shows that children who attend preschool acquire a strengthened immune system and experience a lower incidence of illness throughout the elementary school years compared with children who did not attend preschool.

At Canyon Lake United Methodist Preschool, we promote a healthy environment and discourage the spread of diseases in several ways:

- Staff and children wash hands when entering the classroom at the beginning of the day and throughout the day, especially before and after handling food or eating, after using the bathroom, and before and after assisting children with diapering/toileting
- Staff is trained in preventative health practices and implements universal precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Texas Health and Human Services
- Classrooms, toys and equipment are regularly cleaned and disinfected
- Children with communicable diseases or conditions are excluded from school as required by the Health Department

The following Student Illness Policy is developed from standards set by the State of Texas Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing division. We request the cooperation of parents in maintaining these health standards.

Canyon Lake United Methodist Preschool will not allow any ill child to attend preschool if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in preschool activities including outdoor play
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care
- The child has one of the following:
 - An oral temperature above 100°F degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
 - A tympanic (ear) temperature above 100°F degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness. Tympanic thermometers are not recommended for children under six months old
 - An axillary (armpit) temperature above 100°F degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
 - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as:
 - lethargy
 - abnormal breathing
 - uncontrolled/uncontained diarrhea
 - one or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours
 - rash with fever
 - mouth sores with drooling
 - behavior changes
 - or other signs that the child may be severely ill
 - Any signs of respiratory illness:
 - nasal secretions, coughing, and/or wheezing
- A health - care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious

** Please note: if a child shows any of the above listed ailments and is sent home – they may not return to school unless a medical evaluation by a healthcare professional indicates that they are no longer contagious and are physically able to resume normal preschool activities. A copy of the doctor authorized – signed and dated note stating the child is allowed to participate in school activities MUST be uploaded to your child's ProCare account prior to returning to school. **

Parents are asked to keep their child home when the child shows any of the following signs or symptoms:

Symptoms / Illnesses	Child May Attend	Child Must Stay Home
Diarrhea	Child has had one loose movement without other physical symptoms before coming to the center. Child may return after 24 hours of no symptoms without the aid of medication	Diarrhea is accompanied by additional signs of illness Is uncontrolled (or not contained in the diaper) 2 or more times in 24 hours
Colds and Runny Nose	Clear runny nose, with no other symptoms, associated with a diagnosed allergy, doctor's note required	Runny nose with fever, lack of appetite, lethargy or irritability Runny nose that is yellow or green unless there is documentation by a physician that the child is not contagious Runny nose plus vomiting Runny nose plus other signs of illness
Fever	Child may return after fever has broken without medication for 24 hours	Child's temperature is 100°F orally, 100°F tympanic, 100°F auxiliary
Ear Infections	Child may return when on medication and 24 hours after symptoms are gone	Fever, or lethargy, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, drainage, irritability, tugging on ears
Eye Infections	Child must be on medication for 24 hours and have no drainage before returning	With yellow or green drainage
Cough	Dry cough with no mucus secretion associated with allergy or asthma, doctor's note required	Any cough, dry or wet/wheezing not associated with a diagnosed medical condition
Vomiting	When symptoms have subsided for more than 24 hours without medication	With fever Once in the last 24 hours Appears green or bloody No urine output in 8 hours Recent history of head injury Looks or acts very ill
Skin Infections or Rash	Child may attend with dry lesions In some instances, child may not return until a physician determines that the symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease	Skin infections or rashes with drainage Accompanied by a fever or behavior change

Symptoms / Illnesses	Child May Attend	Child Must Stay Home
Lice, Scabies or other Parasites	Child may not return to the center until appropriate treatment and shampoo is complete and child is completely nit and lice free	
Other Communicable Infections	Child may return when infectious symptoms have subsided and child is feeling better. In some instances, a physician's release may be required	

If a child becomes ill while at preschool, the following procedure will be used:

1. Contact the parent to pick up the child
 - o If the child's parent/guardian does not respond within 15 minutes of the preschool notifying them, the emergency contact listed in your child's account will be called
2. Care for the child apart from other children
3. Appropriate attention and supervision will be given to the child until the parent picks the child up
4. Extra attention to hand washing and sanitation will be utilized if the child has nasal secretions, coughing, diarrhea, or vomiting
5. Child must be picked up within 30 minutes of parent contact. Parent must notify the director if pick up time will exceed 30 minutes.

A child who was ill may return to preschool when:

- The child is free of symptoms of illness for 24 hours without the use of medication; or
- You have obtained a health care professional's written, dated and signed document that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition

The health and safety of our students is our highest priority. We can greatly reduce the incidence and severity of illness at Methodist Preschool if we work cooperatively to prevent the rapid spread of communicable diseases. Methodist Preschool appreciates your cooperation in maintaining this policy.

**** Please Note: if your child has been sent home with symptoms of any potential illness, and returns exhibiting previous symptoms - the school has the right implement a mandatory 48 waiting period for all subsequent illnesses. ****

BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff and is not tolerated at Methodist Preschool. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names and personal information of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water and an ice pack applied if necessary. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The "Accident Report" form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child "NO. DO NOT BITE."
2. If appropriate, the child will be placed in time out for no longer than the child's age (one year old, one minute).
3. The parents are notified.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child inflicts a bite in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark multiple times in one day, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any further biting incidents. Additionally, the child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
2. Having a child who bites in classes although age appropriate, is very stressful for everyone in the classroom. Should the child attempt to bite or bite other children multiple times a day or the center does not have the appropriate number of staff that day to dedicate a person to shadow the child at all times, the child may be sent home for the remainder of the day.
3. If a child continues to inflict bites in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark despite everyone trying multiple strategies to prevent the biting the parents may be asked to make other day care arrangements as we have to consider the well-being of all affected.

NO NIT/LICE POLICY

Methodist Preschool Has a No Nit Policy

Having the No Nit policy in place makes head lice management clear for both parents and staff. As an administrative policy, it helps parents understand their part in controlling and preventing head lice at the program and at home. Families are encouraged and enabled to respond by carrying out the most effective prevention measures at all times and the safest most thorough control measures possible. The reward is an environment of mutual assurance that the child enters a group setting that supports a head lice control program.

Advantages of the No Nit Policy

- Prevents continuing infestations caused by the surviving and hatching of nits.
- Maximizes the opportunity to eliminate repeated chemical treatments aimed at killing head lice that hatch from remaining viable nits.
- Eliminates confusion – Were these eggs here before or do they represent a new infestation?
- Enhances uninterrupted group time for the majority of the children and prevents lost days at work that can be costly for parents.

Parent Responsibilities in the No Nit Policy

Please Check Your Child For:

- Active adult lice. They are about the size of a sesame seed and can be brown, grey, or tan. Check the scalp, behind the ears, and around the nape of the neck
- Excessive scratching of the head, especially at the back of the head just above the neck
- Small red bumps from scratching. Irritation from scratching may lead to scabs, blood spots, or red marks on the scalp, behind the ears, or on the back of the neck
- Nits on the hair. These are usually pearly-grey in color and are attached to the hair shaft near the scalp
- Nits are distinguished from dandruff because they stick to the hair shaft

Treatment For Nits/Lice:

- Treat your child and all household members with a lice shampoo recommended by your pharmacist. Follow all instructions carefully!
- Use a nit comb after treatment to remove lice and nits from the hair shafts. A diluted vinegar rinse helps to loosen the nits from the hair shaft. This process must be repeated daily until zero nits are present. There are between 90 and 150 THOUSAND hairs on the average head! That leaves a lot of opportunity to miss a nit.

- Wash all bed linens, towels, blankets, and washable clothing in hot water.
- Place all non-washable items, such as stuffed toys and throw pillows, in a sealed plastic bag for 21 days.
- Thoroughly vacuum all furniture, rugs, and floors
- Remove your child's car seat cover and wash in hot water. Vacuum all seat head rests.

When Can Your Child Return To School

- Children with head lice must be kept out of school until treated and NIT FREE. Before your child's return to the classroom, the school staff will assist in re-checking him/her before allowing return to the classroom.

Preschool Responsibilities in the No Nit Policy

- Coats and hats should be hung separately and spaced so they do not touch. Lice do not hop, jump or fly.
- Children should not share clothing or headgear.
- Dress-up is a valuable play activity, but it can also be risky for head lice outbreaks. We will discontinue the use of shared dress-up clothing during outbreaks and for 21 days afterward.
- Children's blankets and nap items will be sent home to be washed. School provided blankets will be laundered and sealed in an airtight bag for 21 days.
- Carpeted areas will be vacuumed as often as possible.
- Infested children must be prepared for pick-up with a minimum of fuss. When the parent arrives, he/she will be given a copy of the guidelines explaining that the child may return as soon as she or he is free of lice and nits
- Notify all parents that lice have been found within the school and arrange for everyone to be screened as soon as possible. We will remind parents to check all their children carefully each day for the next few weeks and to continue checking as part of their routine hygiene.
- Reassure parents that head lice do not necessarily reflect unsanitary households or neglected children.
- Director and staff will be prepared to answer parent questions without judgment.
- Examine children returning after an infestation to confirm successful elimination of lice and nits before the child re-enters the school.
- Review procedures with staff .
- Remind children of the importance of not sharing headgear or personal articles.
- Remind parents of the importance of screening often, detecting head lice and nits as early as possible, removing them safely and effectively and continuing to screen as part of their routine hygiene.
- Encourage the children and help them feel comfortable about speaking up if they feel itchy.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Admittance into the Methodist Preschool program is completed by submission of all enrollment forms, agreements, required documentation, registration fee and supply fee. Failure to complete the enrollment process, provide required documents, or maintain updated information could result in a delay in attendance/starting date or may prevent a child from enrolling should the class fill before your enrollment is complete.

Tuition is a prorated amount of the annual cost of the program divided into ten uniform payments. Invoices are issued through ProCare on the first of the month, and payment is due by the 1st of the month. You will still be required to pay the full amount even if your child misses school days or there are scheduled school holidays. Failure to pay by the due date will result in a late fee of \$40, and delinquent payments past the 5th of the month will result in a suspension of enrollment until the payment is submitted. If the past due balance is not brought current by the 1st of the next month, your child will be dis-enrolled from the program.

Methodist Preschool publishes the annual calendar on the website and it is included in frequent emails. Parents/guardians are responsible for viewing the calendar and noting the days in which the preschool is closed. Should the preschool unexpectedly close for inclement weather or other emergency, any required make-up days or tuition reimbursement will be at the discretion of the Preschool Board.

Regular preschool attendance and punctuality are necessary for students and teachers to maintain routines. Activities are specifically planned for students during certain parts of the day for optimal learning. Therefore, parents/guardians will be requested to bring their child to school on their scheduled days and times according to their enrollment agreement. All students are required to be present in class by 8:30am. Should the child not be able to attend at their scheduled day and time, the parent/guardian must contact the program through ProCare. A late drop off fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed for consistent tardiness. If your child will be absent, or late due to a scheduled appointment, you must notify the center through ProCare as soon as possible. Should no notice be given for late arrivals, and staff have been sent home due to lower student/teacher ratios for the day, your child may not be admitted for the day with no reimbursement for the missed day. Parents/guardians must follow the arrival and departure procedures given at their parent orientation.

Parents/guardians must follow the arrival and departure procedures given at their parent orientation.

I understand Methodist Preschool reserves the right to amend this policy at any time and I will receive written notice of any changes. I have read the above policy and agree to the conditions set forth within.

METHODIST PRESCHOOL FOOD POLICY

(FOR 2s, 3s, AND PRE-K CLASSROOMS)

SCHEDULE

Our morning snack will be served between 9:30 and 10:30 am, depending on the class. Lunch will be served between 12 and 1 pm, also depending on the class. If participating in extended care, our afternoon snack will be served at 3 pm.

DRINKS

Water will be available for every mealtime, after any physical activity or outdoor time, and upon request. We encourage drinking from open cups which we provide. If you choose to send a drink, please do not send anything sugary, and soda is not permitted. If you send a reusable water bottle, make sure it is clearly labeled with your child's first name and last initial. Drinkable yogurt can be served, but cannot be served alone as a snack, only with lunch.

ALLERGIES, INTOLERANCES, AND SENSITIVITIES

Please keep teachers and the school up to date about any existing and/or developed allergies through the ProCare app. Should your child develop a food allergy, an Allergy and Anaphylaxis Form must be on file which is available on our website.

Under no circumstances will staff be able to serve any food listed in your child's ProCare profile if it is listed as an allergy or intolerance. It is the parents' responsibility to update your child's ProCare profile and notify the director in writing if there is any change in your child's allergies or intolerance.

FOOD STORAGE

Please send lunches in a designated lunch or bento box, clearly labeled with your child's first name and last initial. Practice opening boxes and containers with your child at home. If they cannot open these items, please consider a different receptacle. GLASS CONTAINERS ARE NOT PERMITTED.

We do not refrigerate or heat up food. Please utilize a thermos for hot food and provide ice packs for cold food.

We do not cut food. Please make sure your child's food is appropriately cut or peeled.

Foods on the Choking Hazards list are not allowed to be served in the infant and toddler rooms. Refer to the list provided in this policy. For the safety of all students, it is up to the discretion of the teacher as to what foods they feel comfortable serving in their classrooms.

**Please note - the attached Choking Hazard list is not a comprehensive list of all choking hazards for children. The list provided is simply a list of food hazards we have experienced through our students on a daily basis. Should a teacher feel a food is a choking hazard that is not listed below, you will be contacted through ProCare and advised. If you have already been notified of a problem food and continue to send it, you will be asked to bring a substitute food to replace the problem food immediately if the meal is not sufficient. **

Choking Hazard Foods List – Not Allowed at School

Fruits/Vegetables

- Dried fruit (ex: raisins, cherries, mango, etc.)
- Fruit leather and Fruit Roll-ups

Proteins

- Nuts and seeds

Snacks

- Soft pretzels bites
- Peanut butter filled pretzels
- Popcorn, or similar snack foods
- Beef jerky

Sweetened Foods

- Fruit snacks of any kind
- Chewing gum
- Marshmallows

NOT APPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL

Candy

- Of any kind

Pouches

- Above 24 months, eating from pouches is no longer age appropriate
- Pouches will be sent home
- Go-Gurt tubes are not permitted

Desserts

- Only for special occasions
- No cookies, brownies, etc.

Make-Your-Own Foods

- Pizzas that are not pre-assembled
- Lunchables can be *part* of a lunch but must be supplemented with other items

CHOKING HAZARD FOODS LIST – ALLOWED AT SCHOOL WITH PROPER PREPARATION

Foods on the below list are allowed to be sent with your student with proper preparation. Preparation guidelines include the following:

- Cook or steam hard food, until soft enough to pierce with a fork
- Remove seeds, pits and tough skins/peels from fruit and vegetables
- Finely chop food into thin slices, strips, or small pieces (no larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch)
 - Especially important with raw fruits and vegetables as those items may be harder to chew (ex: strawberries, blueberries, apples, carrots, broccoli, etc.)
- Remove all bones from fish, chicken and meats prior serving
- Grind or shred tough meats prior to serving
- Round and tube-shaped foods are to be cut quarterly, lengthwise
 - Cut must be no larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (ex: cheese, sausage, hotdogs, grapes, cherry tomatoes, etc.)

Fruits/Vegetables

- Broccoli
- Corn kernels
- Carrots
- Snap peas/snow peas
- Cherry tomatoes
- Olives
- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries
- Melon
- Canned fruit/vegetables
- Freeze-dried fruit/vegetables

Proteins

- Nut and seed butters (spread thinly)
- Cooked meat
- Hot dogs
- Sausages (includes kolaches/pigs in a blanket)
- Cheese

Snacks

- Cereal bars
- Toddler chips
- Baby teethers
- Crackers

****This list is subject to change throughout the year. You will be notified when changes are made.****

METHODIST PRESCHOOL INFANT & TODDLER

FOOD POLICY

Schedules

Each infant under the age of 12 months must have a parent supplied and signed schedule, including feeding times and ounces per feeding, naps, typical daily activities, Drop-off/pick up time, etc. Each supplied schedule will be posted in the infant's classroom for care givers to follow.

Parents/guardians must update the schedule monthly, or as needed. Toddlers 12 months and older will follow the daily classroom schedule.

****Please note - for infants 12 months and younger, as per licensing requirements, a new monthly schedule will be required on or before the 1st day of the following month. We cannot admit a child for the day if the next month's schedule is not provided and signed in advance. ****

Infant Bottles

Infants must have enough bottles (labeled with first name and last initial) to accommodate each anticipated feeding per the parent/guardian supplied schedule. In addition, please send 1-2 extra bottles for unplanned feedings to include the following:

- Growth Spurt – needs additional feedings
- Unplanned delay in pick-up
- Does not consume full ounces from previous feeding (within 1 hour of being prepared)
- Accidental spill
- Normal wear and tear (example: cracked bottle, nipple with hole, etc.)

If your child consumes formula, please send a full sized, unopened container to be kept at school. The teacher will let you know when a new container is needed. Opened formula containers will be sent home 1 month after opening as per safety standards.

Breastmilk must be in an insulated carrier with cool packs that will last the duration of the school day. Teachers will warm the bottles, if necessary, in a bottle warmer. Breastfeeding mothers will be provided a comfortable place to feed their baby in the

infant room, or mothers can sign the child out to use the church cry room for more privacy. Resources on breastfeeding are available in the Parent Resource Center and upon request.

Allergies, intolerances and sensitivity

Please keep teachers and the school up to date about any existing and/or developed allergies through the ProCare app. Should your child develop a food allergy, an Allergy and Anaphylaxis Form must be on file.

Under no circumstances will staff be able to serve any food listed in your child's ProCare profile if it is listed as an allergy or intolerance. It is the parents' responsibility to update your child's ProCare profile and notify the director in writing if there is any change in your child's allergies or intolerance.

Introducing Solid Foods for Infants

Solid foods may be provided by parents as long as they are initially introduced at home for at least 3 feedings prior to sending them to school. We suggest letting your child try one single-ingredient food at a time for at least 3 to 5 days at first. This helps you see if your child has any problems with that food, such as food allergies.

Please use ice packs if needed for storage of opened containers of solid foods. For all pureed/jars of food (such as apple sauce or jar of baby food) – please send additional plastic container/utensils for teacher to serve to student, in order to not contaminate original container.

Table-Food for Infants and Toddlers

When your child turns one year old, water will be served with every meal. Children will be seated in a chair or highchair for every meal. Hands will be washed before and after each meal. All leftover food will be sent home or parents/guardians will be notified if the food is thrown away. Our students' safety is our highest priority.

Food on the Choking Hazards list is not allowed to be served in the infant and toddler rooms. Refer to the list provided in this policy.

For the safety of all students, it is up to the discretion of the teacher as to what foods they feel comfortable serving in their classrooms.

Please DO NOT send glass containers of any type to be served to your children.

**Please note - the attached Choking Hazard list is not a comprehensive list of all choking hazards for children. The list provided is simply a list of food hazards we have experienced through our students on a daily basis. Should a teacher feel a food is a choking hazard that is not listed below, you will be contacted through ProCare and advised. If you have already been notified of a problem food and continue to send it, you will be asked to bring a substitute food to replace the problem food immediately if the meal is not sufficient. **

Choking Hazard Foods List – Not Allowed at School

Fruits/Vegetables

- Dried fruits (ex: raisins, cherries, mango, etc.)
- Dried Vegetables (sweet potato, beets, etc.)
- Fruit leather

Proteins

- Nuts and seeds
- Crunchy peanut butter

Snacks

- Corn chips
- Soft pretzels bites
- Peanut butter filled pretzels
- Popcorn, or similar snack foods
- Cookies with candy, nuts or raisins (ex: m&m cookies)
- Granola bars
- Meat sticks
- Beef jerky

Grain Products

- Breads with seeds, whole nuts, nut pieces, or whole grain kernels
- Whole grain kernels of cooked barley, wheat, or other grains
- Plain wheat germ

Sweetened Foods

- Candy of any sort
- Fruit snacks of any kind
- Chewing gum
- Marshmallows

This list is subject to change throughout the year. You will be notified when changes are made.

Choking Hazard Foods List – Allowed at School with Proper Preparation

Foods on the below list are allowed to be sent with your student with proper preparation. Preparation guidelines include the following:

- Cook or steam hard food, until soft enough to pierce with a fork
- Remove seeds, pits and tough skins/peels from fruit and vegetables
- Finely chop food into thin slices, strips, or small pieces (no larger than ½ inch)
- Grade, mash or puree foods
 - Especially important with raw fruits and vegetables as those items may be harder to chew (ex: strawberries, blueberries, apples, carrots, broccoli, etc.)
- Remove all bones from fish, chicken and meats prior serving
- Grind or shred tough meats prior to serving
- Round and tube-shaped foods are to be cut quarterly, lengthwise
 - Cut must be no larger than ½ inch (ex: cheese, sausage, hotdogs, grapes, cherry tomatoes, etc.)

Fruits/Vegetables

- Broccoli
- Corn kernels
- Carrots
- Snap peas/snow peas
- Cherry tomatoes
- Olives
- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries
- Melon
- Canned fruits/vegetables
- Freeze-dried fruits/vegetables

Proteins

- Nut and seed butters (spread thinly)
- Cooked meat
- Hot dogs
- Sausages (includes kolaches/pigs in a blanket)
- Cheese

Snacks

- Cereal bars
- Toddler chips
- Baby teethers
- Crackers

Preschool Potty Learning Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the procedure for initiating and supporting a child's transition from diapers/pull-ups to using the toilet independently within our Pre-school program. Our approach is collaborative, gentle, and child-centered, focusing on readiness signs and positive reinforcement. The goal is to partner with parents to ensure a smooth and successful experience for the child.

Enrollment in the Two-Year-Old Classroom

Children begin their potty learning journey in the two-year-old classroom, following a collaborative readiness assessment between the teacher and the parents.

Potty Readiness Checklist

When the teacher of the two-year old classroom sees signs of school readiness, a "Potty Readiness Checklist" will be sent home to the parents. This checklist helps both the school and the family determine if the child is showing signs of physical and emotional readiness for potty learning.

The checklist assesses readiness indicators, including:

- The ability to stay dry for at least two hours or after naps.
- The ability to communicate the need to go to the bathroom (verbally or non-verbally).
- Showing interest in using the toilet or wearing underwear.
- The ability to pull pants up and down with minimal assistance.
- The ability to follow simple directions.

Implementation of Potty Learning

Determining Readiness

The child will be considered ready to begin the active potty learning phase at school when the parents and teacher have reviewed the checklist together and agree on a start date.

Required Supplies

Parents must ensure the child comes to school with the following:

1. A minimum of five complete changes of clothing (including socks and shoes, if possible).
2. Adequate supply of easy-to-manage underwear.
3. Diapers or pull-ups are only to be worn during naptime if the child is not consistently dry during naps.

In-School Procedure

1. **Scheduled Potty Breaks:** Teachers will incorporate frequent, scheduled potty breaks throughout the day (e.g., upon waking, before and after meals, before and after outdoor time).
2. **Positive Reinforcement:** Staff will use positive language, praise, and encouragement for all attempts and successes. A sticker chart or small, non-food rewards may be used.
3. **Accident Management:** Accidents will be handled calmly and without shame. The child will be assisted in changing their clothes, and the soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag to be sent home. Should your child have a Bowel Movement accident, it is our policy to cut-off the underwear and throw it away due to sanitary reasons.
4. **Communication:** Staff will document attempts, successes, and accidents to communicate progress to the parents daily.

Parent Partnership

Open communication between home and school is vital for success. Parents are asked to:

- Maintain a consistent routine at home that mirrors the school's potty routine.
- Communicate any changes or challenges observed at home to the teacher.
- Ensure the child is dressed in clothing that is easy for them to manage independently (elastic waistbands, no complicated fasteners).

Timeline and Transition to Underwear

A child's transition to wearing full-time underwear at school requires consistent success with minimal accidents. The classroom teacher will initiate this change and notify parents when the child is ready; children must remain in diapers until this readiness is established by the teacher. If a child experiences significant regression or distress during the potty learning process, the teacher and parents will collaborate to adjust the approach or temporarily pause the process.

Please contact the two-year-old classroom teacher, or the Preschool Director, with any questions or concerns regarding this policy or the potty learning process. We can schedule a time to discuss this further at the school, or via a scheduled meeting. See our potty learning policy here [Potty Training Agreement](#)

PARENT HANDBOOK & PROGRAM POLICIES

AGREEMENT

Student Name

Date of Birth

The Methodist Preschool Policies and Procedures Parent Handbook is available on the Methodist Preschool website at www.canyonlakemps.org. Additional policies are included on the website. You may also request a printed copy of the handbook or any additional policy. Please visit the website, or contact the director for printed copies, to read the policies and procedures for the Methodist Preschool program.

Methodist Preschool program's policies are listed below:

- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Parent Handbook**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Biting Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Illness Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool No Nit/Lice Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Attendance Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Food Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Infant & Toddler Food Policy**
- ❖ **Methodist Preschool Potty Learning Policy**

This document serves to notify the preschool I have read the above Methodist Preschool Parent Handbook and additional policies, and I agree to the conditions, policies, and procedures set forth within them. I understand that the Methodist Preschool Director and Preschool Board members have the right to amend the handbook and policies when necessary and I will receive written notification of the revision.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date