

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

for

Preschool and PDO

at

Brainerd UMC

August 2011

PURPOSE

Our purpose is to provide your child and family with a warm, nurturing, safe and loving Christian environment where concepts are enhanced, independence is encouraged, and individuality is respected.

We do not discriminate based on sex, race, religious belief, or handicap/disabling condition with our enrollment of children or hiring of staff.

This program is about doing what is best for the child! We do not have parties for different holidays or share food of any kind. We want our children to enjoy learning. We are proud to have children of different backgrounds and ethnicities here as well as different needs. We are a fully inclusive program.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

We accept children 6-weeks through 5-years of age. School age children are welcome to attend if room allows during summer or elementary school breaks.

Infants follow their own schedule as needed and do not leave their classroom. We will only feed your child what is brought with them each day. We do not accept bottles for children over 12 months of age, and children are not permitted to carry a sippy cup or bottle with them at school. We do not make bottles here at school. Bottles may only be warmed with water. You may send the bottle with powder already in the bottle and indicate how much water should be added. We only wear socks in this room. **Please label everything.**

Our 1's room will have music and library privileges. The 1's will also be permitted to use the toddler playground. The children in this room have scheduled free play, lunch, nap time and some arts and crafts. HighReach curriculum is purchased and used from September through May. **Please label everything.** We know children that use pacifiers should stop at age 12 months. Therefore, children may have a pacifier for naptime only. We only wear socks in this room.

Our 2's room will use the art studio, gym, library and music rooms. The children in this room have a scheduled lunch time. We purchase HighReach curriculum for this age group also. We are happy to assist with potty training when both child and parent are ready. There are no pacifiers allowed in this room.

Our 3's room also uses the HighReach Curriculum, and lesson plans are posted monthly on the Parent Boards. The room is set up with learning centers, which are rotated monthly to match our lesson plans. Each month we focus on one color, one shape, two numbers and three letters. We use the scaffolding approach, so the children build on what they learn each month. We do not allow sippy cups in this room. Assessments are done on every child in this room in October and April, followed by a parent/teacher conference.

All of our pre-k children, the 2-day, 3-day and 5-day programs, are located in the same room. We again use the HighReach curriculum and focus on one color, one shape, two numbers and three letters each month, along with opposites, themes and characteristics.

Assessments will be done on every child in this room in October and April with the option for a parent/teacher conference.

Our summer months are spent studying other countries. We believe that just because there is no public school, that does not mean the learning stops. The older children collect research and share reports about the countries, while our younger ones learn about specific countries food, culture, songs, language and more.

School-age siblings are welcome to come during school closings like Fall break, Spring break and Summer.

We will have Chapel in the sanctuary weekly. This is a time for us to sing songs for God, pray together, and share a simple story.

As our program is year-round, we always have a waiting list. Please give us plenty of notice for siblings that would like to join our program.

Our program practices looping, which means the teachers move up with the children whenever possible. Every August when our pre-k students begin kindergarten, all the children and their teacher move up to the next room. We will also move children up in January and May if space is available and at least 2 children in the room are ready to move together.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Prior to admission, ALL forms must be completed and signed. These include: enrollment form, photo release, emergency contact form, and parent handbook.

Our two-day-a-week program is from **9:30 a.m.** until **2:00 p.m.** Tuesday/Thursday or Monday/Wednesday. You must **sign your child into** their room every day. Please do not park under the overhang. That is for emergencies only. We will have car dismissal

for all children three-years-old and older that do not have younger siblings. Your child will only be released to persons whose names appear on their enrollment form. Identification will be required. If your child is picked up after 2:05 pm there will be a \$10 late fee. There is an additional fee of \$1 per minute after 2:05 pm.

We will have one door unlocked from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. each morning under the porte-cochere. Then again that door will be unlocked from 1:45 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. You may also come in near the church office, using the buzzer; but know that your children are locked in safely while in our care.

Children also have the option of early drop-off at 9:00 a.m. or late pick-up at 2:30 p.m. This is a monthly choice and is \$15 more for one choice or an addition \$30 per month for the child to be here from 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Payment of \$125 per month per child is required. Our tuition is \$125 per month even if the child misses school due to illness, vacation or school closings. There is also a yearly \$40 registration fee. Monthly payments must be made by the 10th of each month. If your child is in attendance without payment there will be a \$10 late fee. **All payments may be mailed in or paid to the Director, Assistant Director or Staff Trainer only.** All payments must be made in the morning.

You also have the option of bringing your child either M/W/F from 9:00 to 12 noon for \$150 per month or M-F from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon for \$250 per month.

There will be a \$20 summer registration fee for all children attending over the summer months.

Our daily rate for the 2-day-a-week program is \$25 per day from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

There will be a \$30 fee for any returned checks.

All bags, containers, cups, and food must be labeled with your child's first and last name. Please do not bring any toys from home. The 1's are permitted to bring in a sleep aide for nap. Each child will need to bring their own lunch, drink, diapers, and change of clothes if needed. The pre-schoolers brush their teeth after lunch so please bring in a labeled zip-loc with your child's labeled toothbrush and toothpaste.

Children may not bring any phones, DS game systems, cameras, etc. with them from home.

We will never watch T.V. here at school. Our program is very busy and we have lots of wonderful things to learn. However, every other month we host a Parent's NIGHT Out for our parents to have some time alone. This is referred to as the kids' "party at school" and is the only time we eat pizza and dessert and watch a G-rated Disney movie.

Parents, we ask that for the safety of the children you not have a cell phone during drop-off or pick-up time. Also parents, please be aware of your language in our facility.

In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the closings of the Hamilton County School System. This means that during the winter, if there is no school because of ice, snow, etc. we will also be closed. If there is only a school delay, we will remain on the same schedule. This will be posted on television stations and our "Brainerd Preschool" facebook page and also will be emailed.

We have at least one fire drill each month and two tornado drills each year. This building is equipped with several kitchens, lots of space and even a bomb shelter. **YOUR CHILDREN ARE SAFE HERE.** We cannot dismiss children during a tornado warning, even if they are with their parents.

Please see that your child is appropriately dressed. We will be outside daily unless it's raining. We are also busy with paint, water and other messy activities. Please no sandals, crocs, or flip flops. Tennis shoes are a must!

OPEN DOOR POLICY

You are always welcome to stop by for lunch, a conference or a visit.

PARENT PLACE

Just past the sign-in table there is an area just for parents. Anything found on this table is for you to take home and keep. You are welcome to free Parent magazines, coupons, DVD's or Imagination Library Applications.

LENDING LIBRARY

The church provides us with a wonderful library, and the children are welcome to "check out" a book or movie. If they are old enough to sign the card in the back of the book and turn it in that would be terrific; but if not, that's fine too. The library uses the honor system and is a wonderful way to get the kids used to taking care of something that does not belong to them.

FUNDRAISING

Our program hosts one fundraiser each year. This event takes place in September and is a dinner/auction. We have many other ways to help our program throughout the year. Our program participates in Bi-Lo Boosters. You simply pick up a form in both September and January and hand it to your cashier next time you are at Bi-Lo. Our program will be linked to your Bi-Lo card and we will receive a percentage of sales twice a year. However, they clear it each summer and New Year so you must take the form both in September and January. Our picture sales always bring us a percentage of money as well.

STAFF

All the staff here at Brainerd UMC have cleared a national background check and all our teachers are First Aid and CPR certified. They all have degrees, years of experience and terrific Christian values. We are members of NAEYC, SECA, TAEYC and CAAEYC (Chattanooga Area Association for the Education of Young Children) of which our Director is the current President. The teachers all go by last names as we are in a school setting. For instance it's Mrs. Nasca or Mr. Crowe.

FIELD TRIPS

We will never take your children away from our facility but we do have in-house visitors monthly. We host the Creative Discovery Museum, Zoo, fire fighters, Safe and Sound, and many more special guests each year.

PARENT-PRESCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We have several ways of communicating with our parents. We are on facebook at “Brainerd Preschool.” You can get information from our website at www.brainerdumc.org. Our Director, Emily Nasca’s email is EmilyNasca@yahoo.com, and our hallway has a 2-month whiteboard with all the dates and times of upcoming events. The curriculum each month contains anywhere from one to six pages of monthly sheets to go home, depending on your child’s age. We also provide an assessment on all 3, 4 and 5-year-olds in October and April, followed by a parent/teacher conference. In addition, you are always able to schedule a conference with either the Director or your child’s teacher.

BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAY EVENTS

While we would like to celebrate every birthday and event, we are also trying to implement our curriculum in only nine hours per week. Holidays may be acknowledged, however we will not have a party for everyone. We will plan a Christmas book exchange for example. As with many programs and schools, the number of children with food allergies is growing. We are happy to participate in the celebration of your child’s birthday at school with stickers, stamps, or a classroom gift (book, game, etc.); however, food and candy will not be permitted. We can always sing, play games and wear funny hats.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Should a parent or family member have a complaint or concern, it needs to be put in writing and given to the Director of the Parents Day Out/Preschool Program. The Director has two weeks to schedule a meeting between the director and the concerned party.

SICK POLICY AND MEDICATION

We will never administer medication of any kind. If your child is running a fever of 100 degrees or higher, is vomiting, or has diarrhea or a rash, he/she will not be allowed to attend our program. If this occurs while they are with us, we will call you to pick your child up. Your child must be without fever for at least 24 hours before attending our program.

OUR POLICY ON DISCIPLINE

The disciplinary practices of this facility are based on creating a Christian atmosphere of respect and love. We regard discipline as a learning situation. Rather than time out, our philosophy is positive re-direction and positive reinforcement.

MOMS AND MOPS

We have a weekly women's Bible study group that meets during the school year from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon and provides free childcare. This group is referred to as MOMS and welcomes all to join us at any time. The church has a Mothers of Preschoolers group that meets here the 1st and 3rd Thursday evening of each month from 6-8 p.m., which provides free childcare as well. Both are wonderful ways for moms to get support, resources and encouragement.

HOLIDAYS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Our program will be closed for the following.

The week of New Years	The Fourth of July
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
The week of Christmas	

Dates for closings will be posted one month in advance.

PARENT HANDBOOK

I have read and understand the policies of this facility and agree to abide by them.

Parent's Name _____

Date _____

Parent's Signature _____

Child's Name _____

PHOTO RELEASE

I give permission to Brainerd UMC's Parent's Day Out Program to take pictures of my child. These pictures may be posted or used for the newspaper, etc. We will not post any pictures of children on the website, facebook or internet.

Child's Name _____

Child's Name _____

Date _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____