

Handbook
Preschool of the Warm Heart
2016 Mt Carmel Church Rd
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
919.636.6471
www.preschoolofthewarmheart.com

August 1, 2024

Dear Parents:

Thank you for selecting Preschool of the Warm Heart, a ministry of Mt Carmel Baptist Church. It is a privilege to serve you and your family by offering a loving and welcoming preschool environment. Our mission is to love each child and help each child grow in mind, body, and love of God.

In this handbook, you will find helpful information explaining the philosophy, programs, and policies of our school. Please read it carefully and refer to it frequently during the school year. The handbook is also available on our website: www.preschoolofthewarmheart.com. I encourage your involvement in our classrooms, on our advisory board, and during community-building and fundraising events. Please contact me with any questions or suggestions.

It is an honor to welcome you to the Preschool of the Warm Heart family. Our goal is to build a community based on caring, a love of learning, and support. The PWH staff and I look forward to getting to know you and working with you.

Sincerely,

Katie Donoway

Director
919-636-6471

Preschool of the Warm Heart

PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement: *With a nurturing program in a Christian environment, our mission is to love each child and help each child grow in mind, body, and love of God.*

Preschool of the Warm Heart seeks to love each child and recognize each child's individual differences and needs. We recognize that young children have a spiritual nature that is developing. The preschool programs and curricula are designed not only to meet the educational needs of young children by aiding their emotional, social, intellectual, and physical development but also to help them grow as a child of God. Enrollment is open to all children, regardless of religious belief, gender, race, or national origin. We honor and learn from our differences.

THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Objectives

It is the objective of the Preschool program to encourage each child to:

- Enjoy the stories of God and celebrate the Christian traditions.
- Build a good self-image.
- Develop his or her own unique talents and capabilities.
- Grow in interpersonal relationships.
- Grow in communication skills.
- Develop interest and joy in learning.
- Have a feeling of security.
- Expand fine and gross motor skills.
- Make a successful transition from the home into a preschool setting.

Classroom Practices

The following classroom practices shall be observed by the Preschool and its teachers:

- 1). Encourage independent functioning, such as washing hands, selecting own toys, and picking up toys.
- 2). Facilitate the development of personal responsibility and self-control in children by listening and acknowledging the child's feelings and by guiding children in conflict resolution.
- 3). Recognize and encourage pro-social behaviors among children such as cooperation, taking turns, and using words.
- 4). Make available appropriate material and equipment as well as provide experiential learning activities.
- 5). Foster a positive identity, sense of emotional well-being, and human connectedness to each other and God.

Curriculum

Each classroom shall have a general curriculum developed by the preschool teachers and director in accordance with the goals and objectives of the preschool. Each classroom shall also have a more specific periodic curriculum, which shall be in writing, and include the following:

- Specific goals regarding program content.
- Planned activities.
- A daily schedule.
- Availability and use of materials at properly organized areas or “centers.”
- Transitions between activities are built into the curriculum and communicated to the children.
- Routine tasks of living are used as learning experiences and opportunities.

Learning Centers. Learning centers will be utilized in furtherance of each classroom’s curriculum. Classrooms may include the following learning centers:

- Blocks
- Art
- Home Living (encourages dramatic play)
- Sand & Water Play
- Puzzles and Games (for fine motor and math concepts)
- Books
- Science
- Writing

Christian Curriculum. As a ministry of the church, the preschool will promote the development and practice of the Christian faith and the belief in God and Jesus Christ in the following manner:

- Age-appropriate Chapel Time led by the Director or Children’s Minister.
- Group prayers before meals and snacks.
- Singing of religious songs, such as Jesus Loves Me.
- Reading Bible stories from age-appropriate material.
- Celebration and discussion of major Christian events such as Christmas and Easter.

Staff Composition

Preschool of the Warm Heart director, lead teachers, and co-teachers either possess a degree in early childhood education or a related child development field or hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) or its equivalent or have experience working with young children.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMITMENT

The preschool encourages and depends upon the participation of parents. Preschool of the Warm Heart does not require that parents take teaching turns, but we do expect parents to serve when a need arises, such as substitute teaching or being actively involved in our fundraisers. In addition, each family will be expected to participate in the following activities:

Fundraising

Because tuition does not completely cover the cost for each child to attend the preschool, periodic efforts are made to raise funds to supplement preschool tuition.

Preschool Workdays

A workday may be scheduled in the fall and/or spring where parents are asked to help maintain the playground and classrooms.

Observing in the Classroom

Parents are welcome to observe in the classroom. However, it is expected that parents will work with the teachers to avoid unnecessary disruption of the class routine. Further, please be especially courteous when considering whether it is appropriate to bring a sibling into your child's classroom.

Please share your talents!

Do you speak a foreign language, play a musical instrument, or know how to do a fun craft? The preschool welcomes any parent who may have a special talent or interest that they would like to share with a class. Please contact the appropriate teacher to plan for any such special activities.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admissions

Applications Procedure: Applications may be submitted for the upcoming school year in January of the current preschool year. Applications must be submitted with a non-refundable \$40 application fee. The child must be the class age by August 31.

In addition to being the class age by August 31, children enrolling in our 1-year-old class must be able to walk and no longer need a morning nap.

Classes will be enrolled on a priority basis. All currently enrolled students will be guaranteed a space in the next year's class. Siblings of currently and formerly enrolled students receive priority. Members of Mt Carmel Baptist Church will be enrolled next. Then the public registration process will continue on a first come first served basis. Once a child is enrolled, an advance tuition fee and supply fee must be paid to maintain the child's position on the class roster.

Waiting lists will be formed and maintained throughout the school year. During the school year, parents of children on the waiting list will be notified that their child can be enrolled from the waiting list when a vacancy occurs. Waiting lists are not carried over to the next school year, and a new application must be made for each year that a parent would like to have their child considered for admission. However, a second registration fee shall not be required upon re-application if the child was not previously offered enrollment in the preschool. All application fees go towards the Susan L. Allred Scholarship Fund.

Class Schedule

- ***One-year-old class:***
 - 3-day option will meet, Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from 8:45 am- 12:40 pm
 - 2-day option will meet Tuesdays & Thursdays from 8:45 am - 12:40 pm
- ***Two-year-old class:***
 - 4-day option meets, Monday - Thursday from 8:45 am- 12:40 pm
 - 5-day option meets, Monday - Friday from 8:45 am- 12:40 pm
- ***Three-year-old class:***
 - 4-day option meets Monday -Thursday from 8:45 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.
 - 5-day option meets Monday - Friday from 8:45 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.
- ***Four-year-old class:*** Meets 5 days a week, Monday - Friday from 8:45 am - 12:40 pm

Tuition and Fees

All required tuition and fees must be paid in full before any child may attend class. **All checks shall be made payable to Mt. Carmel Baptist Church or MCBC** and may be given to the Director in the carpool line, or be mailed to the following address:

Preschool of the Warm Heart
2016 Mt Carmel Church Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Parents will also have the option to pay their tuition electronically through our childcare software, ProCare. Automatic monthly drafts may be set up at no additional charge. If you choose to pay via credit or debit card, you will be charged a 2.70% + \$0.30 per transaction technology fee.

Parents will receive a monthly invoice notifying them of what is due.

Application Fee: A one-time, non-refundable application fee of \$40 is due with each application made to the preschool. An application is not considered received unless accompanied by the application fee. All application fees go towards the Susan L. Allred Scholarship Fund.

Supply Fee: A supply fee is due by March 15th before fall enrollment, or if accepted after

February 15th, due within 14 days of acceptance in the program. The supply fee is not refundable. The 2024-2025 supply fees are as follows:

Supply fee for students attending 2 days per week: \$200

Supply fee for students attending 3 days per week: \$225

Supply fee for students attending 4 days per week: \$250

Supply fee for students attending 5 days per week: \$275

Tuition: Tuition payments are due on the **first** day of preschool in September and the first day of the month October through April as follows:

- Monthly tuition payment for classes meeting 2 days per week: \$260
- Monthly tuition payment for classes meeting 3 days per week: \$360
- Monthly tuition payment for classes meeting 4 days per week: \$460
- Monthly tuition payment for classes meeting 5 days per week: \$560

If a child will be attending the preschool for the 2025–2026 year, tuition shall be pre-paid on May 1st of 2025 to hold their space in the class. Parents will be notified in writing of the amount payable on May 1st.

Tuition Payment Policy

1. Tuition Payments are due on the first day of preschool in September and the first day of each month, from October through April.
2. A \$10 late tuition fee shall apply for any tuition not received by the tenth day of the month in which it was due. Applicable late fees must be included with your tuition payment.
3. Tuition rates are reviewed annually and are raised as needed.

Returned Check Fees: A returned check fee shall be assessed for every check that is returned. The assessment shall be in the amount of the cost incurred by the preschool because of the returned check. Any returned check fee assessed shall be immediately payable to the preschool.

Scholarships: Preschool of the Warm Heart offers financial aid to qualified families through the Susan L. Allred Scholarship Fund. Scholarship applications may be found on the website. Applications are due by March 1, 2025, for the upcoming school year.

Withdrawal: Parents withdrawing their child from preschool shall give written notice of their intent to the Director at least two weeks before the child's withdrawal. *Parents remain financially responsible for tuition payments through the end of the school year unless the child's classroom position is filled.* When the withdrawing child's position is filled immediately upon withdrawal, tuition already paid for the month of withdrawal may be prorated at the discretion of the preschool. Prepaid tuition will not be refunded if a child is withdrawn after March 31st. *Application fees and supply fees are not refunded nor prorated upon withdrawal.*

Health and Emergency Forms

The Emergency Contact Form and the Children's Physical Form for the current school year must be completed and on file in the Director's office before the child can attend class. The Children's Physical Form must include a record of immunizations. Parents must update these forms annually. Please notify the Director of any changes to these forms during the school year.

Health & Wellness

Immunizations: ***No child shall attend preschool without current immunizations.***

Allergies: Please notify the Director and your child's teacher regarding any allergies your child may have and include a notation of it on your child's health form. If your child has allergies listed on his or her health form, you must complete a Preschool of the Warm Heart Allergy Action Plan to keep on file at the preschool. The action plan form is available on the preschool website. The plan along with the child's picture will be posted in the classroom.

Sickness: Children must be free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, unexplained rashes, runny noses, excessive coughing, sore throat, headache, chills, earache, and red eyes for a minimum of 24 hours before coming to school. Please DO NOT bring your child to school with any of these symptoms. Children may not attend school with head lice or nits. ***The Preschool reserves the right to refuse attendance to any child displaying the above symptoms and appreciates your cooperation in this matter. Please see the Preschool of the Warm Heart Health Protocols addendum for additional information regarding illnesses.***

Notification of Director: Please notify the Director before the start of class when a child will not be attending his or her scheduled class due to sickness or otherwise. In addition, please notify the Director of any of the following:

- All communicable diseases, including head lice, pink eye, flu, RSV, & Covid.
- Any serious illness or health problem concerning your child.
- Any event that may cause your child physical or emotional distress.

Sick Child at School: If a child becomes sick at school during the day, one or both parents will be notified. If the parents cannot be contacted, the additional emergency contacts listed on the child's Emergency Contact form will be called. ***Arrangements to pick up a sick child must be made immediately.*** Thus, please keep the numbers listed on your Emergency Contact form current and advise anyone designated on your Emergency Contact form that they will be expected to pick up your child immediately upon notification that your child is sick

Allergy Policy

If a Preschool of the Warm Heart classroom has a student with severe allergies, the following Allergy Policy will apply.

- Information with the child's name, picture, and respective allergy will be posted in the

classroom.

- Each allergic child will have a clear, physician-approved action plan to be followed in the case of a reaction (form provided by the preschool, child's photo required). The preschool staff will follow this plan.
- When medication and/or an EpiPen is part of the child's allergy action plan, these will be kept in the child's classroom in an upper or locked cabinet. All preschool staff are instructed yearly in the use of an EpiPen.

Preschool of the Warm Heart and the parents of children with severe allergies must comply with this policy prior to the first day the allergic child attends preschool.

Administering Medicine at School: Teachers will not administer any medication to children during preschool unless it is specified on the Allergy Action Plan. If a child requires medication during school hours, the child's parent will be required to return to school and assist the child with any medication. Should a child have an allergic reaction that has not been previously noted, the school will administer a dose of Benadryl until parents are contacted or further help arrives. For instance, parents may not yet know if their child has an allergy to bee stings.

Clothes at Preschool

Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothes. Students must always wear shoes at preschool. We recommend tennis shoes. Please do not send your child to school in flip-flops. Parents will be asked to maintain a spare change of clothes for their child in case of a spilling or wetting accident. *Please label your child's spare change of clothes (please include underwear and socks) with his or her name and bring them to school in a Ziplock bag for storage at school.*

Lunch | Snack

A mid-morning snack and lunch will be eaten at school every day. The exception to this is on days when school dismisses early at noon. Parents must send a packed NUT-FREE snack and lunch with their child each day. Each student will receive a snack pouch with their name on it at the start of the year. Please send your child's snack in the pouch each day to avoid confusion between what is a snack and what is lunch. Please pack a well-balanced lunch in containers that are easy to open.

Toys from Home & "Loveys"

Children are permitted to bring a "lovey" or special toy from home if it will help his or her sense of security. Make sure the item is labeled with your child's name. However, parents will be encouraged to leave the item in the car or at home as soon as possible, as your child's anxiety may be increased if the child fears a friend may take his or her special toy or "lovey." Please do not bring other toys from home. ***Toy weapons are not permitted at the preschool under any circumstances.***

Diapers and Toilet Teaching

Preschoolers are typically at various stages of potty habits. Potty training should be well underway at home before children use the potty at school. Teachers will work with parents in this process. Please provide extra underwear and socks for your child while toilet training.

For children still in diapers, please dress your child with ease of changing his or her diaper in mind. Diapers are not provided by the preschool, so please bring ten disposable diapers, and keep an extra stored with his or her change of clothes at school. The teachers will notify you when you need to bring more.

Children in diapers will be changed at school as needed. Only preschool staff will be permitted to change diapers or to take children to the toilet. Preschool staff will wash their hands before and after each diaper change and will disinfect the changing table between changes.

The preschool recommends that all three-year-olds be toilet-taught before the start of school or be well into the process of using the toilet. **All students enrolled in a 3-year-old class must be toilet trained by January 1st.** Please speak with your child's teacher if your child has needs in this area.

Discipline

Our children are loved because they are children of God, and the preschool subscribes to the belief that children are most successful in a safe, organized, and developmentally appropriate environment. Because preschool days are well-planned, fun, and busy, discipline problems are kept to a minimum.

It is the preschool's philosophy that all children need to be free to explore their physical and social environments. The Preschool staff practices Conscious Discipline. DVDs are available for parents to view. Praise, limit setting, and positive reinforcement are effective methods of managing children's social behavior during their exploration process. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding guidance from caring adults, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. In keeping with these beliefs about how children learn and develop values, the preschool staff:

WILL:

- Praise and encourage the children.
- Set limits for the children and explain limits to them on their "level."
- Model appropriate behavior and teach common courtesy and empathy for others.
- Modify the classroom environment to prevent problems before they occur.
- Listen to the children's concerns.
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behaviors and redirect their efforts.
- Help the children understand the consequences of their behavior.
- Treat children as people, respecting their needs, desires, and feelings.
- Ignore minor misbehavior.
- Use gentle supportive and appropriate touching and hugging to encourage, comfort or guide the child or to help them calm themselves.
- Demonstrate consistency.

WILL NOT:

- Use corporal punishment.

- Verbally disrespect the children.
- Shame or punish children when bathroom accidents occur.
- Leave children unsupervised.

If the preschool staff identifies any concerns regarding a child's behavior, they will speak with the child's parent(s) directly and arrange for a conference. If a parent identifies problem behaviors at home, please speak with the child's teachers and they will help if possible.

Biting

Biting at school is not an acceptable behavior. If biting occurs, the parents of the children involved will be notified, and a plan will be developed and implemented to correct the situation.

Child Abuse/Neglect/Child Advocacy

Mt Carmel Baptist Church and Preschool of the Warm Heart are concerned with the well-being of all children and their families. The preschool has a moral and legal responsibility to report any case of suspected child abuse to the Orange County Department of Social Services. In suspected abuse and neglect cases, no evidence will be excluded on the grounds of confidentiality, including preschool records.

Inclement Weather

Preschool of the Warm Heart follows CHCCS for decisions on inclement weather. The Director or teacher will notify families via e-mail and ProCare on the school day as to whether the school will be opened or closed should inclement weather be forecasted. *The preschool will not make up or refund tuition for days missed due to inclement weather.*

Field Trip Policy

Teachers in the three- and four-year-old classes may plan a field trip for their classes. Parents will be informed of the field trip plans. Parents will drop off and pick up their child at the field trip destination at the times designated by the teachers. The students will spend the entire morning at the location. We have previously planned field trips to the NC Botanical Gardens and Spring Haven Farm.

Birthdays

Parents who desire to celebrate their child's birthday in the classroom may send or bring in their child's favorite book to be shared with the class or plan with the teacher a non-food-related celebration. *Party invitations may not be distributed at school unless every child in the class is included.*

DAILY PROCEDURES

Arrival & Dismissal

Children should be brought to school at 8:45 am. Cars will be met in the carpool line and teachers will get your child out of the car seat and escort your child into the classroom. To keep the carpool line as efficient as possible, please pull up to the "Slow Joe" flagged figure before stopping. If a child is having a difficult time separating in the car line, parents will be asked to

pull around to park in the lot in front of the school. The director or your child's teacher will meet you there once the carpool line is complete. *Children MAY NOT be dropped off at the outside door and be expected to get to class on their own.*

Children must be picked up at their scheduled dismissal time of 12:40 pm. Children will only be released to their parent(s)/guardian unless the parent(s)/guardian has provided the preschool with written notice to the contrary. If a person other than a parent or guardian is authorized to pick up a child, that person will be required to present their photo identification to the releasing teacher before the child is released. A teacher will safely buckle your child into their car seat. Parents are encouraged to park in the front lot after their child has been placed into their car seat to ensure proper buckling. **The preschool staff (including the director, teachers, and substitutes) ARE NOT responsible for inaccurate car seat installation or proper buckling of your child.**

Late Pick-up Fees: Parents will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute for children picked up more than 10 minutes past their scheduled dismissal time. Late fees will be due upon assessment and shall be immediately payable to the teacher directly.

Early Pick-up: Parents picking up their children early from preschool should advise the child's teacher upon arrival that day. Parents may use the doorbell out front to notify teachers they have arrived. The director or your child's teacher will escort them to the front doors to meet you.

School Absence

Parents should advise their child's teacher or the Director if their child will be absent from school, whether due to illness or other family plans. Tuition will not be refunded for missed school. Parents may leave a voicemail message, text the director at 919-636-6471, or email the director at mccppwh@gmail.com.

Communicating with Parents

The preschool will communicate with parents primarily through email and notes sent home with your child through cubby mail. Anyone who wishes to use school or class-wide email or the "cubby mail" system to communicate with parents should first discuss their plans with the Director. Please copy the director on any school-wide or class-wide email. Please do not use "cubby mail" for invitations unless all children in the class are included.

Meetings of the Preschool Advisory Team

The preschool advisory team will meet virtually via Zoom on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Parents are encouraged to sit on the advisory team. All meetings are open to any parent. Parents may request to be on the agenda for a meeting by contacting the chair or the director.

Preschool of the Warm Heart Handbook

I have read and agree to the policies and procedures found in the Preschool of the Warm Heart Handbook for the 2024-2025 school year including:

Please initial that you have read, understand, and will abide by the following policies and procedures:

_____ Health and Wellness Policy

_____ Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

_____ Tuition, Supply, and Application Fees & Enrollment Procedures

Child(ren)'s Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____