

Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool



Parent Handbook

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Section 1: Introduction

WELCOME

Welcome to Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool. We believe that this will be an experience full of excitement and discovery for your child. The preschool is operated as a ministry of Yorba Linda United Methodist Church and is under the supervision of the Preschool Support Team, which is responsible for setting rates and policies as well as determining operating procedures and programs. The Support Team includes the Senior Pastor of the church, parent representatives, and church representatives.

The preschool is open to the community without discrimination of race or creed. The school is licensed by the California Department of Social Services and the staff meets the professional standards set by that department.



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

All children need a safe, loving environment in which to learn important skills before they enter elementary school. The years 18 months-6 years in a child's life are critical to the development of their creative thinking and social skills, as well as an important time for them to learn about the love of Jesus Christ. We offer a multi-cultural environment where children feel pride in their family and ethnic background.

The philosophy and goals of Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool is to provide opportunities for children to work, play and grow cognitively, socially, emotionally and spiritually in a developmentally appropriate program.

We believe that children learn best in a positive and nurturing environment. The children learn through play and planned activities in a safe and secure environment. Our staff provides children with learning experiences through art, music, literature, science, dramatic play, fine and gross motor development and outdoor activities. Our program emphasizes the development of strong self-esteem, feelings of independence and competence and sensitivity to others.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Help each child enhance his or her sense of self-worth and self-esteem.
- Provide an opportunity for each child to develop and use basic skills needed for daily living and later responsibilities.
- Enable each child to create and discover.
- Encourage each child's participation in learning through the use of various materials and activities.
- Help each child practice good personal health, safety and nutritional habits.
- Give each child personalized attention.
- Help each child develop his or her ability to relate to others.
- Give each child opportunities to develop responsibility, independence, self-direction and self-control.
- Extend each child's awareness of his or her environment.
- Help parents recognize and reinforce behaviors, which lead to the acquisition of social, physical and cognitive skills.
- Provide an outreach to the community.
- Use a child's interest and concerns in planning activities for further growth.
- Provide an opportunity for each child to know God in a loving atmosphere of acceptance.



PROGRAM INFORMATION

Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool is licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services to serve children 18 months old through 6 years of age. Our hours of operation are 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Our office hours are 8:00 am to 3:30 pm. We offer 2, 3, 4, and 5 day programs. Lunch Bunch, Stay and Play, and Full Day options are offered daily. We offer sibling and church member discounts.

HOLIDAYS and VACATIONS

The Preschool will be open for the school year from September to June with the exception of specific holidays (New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President Lincoln’s Day, President’s Day, Good Friday, Easter Break, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving Week and 2 Weeks for Christmas Break). Every student will receive a school year calendar with all holidays noted in advance. Summer Schedule options will be available in the Spring.



Section 2: Connecting

STAFF

All staff are dedicated Christians who have been hired on the basis of education, experience and maturity.

Our staff consists of qualified Teachers and Teacher Assistants under supervision of a full time Director. Our teachers have earned or are working toward either a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree with early childhood units, Associate of Arts degrees or Certificates in Human Development, Child Development or Early Care and Education. We are proud of the high degree of professionalism our staff exhibits.



All personnel meet the State of California requirements for working in a preschool setting. Background checks are required by the State of California and have been completed on all staff members. The staff is CPR and First Aid certified.

Our teachers are the main strength of the school. Their Christian instruction and guidance is a ministry to the children and parents. They teach, evaluate, relate, pray and care. Their communication with parents is the key to effective education. We pray for them, support their decisions and give them our respect, love and encouragement.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Throughout the year, the staff will share information about current classroom activities through emails, newsletters, phone calls and notes.

It is in the best interests of your child that parents and teachers communicate freely with one another. Parent/teacher communication is an ongoing process at daily arrival or departure time. Please use this time to mention any changes in your child's routine that may affect him/her. However, if you need to speak with your child's teacher at length, please schedule a time to meet outside of class time.

We have an open door policy for parents that have their children enrolled. Always check in at the office before visiting your child's class. Prospective parents visiting the school for the first time need to call and schedule an appointment with the Director before taking a tour of the school.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Conferences are available throughout the year. Conferences are meant to exchange information, discuss concerns or generally help us develop a better understanding of your child. You may request a conference at any time however we have designated a week in the fall for this purpose.

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We encourage you and your family to take part in weekly worship, Sunday School, Youth Group, and Adult Bible Studies. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to consider the Yorba Linda UMC family. We believe that God has a wonderful plan for our lives, and that all may know Jesus Christ. Our desire is to grow in Christ, minister to the world, and joyfully reflect the spirit and love of God.

We worship Sunday at 10:00 am. A "Family Room" is available in the sanctuary for families with infants and toddlers. Sunday School is available for children ages 3 through middle school and Nursery Care is available for children under age 3. Additional programs and activities will be noted on the church website, and Facebook page. Further information about the church is available through the church office at 714-777-2885 or ylumc.org.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We are always searching for the hidden talents and skills in our parent body. Please know that we love when parents wish to come and share experiences with our young students and the child loves it when mom, dad or grandpa, etc., comes into the classroom as a special visitor. However, all in class help must give proof of current immunizations records with measles, pertussis, and influenza shots.

We maintain a list of possible areas where parent volunteers can help. Some projects are more time demanding than others. Sign-up for something that interests you. We have volunteer opportunities in many areas including: room parent, fundraising, book fair, photography, event set-up and clean-up, and picture day assistance.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

The Department of Social Services requires us to print a school directory for parents whose children are 2-5 years old. Directories are distributed each October and updated throughout the year. Please be aware this directory is not for business use. It is not the desire of our families to be approached for promotional or sales presentations through the use of this directory.

PARENT CONCERNS

During a school year there may be times when a parent wishes to register a concern about a particular topic or happening. It is important to us that your concern is heard. A parent that has a concern with a teacher or classroom situation is asked to speak to that individual first. If, after that meeting, an understanding is not reached, a meeting with the Director may be needed. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of that meeting you are encouraged to contact the Preschool Support Team or the Pastor.

EMAIL

Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool's primary written notifications are through email. Please keep email addresses up to date so that you may receive pertinent program information in a timely manner. If you choose not to receive email you will receive a printed hard copy of any communication sent via email.

Each month the preschool newsletter will be sent to each parent via email. The information will inform you of activities or events that will take place that month or in a future month.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Each classroom has a parent bulletin board. The monthly snack menu, classroom newsletter/calendar, and classroom daily schedule will be posted. This board also contains information about events that occurred that day or are coming up. This information changes frequently and is meant to be a tool for you to discuss your child's day with them.

CHAPEL

Each class attends Chapel weekly on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Parents are encouraged to join us for this special time.

Section 3: GETTING STARTED**ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION**

Enrollment in Yorba Linda United Methodist Church Preschool program is available to anyone on a space available basis. Priority will be given to church members as well as siblings of children currently enrolled.

- Enrollment is open to children who are at least 18 months old, and those who will not turn 6 until after September 1st and are not enrolled in a local kindergarten.
- Registration for the future school year will be held in February. Currently enrolled families and members of the Yorba Linda United Methodist Church have the priority. Registration is then open to the public.
- Children with physical, mental or emotional issues, which would qualify a child for state sponsored pre-primary special education, will only be admitted on an exception basis with advanced written approval by the director.

A space will be reserved in an age appropriate class when the non-refundable registration fee is received. A signed Enrollment Agreement is required for each child prior to starting YLUMC Preschool.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Tuition fees are based on a yearly rate and can be paid in 1,2, or 10 equal monthly payments as specified on the Financial Commitment form. Tuition is based on an academic year and will not be increased during the term of the contract. Tuition credit will not be given for any of the days the preschool is closed or any day that a child is absent due to vacation or illness. We do not offer "make-up" days for absences.

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month for the upcoming month. If tuition is not received by the 10th of the month a late charge of \$10.00 per day (maximum of \$50 fees per late payment) is charged until the balance is paid in full, unless other arrangements have been made with the office. There is a \$20.00 charge for returned checks. After the second check is returned, all future tuition payments must be paid by money order or cashier's check. Tuition not received by the end of the month can be cause for dismissal of the enrolled child.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Thirty days written notice is required when requesting a schedule change. One change can be made to a child's schedule at no charge, thereafter; there will be a \$25 fee per change. Upon approval of the schedule change a new enrollment agreement will be signed.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Thirty day written notice is required when withdrawing from the program. Upon providing notice, the annual tuition will be recalculated based on the number of days the child attended and must be paid in full. Any notice given after March 31st is responsible for the full school year's tuition.

We reserve the right to refuse service to any child or to terminate attendance if YLUMC Preschool is unable to meet the needs of the child.

EASING THE TRANSITION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

The first few weeks here may be a transition period for both you and your child. Although you may feel some anxiety during this time, it should quickly pass as your child begins to learn and grow in our program. During this time, we're eager to work with you to provide a smooth adjustment for your entire family.

Transition tips:

- Talk with the Director about visiting the center with your child before his or her first day.
- Talk with your child positively about the school experience. Your enthusiasm is a signal to your child that he or she can relax and enjoy this new environment.
- Make sure to have your child here by 8:45 am to give them time to adjust.
- Develop a goodbye routine with your child. Discuss the routine with his or her teacher so they can help in any way possible. Be sure to always say good bye to your child.
- Feel free to discuss your child's progress with our teachers or the Director at any time. Daily communication between parents and teachers is an important part of your child's development.
- Remember that we have an open-door policy and that your calls or visit are always welcome.

As children mature, they begin to identify themselves as independent personalities. In separation from you, your child is learning a sense of independence, to feel comfortable with others, and social skills which are important for academic development. Our teachers are trained to follow children's cues and help them work through their feelings to find the coping skills that work best for them.



Section 4: DAILY ROUTINE

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please be sure to sign your child in upon arrival and out upon departure with a full signature. The State of California requires that all children be signed in and out each day. YLUMC Preschool can be charged fees of \$150.00 per day by California Community Care Licensing Department for parents who do not sign their children in or out. **Those fees, if accessed, will be passed on to parents.**



Doors will open at 8:30 am for class. It is important that your child arrive at school at the beginning of class. Teachers follow a daily routine. Arriving late means your child will miss some class activities. If you arrive during Circle Time, please do not disrupt this learning time. Please make every effort to be prompt.

For your child's protection, children will be released only to parents or to authorized persons designated on your child's registration form. If someone other than the person you identify on the registration form will be picking up your child, please notify us **in writing** ahead of time. Proper identification will be required before a child is released to an unfamiliar person.

It is very difficult for children to be left at school after their normal pick-up time. Out of respect for your child and staff, we ask parents to make every effort to observe your child's pick-up time. Your promptness is appreciated.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED WHEN A CHILD IS LEFT AT THE SCHOOL BEYOND THEIR SCHEDULED PICK-UP

12:00 Pick-Up: Any child not picked-up at 12:00pm will go to lunch bunch and a hot lunch will be prepared. \$12 will be charged to your account and the child may stay until 1:00pm.

1:00 Pick-Up: Any child not picked-up at 1:00pm will go to Stay & Play. \$20 will be charged to your account and the child may stay until 3:30pm.

3:30 Pick-Up: Any child not picked-up at 3:30pm will go to Extended Care. \$14 will be charged to your account and the child may stay until 5:00pm.

5:00 Pick-Up: Any child not picked-up at 5:00pm will be charge \$1 per minute for the first 5 minutes (5:00-5:05pm) and \$5 per minute for each additional minute. Here is the procedure followed when a child is left at school beyond 5:05pm.

- 1) Every effort will be made to contact the parents
- 2) If parents are not located within 15 minutes, YLUMC Preschool Staff will try to reach an emergency contact.
- 3) If the staff is unable to reach an emergency contact within 30 minutes, local authorities will be contacted.

Section 5: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MONEY MATTERS

When sending money with your child, please place the money with any permission slip or order securely in an envelope. Make sure that the envelope is clearly marked with your child's name, purpose and amount enclosed before sending to preschool.

DISCIPLINE POLICY GUIDELINES

We feel the children need to take part in the appropriate consequences for their behavior. Facilitating conversation in an effort to solve their problems is one method we use consistently. Our children will learn the skills they need to deal with the challenges/conflicts of life if we give them opportunities as they grow, to face the results of their actions in a safe, loving environment surrounded by a staff ready to model appropriate behavior.

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children.
- Providing clear and simple limits.
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere.
- Keeping children interested in program activities to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.
- Modeling appropriate behaviors.
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes.
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives.
- Encouraging children to work together to solve problems.
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation.
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions.
- Removing children from the situation until they are able to discuss the problem and calm down.
- Conflict resolution (for older preschoolers).

BITING POLICY

Toddlers sometimes go through a “biting stage” as a means to communicate their frustration or needs. It is important to help the child quickly understand biting is not acceptable to help the child find a better way to communicate. Should biting continue to be an issue, the child will be sent home. When a biting incident occurs:

1. The biter is immediately removed with a firm NO and the teacher will speak with the child.
2. Teachers will evaluate the context of the biting incident in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
3. Teachers will work with biting children on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner
4. Teachers will try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress and protect the other children.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Daily outdoor play is an important part of the curriculum, except for the occasional day when there might be inclement weather. Children should be appropriately dressed and have a change of clothes in their backpack. A child that is too ill to play outside is likely not well enough to be at preschool. It is strongly recommended that you apply sunscreen, each day, before coming to school.



CLOTHING

Please label your child's sweaters, jackets, backpacks and hats with his/her name. Dress your preschooler comfortably and remember that they will be climbing, painting, digging and playing in the water and sand. Closed toe shoes with non-slip soles are required. Please do not send your child to school wearing sandals, rain boots, cowboy boots, flip-flops or slick-soled party shoes.

Each child should have a plastic Ziploc type bag, labeled with the child's name, in his/her backpack. This bag should have the following items: a pair of underwear, pair of pants, socks and shirt. Staff will use these items if an accident should occur.

GYMNASTICS and Music

Each child will participate in a weekly gymnastics class on Tuesday or Wednesday, and children attending on Wednesdays will participate in our music class. These programs are included in your tuition so that all children can participate. Children should be appropriately dressed to participate in gymnastics. There will be a recital at the end of the school year and the dates will be specified on the school year calendar.

TREASURES FROM HOME

Please do not bring treasures from home to school. As parents, we know how things get broken, argued over or lost. Our school has plenty of toys and the children find it easier to share toys from school rather than from home. We cannot guarantee the safety of toys brought from home.

WEAPON PLAY

Guns and weapon type toys are not to be brought to school at any time. Please take the time to talk to your child about gun and weapon play. The staff will not allow any shooting of any kind at school. Children will not be allowed to make any type of weapon or gun out of any type of toys.

SNACK

Nutritious snacks will be served by the preschool each day. A snack menu will be posted each month in your child's classroom. If you would like to volunteer to bring snack, please notify the classroom teacher. Please bring the foods listed on the calendar in the original unopened containers. Parents with children that have allergies can use this calendar as a guide to monitor the foods they eat at school. Juice will always be 100% juice. We follow the guidelines set by the State Department of California Community Care Licensing. We appreciate your cooperation.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special time for each child. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher if you wish to bring a special birthday treat. The teacher will be able to set a time for your child to be the host/hostess. If your child is having a party at home to which the whole class is invited, invitations may be given out at school. If everyone is not invited, the invitations must **not** be brought to school.



FIELD TRIPS

The Preschool plans different onsite field trips that offer both discovery and enjoyment to the children. The field trips are seen as an extension of the program, which enriches the lives of the children. Onsite field trips are selected on their potential to expand the skills and knowledge of the children and to complement the children's interests.

The role of the staff and volunteers during the fieldtrip is to promote the development and learning of the children. Staff and volunteers will ask questions to pique the children's curiosity and encourage them to try new things. They will draw the children's attention to anything of interest and facilitate learning.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PUBLICITY

Photographs of the children enrolled in our programs are regularly taken as a way to document our events at school; these photographs are used in the classroom and for the yearbook. Each parent has the option to sign a

photo release which is maintained in the child's file. The photo release gives YLUMCPS permission to use photographs of the child for promoting or reporting about the preschool; including the school website, Facebook page, Instagram and the blog. No staff members will take or retain photos for personal purposes.

Section 6: SAFETY

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please drive slowly and carefully when arriving and departing. Do not leave children unattended in the car. Parent parking is on the upper parking lot only. Only one entrance and exit on the upper parking lot.

HEALTH

A pre-admission physician's report must be completed by your doctor or clinic and returned as soon as possible. A physical examination is required prior to admission if there is no physician who can complete the report on the basis of prior knowledge of the children's health. We must have a copy of your child's immunization record before your child can attend school.

YLUMC Preschool is designed for the well child. For the protection of all children from possible communicable diseases, your child should be kept at home if he or she shows any of the following symptoms or has experienced any of the following:

- Sniffles, sore throat and/or headache
- An above normal temperature within the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- A rash
- Nasal discharge or discharge from eyes or ears
- Vomiting that morning or the night before
- Persistent coughing
- Listlessness

For your child's protection, as well as for the protection of other children, we cannot accept a child at the preschool if he or she has any of the symptoms or conditions listed above. We ask your assistance in helping us keep a healthy school. Please contact our Preschool Office when your child will not be attending class for any reason.

If your child becomes ill at school, a member of the staff will try and reach you or a designated emergency contact person by phone. PLEASE KEEP YOUR EMERGENCY NUMBER CURRENT! In case of medical emergency, we will contact the parent and/or child's physician or paramedics. The director and staff are CPR and First Aid certified.

Please let the preschool know of any special medical condition your child might have. We will post allergies and food sensitivities in the classroom.

LICENSING

Community Care Licensing has the right to visit and inspect the school at any time announced or unannounced, and has the right to interview and observe the children.

STATEMENT ON CHILD ABUSE

The California Penal Code MANDATES that teachers, daycare providers, doctors, etc. report suspected child abuse. If it is suspected that your child may have been abused we are mandated to report it to the Child Abuse Registry. We are not required to notify the parents.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Please notify the school immediately if your child has a contagious disease. We need to alert other parents and staff members that the children have been exposed. Your family will remain anonymous. We are required by the State of California Board of Health to report serious communicable diseases.

MEDICATIONS

Parents need to administer medication before or after school hours. If a child requires any special medications while the child is in class, the parents will need to make arrangements to be at school to administer the medication themselves. Personnel at the school cannot accept responsibility for administering medicine to children. This includes sunscreen. It is strongly recommended that you apply sunscreen, each day, before coming to school. The only exception is for medication considered life-saving measures, i.e. Epi-Pen Jr. for allergy emergencies; life-saving medication is maintained at the school according to licensing requirements.

EARTHQUAKE AND DISASTER PLAN

The staff and children will participate in fire, earthquake and lockdown drills according to state regulations. In the event of an emergency, the preschool will retain responsibility of all children on premise until they are released to a parent, guardian or designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center. All staff will remain on premise and assume emergency duties. Individual Earthquake Kits have been purchased that contain food, water and other supplies for the children and staff who may be at school for up to three days. The earthquake kit is the property of the Preschool and is not taken when a child leaves the program.

MINOR INJURIES

The teacher observing the incident will fill out an "Ouch Report" for minor injuries (scrapes, bumps, and bruises). The original form will be placed in the child's permanent file and a copy will be sent home.

EMERGENCY CARE

In case of accidental injury we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we can't reach you we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call emergency care services. Until the parent, physician, or ambulance arrives, we will make all necessary decisions about the care of the child. The school will maintain a parent's signed consent form agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit, and therefore extremely necessary, that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent information.