UCC
WEEKDAY
SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2720 South University Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

Direct School Phone: 817-926-3960
Church Phone: 817-926-6631

A Mission of Growth

UCC, through the ministry of Weekday School, promotes a partnership of growth for students, parents and staff. Our mission is to help meet students' needs for individual and social growth amid a nurturing, learning environment.

Philosophy

Our educational philosophy is to help young children become lifelong, enthusiastic learners. This philosophy, based on the sound research principles that under gird the premium preschool programs in the nation, is guided by the criteria for optimum learning environments as established by the NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Within a framework of knowledge of developmental stages of students ages 0-5 years, we provide activities in all major areas of learning. Lesson plans and activities are based on the importance of the whole child.

Mayfield Resource Center

The Mayfield Resource Center is a point of great pride and excellence at UCC. It houses more than 3,000 children's books, as well as a wide selection of teaching aids. These include items for problem solving, math, science, dramatic play, puzzles, games, audio/visual aids, and large motor equipment. The Resource Center also houses many excellent parenting books and current research articles for check out.

A Program of Excellence

- *Nationally accredited by SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools)*
- *Serving Ages 6 weeks through Kindergarten*
- *Classes available Monday through Friday mornings from 9:00-Noon. Students may attend from 1 to 5 mornings per week, depending on age.*
- *School-year based program (August-May)*
- *Enrichment programs available before (Early Bird, 8-9:00) and after school (Discovery Time, 12:00-2:30)*
- *Highly trained professional staff*
- *Outstanding Teacher/Student ratio*
- *Mayfield Resource Center*
- *Experiential Learning*
- *Environment of love, nurture, fun and happiness*

Curriculum

Curriculum at WDS closely adheres to the best practices for early childhood programs. It is drawn from three major sources:

Addison-Wesley Active Learning Series
The Creative Curriculum
High Scope Active Learning Program

Individual teachers and teaching teams design their classrooms and lesson plans based on the framework established in these curricula guides. Our highly skilled faculty combines activities and ideas from these sources to create the best of programs for their classes; programs that instill confidence while presenting daily opportunities for learning and discovery.

Our Goals

Social/Emotional

To experience a sense of self-esteem
To express feelings appropriately
To exhibit a positive attitude toward learning
To develop independence, express choices and solve problems
To develop cooperative, pro-social behavior
To learn to deal with social conflict
To develop responsibility and self-regulation

Intellectual

To acquire concepts and information about the world
To expand logical thinking skills
To expand verbal communication skills
To develop language arts concepts and skills
To develop math and science concepts and skills
To foster discovery, exploration and curiosity

Physical

To enhance large motor skills
To enhance fine motor skills
To develop the use of alls senses as modes of learning
To promote healthy physical development

Spiritual

To establish a loving Christian atmosphere
To present Christian holidays, events and concepts in developmentally appropriate ways
To nurture respect for diversity, inclusion and acceptance
To strengthen character development through example and curricula
To provide support for the whole family in their spiritual journey

Nuts and Bolts

Tuition

The first month's tuition and the activity fee are due on June 1st of each school year. No refunds are made for withdrawal and a 30-day written notice is required.

Tuition is due and payable on the first day of each month. After the 5th day of the month, a late fee will be charged. If tuition has not been paid in full by the 25th day of the month, WDS reserves the right to drop the student from the rolls and replace them with another child. Any problems regarding payment of fees may be discussed with the WDS Director.

Tuition may be made by automatic draft or by check (brought to the office or mailed to the church).

Days and Hours of Operation

All students should be brought to their classrooms at the beginning of the school day, signed in and picked up promptly at dismissal time for each program. All students must be signed out each day with time of departure and authorized adult's initials. Students need to be picked up by an adult and SHOULD NOT be allowed to go to the classrooms unattended. Please be prompt in your arrival and departure.

If, in emergencies, you will not be on time, please have a relative or trusted friend, whose name must be on file in the office pick up your child. A late fee of $2.00 per minute will be charged 10 minutes after dismissal time. You must pick up your child in the office. Habitual lateness may result in additional fees or withdrawal from the program.

Classes:	9-Noon
Early Bird:	8-9:00
Discovery Time:	Noon-2:30

Attendance

Enrolled students must attend regularly. WDS policy does not allow parents to enroll and pay for a child yet not send the child to school on a regular basis. Students may be removed from the program in such instances.

Enrollment

Enrollment is through the WDS office from persons called from the waiting list, or when the wait list is exhausted, through open enrollment on a first come, first served basis. Enrollment involves filling out enrollment forms, receipt of health form and parent handbook. When an opening is available, an enrollment form must be filled out within 2 working days of notification. There is a nonrefundable fee for each child at the time of registration.

In February, registration privileges for the next year will be given to:

- Children currently enrolled at WDS
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Children of UCC members
- In the infant class only, church members receive enrollment priority over current students' siblings

In the event of lack of space, students will be accepted in the order listed above. During the registration process, church members have priority above the general waiting lists in all age levels. After this two week period, church members must get on the waiting list until they are called or until the next registration period.

In order to participate in registration, families must be current in their financial obligations to the school. Following the open registration period, classes will be filled from the waiting lists.

Students will be assigned to a class within their age group according to class days, age, gender and teacher recommendations.

Waiting Lists

When a parent is called regarding an opening in the program for the days the parent has requested and declines the opening, but wishes to remain on the list, the child's name will be moved to the bottom of the list. However, if the student is currently in the program and desires an additional day with the same teacher, the refusal to accept an opening with a different teacher will not forfeit the child's place on the waiting list.

Safety and Security

It is a primary goal of WDS to ensure the safety of students and staff during school hours. These policies are designed to maintain a safe environment for the student's areas during WDS. All doors to the WDS will be locked 15 minutes after classes begin and unlocked 15 minutes before dismissal. Access to the area between those times will be given via the doorbell entry system and confirmation of identity. All visitors and volunteers must check in at the WDS offices.

All students must be signed in and out of the school, and time recorded, by those authorized by the family.

School Closings

As closely as possible, WDS follows the Fort Worth ISD's cancellation of classes due to bad weather. If FWISD schools are closed or are opening two hours late, WDS will automatically be closed. Please check local TV stations and the WDS website for more information. There will be no tuition or schedule adjustment due to bad weather or special circumstances.

Cancellation of Enrollment

Some children are not ready for group activities at these early ages. If, in the judgment of the leaders of the WDS, a child is not ready, the school reserves the right to request cancellation of enrollment. In this event, any unused tuition would be refunded.

If, for other reasons, a child is withdrawn by the parents, the school will require one month's written notice (given to the office) and full payment for that month. This will enable the school to fill the vacancy from the wait list.

Policy Changes

Any major change (hours of operation, numbers/ages of students in care, tuition increases) in WDS policies will be approved by the WDS parent advisory board. Notification of changes, whether major or minor, will be given to parents through personal letters, newsletters, and/or bulletin board notices.

General Guidelines and Policies

Age/Ratio Requirements

UCC WDS serves children 6 weeks up through the age of 6 years. To be eligible for enrollment in each class, the child must be the specified age on or before September 1st of the school year. Adjustments in the number of classes available per age group may occur due to demand and length of waiting lists.

Cribs	2 teachers/6 students
Ones	1 teacher/5 students
Twos	1 teacher/6 students
Threes	2 teachers/15 students
Fours	2 teachers/16 students
K	2 teachers/18 students

Advertising/Use of Lockers

Information concerning products, sales or classes may be posted on the bulletin board by the WDS offices designated for Parent Information. "Parent-to-Parent" bulletin boards are located outside both WDS offices. Students' lockers are not to be used as distribution points for any outside materials.

Birthdays

Please consult with your child's teacher regarding appropriate recognition of your child's birthday. Any food that is sent **must be store bought** (Fort Worth Health Department requirement). Parents may use WDS lockers to distribute outside party invitations only when every child in the class is being invited to the party. In any other case (boy or girls only parties), parents should mail invitations.

Clothing and Toilet Training

Students should be dressed comfortably for messy, active play. It is especially requested for safety that you do not allow your child to come to school in hard boots or any type of shoe with slick soles. Flip-flops and backless sandals are also <u>not</u> recommended. For safety reasons, CROCS and other plastic shoes are prohibited. Tennis shoes are recommended. All outdoor clothing must be clearly marked with the child's name. The school is not responsible for lost/damaged clothing.

All students through 4 years of age should have available in their school lockers necessary clean clothes in case of accidents. All students 3 years and older are encouraged to be toilet trained before entering the program. Please dress students who are not toilet trained in clothing that will easily accommodate diaper changing.

Conferences, Orientation and School Visits

Parents of ALL students will be asked to attend at least one scheduled parent conference during the school year.

Conference days are included with the school calendar. Informal discussions of your student's progress may be requested at any time during the year that is convenient for both parent and teacher. *It is our policy not to discuss concerns about children at the classroom door in front of the students and/or other parents.* Teachers will send notes home, make phone calls or schedule a time to talk with you privately. Books, materials and guidance are available through the Director. An appointment is preferred to make sure confidentiality is maintained and give adequate time for a complete discussion.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. Volunteer opportunities are also available for parents. Observers must check in through the office.

Discipline and Guidance

Discipline is 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.

Teachers 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
- Using brief supervised separation or time away 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

WDS faculty and staff are trained in problem solving and have age-appropriate expectations and guidance techniques. There will be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishment and no child shall ever receive corporal punishment. If very difficult behavior occurs where the child does not respond to the normal ways of gaining cooperation, a brief, supervised separation from the group may be used either in the classroom or in the office. Should further guidance be necessary, parents may be asked to pick up the child from school. On rare occasions, the director reserves the right to counsel with parents and possibly remove the child from WDS either temporarily or permanently.

Emergency Procedures

Fire drills are practiced monthly in each classroom. Severe weather drills are practiced every 6 months. Escape routes are posted in the classrooms. School lockdown drills, named "Red Bird", are practiced at least 4 times annually.

In the event of emergency sirens or tornado alert, children will be moved to a lower, more secure level of the church in the hallways on the east side of the school and the area leading to basement storage areas. Should a major emergency occur, where the building must be evacuated, children will be moved to Ed Landreth Auditorium at TCU .

Equal Opportunity

WDS admits students of any race, color, nationality or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges and activities generally accorded to students at the school.

Field Trips

For Kindergartners, written permission for field trips must be on file at the school. (Students under 4 years of age will not be taken on field trips but may use other UCC facilities for special activities.)

Each time a field trip is scheduled, parents will be notified in writing of the designation, time to be away from the school and the parents who will be drivers for the trip. If for some reason your child may not participate, other arrangements must be made ahead of time with the lead teacher of that class. Parents will be asked to sign up to drive and participate on field trips. Each transported child must have a safety seat or seat belt, according to their age/weight. WDS does not provide transportation.

Illness/Accidents

If in the opinion of the teacher(s) or director, a child appears ill, and cannot fully participate in the regular routine, the child's parents will be notified to take the child home. ***Any child with vomiting, diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash, or fever over 99.6 will be sent home***. Children should be free of fever for at least 24 hours, without the aid of aspirin or Tylenol, before returning to school. In cases of a communicable disease being suspected (chicken pox, etc.) parents will be notified in writing. Licensing requires that after ANY serious or communicable illness the parent must bring a readmitting slip from the child's physician stating that the child is able to participate in normal class activities (including outdoor activities).

All communicable diseases, including chicken pox, measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis, etc., must be reported to the teacher and/or Director so we can, in turn, make our report to other parents and the Health Department.

If a child is chronically ill with a non-infectious disease (asthma, etc.) parents may be asked to stay with the child during the daily outdoor period for a few days until the child can resume the normal routine. In case of a critical illness or injury while the child is at school, the physicians named by the parents on the "Emergency Medical Treatment" form will be called if the parents cannot be reached immediately. If necessary, the child shall be taken to the emergency room used by the specified doctor(s). For this reason, it is IMPERATIVE that the school has the necessary information and authorization for medical care for each child enrolled. Accident reports are on file in the office; and parents are notified of any serious injury, with signature required. Minor scrapes will be reported via a teacher note, with no signature required.

Each child must have a current Health Form. This form MUST BE ON FILE AT THE SCHOOL BEFORE A CHILD MAY BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND CLASS.

Specific requests for non-compliance with this requirement must be obtained from the Director at her discretion. For the Health Form to be valid, it must:

a. show the child has had a physical exam within the last year, and be signed by the child's physician
b. show that the child has been completely immunized (according to state requirement for the child's age); and
c. show proof that children ages 4 years old and older who attend five days per week have had vision and hearing screening (by a qualified examiner).

Medication

If you have given your child any medication before coming to school, please inform your child's teacher. Medicine often affects the way students respond in class.

WDS prefers not to administer medication to a child; however, if a parent finds it necessary, the director must be consulted and a permission form must be filled out. Any necessary medication must be administered in the director's office. Licensing requires:

a. prescription medicine to be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, date, directions, and physician's name
b. nonprescription medicine labeled with the child's name and date brought to school must be in the original container.
c. under no circumstances, send medicine to school in student's backpack or lunch box
d. record of medicine administration is kept in the office

Lunch and Snacks

Children will bring from home a lunch and non-carbonated beverage each day. Parents need to be responsible for seeing that foods needing refrigeration are properly bagged and placed in appropriate containers. A cold pack, marked with the child's name, needs to be put in each child's lunch box if perishable foods are included. Any lunch not eaten will be left in the lunch kit to be taken home. It is the parent's responsibility to package the child's lunch to prevent spoilage. Lunch kits are the preferable container for 1 to 6 year olds.

It is important to remember that lunchtime is an important part of our academic day. We use this time with students to encourage self-sufficiency and social skills. Prepackaged lunches, such as Lunchables, are often difficult to open and usually include candy (which is prohibited).

Snacks are not provided as a part of the regular morning program, but are provided in accordance with licensing standards during Discovery Time.

A list of recommended lunch items will be provided by each teacher for the appropriate age levels.

Parents of infants must mark diaper bags and each item in the bag with the child's name. This is ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT since many children bring

items that are exactly alike. We must insist on this requirement being followed in order to avoid giving your baby the wrong food or bottle. Our license requires parents to fill out and keep up-to-date from month to month a "Feeding Instruction" sheet, until their baby is 18 months of age. PLASTIC BOTTLES only please. Also, please *PLACE YOUR CHILD'S LABELED LUNCH ALL TOGETHER IN A PLASTIC OR PAPER BAG INSIDE THE DIAPER BAG.*

Parent Liaison and Volunteer Information

The UCC WDS has an active, strong Weekday School Board. All Board members' names and titles are listed in the directory. The board members are all available to give information about volunteer opportunities, tours of the school and collect suggestions for school improvements.

The school has many jobs to be done. Please see the Parent Liaison listed in the directory to let us know how you would like to help.

Parent Resources

The WDS has several resources available to parents. A Parent Library is located in the Mayfield Resource Center with books for check-out. Parenting workshops are offered throughout the school year. The ministerial staff of University Christian Church is also available to help families with needs.

Pets, Books and Toys

Books that a teacher can read to the class are always welcome. Unless otherwise requested by the teacher, outside toys must not be brought into the classroom. There may be opportunities for students to share their favorite toys, but even at those times toy guns or other war toys will not be allowed in any classroom. Classroom pets are limited to small rodents (hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, etc.) or aquarium fish, and parents are notified ahead of time regarding their presence in the classroom.

Pets from home are not allowed to visit WDS.

Release Policies

Children may be released only to persons authorized in writing on the enrollment form filed in the WDS office. Any change in drop off or pick up must be accompanied by a signed note from the parent. Persons who pick up children will be asked to show a picture I.D. to verify their identity. Any last minute change in pick-up arrangements done by telephone must be authorized by the WDS director or staff. Children must be signed in and out daily with time recorded. In the case of non-custodial parents, a copy of custody and visitation papers must be on file in the WDS office.

Release of School Records and Confidentiality

WDS will release records to other schools requesting information with the written authorization of the parent. WDS maintains complete confidentiality concerning students' school activities and records.

Transportation and Parking

Each family will provide transportation to and from the school for their child(ren). Parents are expected to observe UCC parking guidelines for parking in the lots.

Early Bird/Discovery Time

The enrichment programs offered before and after school are optional programs available to students enrolled in WDS. They are available only on the days that the student attends school. A full description of this program, policies and fees are available in the WDS office.

Weekday School Board

The board of the WDS acts with limited administrative powers and advisory powers in order to aid in accomplishing the school's purpose, as stated in the bylaws. The bylaws guide all policies concerning the constituency of the board, terms, qualifications, voting members, etc. The bylaws shall serve as the policy guide for all board actions, and may be amended by the procedures found in said bylaws. Copies of the board bylaws are available in the WDS offices.

Student Teachers/Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome at WDS. Volunteer activities must be approved through the classroom teacher and/or WDS director. Volunteers and student teachers must sign in and out in the WDS office and must present proper identification. Any volunteers and student teachers are required to follow WDS staff policies for classroom practices. WDS reserves the right to dismiss student teachers and volunteers if practices are not followed. Volunteers or student teachers are never left alone with children.

Special Needs

As a non-profit, religious organization, University Christian Church Weekday School does not possess the resources, financial or otherwise, which would enable it to provide special education services. However, the school may, from time to time and within its sole discretion, attempt to work with individual families on special needs issues. If the school endeavors to accommodate a family with special needs, it must be understood that there are limits to both financial and logistical provisions that the school can offer. The school will examine any situation on a case-by-case basis and some factors to be considered in the school's determination include but are not limited to the following:

- Cost
- Extent of the child's needs
- Whether or not the child is already enrolled at WDS

- The effect of any accommodation on the other children currently enrolled at the school

Any attempt by the school to work with a family with special needs shall not be interpreted as a warranty that the assistance may continue indefinitely. The WDS office has a complete special needs policy that may be examined by parents at any time.

Referrals

WDS may at the request of staff or parents, find it in the best interest of the child to refer a child to other programs for evaluation, for assistance in maintaining the child's current placement in WDS or enrollment eligibility for specialized programming.

When professional referrals are needed or appear to be helpful, staff follows this procedure:

- Conference with director who then observes the child.
- Parent conference with director and teacher.
- Pending outcome of discussion, referrals for the child to a specialist will be made by the director.
- The child may or may not continue in WDS based on the finding and recommendations of the specialist and the director.
- If a child continues in WDS, a specific individual education plan will be developed to meet the needs of that child. Information is filed in the individual's confidential files
- Developmental guidelines and information about children will be passed to the following year's teacher with director discretion and only when it would be helpful in understanding that child's needs, behavior or guidance issues.
- When special needs are identified, WDS works with families concerned to best meet the needs of the child. When appropriate, the director attends Family Service Plan meetings from Early Childhood Intervention. Parents are expected to provide any information about the child's physical or mental condition that is necessary to meet that child's needs. Any special lesson plans and accommodations are kept in confidential files.
- Each spring, needs are evaluated for special needs children in order to make the best placement for the child for the following school years. Conferences are held with parents, teachers, directors and other support personnel.
- Weekday School is an inclusive preschool program which tries to meet the needs of many types of differing abilities for young children.
- WDS asks that children who are eligible for state funded programming, ECI and public school Special Education services take full utilization of those services, which are free to all children in the state of Texas. If speech, cognitive or other services are required for a child, WDS will work with the families through these programs as they provide services. WDS attempts to work with any programming, but also considers the needs of other children in the program, disruption of classes, etc.

Parent Review of Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers

The WDS office has a copy of Minimum Standards, which is available for parents to review at any time. All licensing and inspection reports are posted in the WDS office and available for parent inspection.

Parents may contact the local licensing office, the PRS child abuse hotline, and the PRS website for information or questions concerning this program or for general licensing information.

Local licensing information: 817-321-8000

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

PRS Website: tdprs.state.tx.gov