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Welcome, we are glad you are here!

Welcome to First United Methodist Church Sylva and the Early Learning Center! We are so happy to have your family be part of our program! This parent handbook was designed to give you the information you will need while your child is attending school. Please take time to read our policies and feel free to let us know if you have additional questions!

Purpose

First United Methodist Early Learning Center is a ministry of the Church. The mission statement of FUMC Sylva is “Experiencing Christ, Offering Christ to Others”.

Philosophy

We believe in providing a supportive and nurturing environment for children, encouraging their development through Christian-based education.

We believe that the love and example of Christ is experienced through others and strive to show this love and acceptance to your/our children and you their parents.

We believe preschool children learn about themselves and their environment best through active participatory learning.

We believe an excitement for learning is best generated in a setting that presents opportunities for learning where achievement pressures are absent.

We believe in Christian outreach to serve both community and church. First Methodist Church members and those outside the congregation will work in partnership to serve the preschool program.

Daily Schedule

Your child's teacher will design a flexible schedule for their classroom. The schedule will consist of the following features:

Sharing Time – We will get to know one another and learn how to get along with other children. We will use our imaginations and our senses to talk about the world around us and discover how it changes from day to day.

Creative Play Time – We will build with blocks and boxes, dress up, have puppet shows, use manipulatives and engage in other activities that help us learn about others and ourselves.

Music Time – We will sing, dance, play instruments and use movement to interpret songs and moods. The classes will have music guest teachers weekly.

Outside Play Time – We will play on our playground equipment to develop our large muscles and to strengthen our confidence and coordination. During extreme or wet weather, the gym will be used.

Art Time – We will express ourselves in every available form. We recycle different materials into “masterpieces”, use our small muscle skills to learn to cut, paste, paint, color and create!

Story Time – We will read and tell stories; use puppets, pictures and ourselves to dramatize them.

Quiet Time – We will have time to rest while we listen to relaxing music, play group games and have finger plays.

Chapel Time – We will use Bible stories to promote character education and develop moral values.

Dance and Movement Time – The children will participate in dance and movement in the classroom to enhance motor skills.

Tuition

Registration Fee: \$75 per child & per school year. This fee is non-refundable.

Monthly Fees: Annual Tuition is 10 monthly payments. *August Fee is ½ of a standard Month, due the first week of school. Classroom placement is based on fall placement (like public schools).*

Per Month	1yr old-Pre-K Classrooms	Infant 2 month-1 year Classroom
Monday-Friday	320.00	380.00
Mon., Wed., & Fri.	220.00	260.00
Tue., & Thur.	170.00	200.00
<i>One Day a Week if avail.</i>	110.00	120.00

Please see detailed Tuition Agreement

Please send tuition at the beginning of each month in an envelope marked with your Child's name on the front of the envelope.

Checks should be made out to FUMCS memo line: Child's name and ELC.

We have the ability to accept online payments using your credit/debit card or your checking/savings account on our website, sylvafumc.org. We ask that you include \$3 for credit/debit payments as the program is charged a 3.00 fee for these payments.

ONLINE PAYMENTS: Go to sylvafumc.org, select "**giving/online**" payments at the top of the page, from there you can log-in to the system or continue as a guest. Using the "**select fund**" drop down menu select "**ELC**" and follow the prompts.

In order to retain your child's place in the Early Learning Center, tuition must be paid **EACH MONTH**. If a child is, absent for a month, for whatever reason, tuition must be paid in order to hold his/ her place in the class. If the first of a month comes up with no payment for the previous month, the child will not be allowed to return until the payment is up to date. If a child is withdrawn from the program before the end of the month, tuition for the month is forfeited.

Tuition Cont.

NOTES:

Tuition is due on the first of the month and is delinquent if not paid by the 10th of the month. A \$10.00 late fee is assessed on over-due accounts.

1. A 5% tuition discount is given to accounts that are paid in advance for the entire school year. If you have questions, please contact the center director.
2. A 15% sibling discount is given for the second child in the same family.
3. If an account is two months overdue, the student(s) may not attend until the account is brought up to date.
4. A \$25.00 charge is applied to all returned checks, and we reserve the right to have payment made in cash or certified check.

Operating Schedule

The Early Learning Center operates Monday-Friday from 9:00am – 12:00pm. The days your child attends depend on the program schedule you selected on your registration form. The ELC offers an early drop off from 8AM to 8:50AM for \$3.00 per day and an early drop off from 7:30 AM to 8AM for \$5.00 per day (billed separately at the end of month). Please arrange for these two early programs in advance to allow for proper staffing. The Early Learning Center will follow the Jackson County Public Schools schedule for holidays and closings.

Inclement Weather Procedures

The Early Learning Center follows the Jackson County Public Schools (Smoky Mountain District) schedule for ***closings*** due to inclement weather.

In the event of a ***delay***, for Jackson County Public Schools (Smoky Mountain District), the ELC **will** operate on a regular schedule.

Please refer to our Facebook page and WLOS TV closings & delays for notifications:

WLOS 13 - <https://wlos.com/weather/closings>

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/434707629936568/> or search by *The Early Learning Center of FUMC*

This Facebook account is a closed/private group page that parents and family members can request to join so they can follow the adventures of their preschoolers throughout the year. The teachers and administrators will review requests carefully. If you as the parent/guardian have any concerns, please speak with the Director.

Health

Entrance Recommendations

Immunizations are recommended to be up to date as this is a group setting where illness is easily transferred between students.

Sick Child Policy

Children should never be sent to the Early Learning Center when the chances are great that they will need to return home before 12:00pm.

When a child becomes ill (feverish, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, etc.,) after arrival, it is the responsibility of the parent upon notification, to pick up the child. It is most important that each parent make back-up arrangements in advance if both parents work, and if the parents are going to be away from the home during the day. The Early Learning Center knows there is a need for unlisted telephone numbers in some instances, the ELC will respect it as confidential information, but valid active contact numbers are needed in the unlikely event of an emergency.

In an effort to ensure all children and staff remain as healthy as possible the guidelines stated below must be followed. **Children may not be sent to the Early Learning Center until 24 hours after**

- ✓ the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea
- ✓ evidence of eye discharged has been resolved
- ✓ the child is fever free without a reducing medicine
- ✓ any contagious rash has been resolved
- ✓ the child is symptom free of any contagious illness or condition

Medication

We realize that on occasion physicians will prescribe medication that must be taken during program hours. If this situation arises, we request that the parent be on hand to administer the medication. Early Learning Center staff will not administer medication, except urgent asthma or urgent allergic reaction medication with a doctor's written directions.

If your child has emergency medication for allergies or asthma, please provide the Early Learning Center with the medication in its original package and a note from your physician specific to the ELC. You must complete and sign the Allergy Alert for medication to be administered.

Emergencies

Student Accidents: In case of an accident to a child at The Early Learning Center, we will contact the family. If the accident is serious enough that medical care is needed immediately, the child will be taken to the hospital. If the parents cannot be reached in case of an accident, the next person on the registration form will be notified. Therefore, it is important that another person be listed as an emergency contact to call in case of an emergency.

Safety/Fire/Disaster Drills

Periodically each class will demonstrate the procedure for an emergency fire, tornado and stranger drill. Please carefully encourage your child to participate in these exercises. Please assure your child that if an actual emergency exists that you will be notified immediately after all involved are safe. Teachers will talk to the children about safety and practicing for emergencies to help prepare them for these drills.

Visitors and Volunteers

Parents are invited to observe the Early Learning Center at any time. Please call and arrangement with your child's teacher. Parents are also encouraged and welcomed to sign up as classroom volunteer. Talk with your child's teacher about any classroom needs.

For the safety of your child and the program, the entrance door to the ELC is locked between 9:15 AM and 11:45 PM. To access the ELC during these hours you will need to enter through the administrative doors to the right of the ELC entrance where you will pass the Church Offices.

What to Bring to School

A bag or backpack with your child's name (clearly labeled) to take home crafts at the end of the day. If your child is still using diapers, please bring diapers and wipes every day for your child to use.

Children are not to bring toys, games, radios, cameras or other personal items to the ELC. The only time children may bring something is when the teacher instructs them to do so. The ELC offers children an opportunity to experience new toys and equipment. Guns, bow and arrows, knives or any war toys are not appropriate for children to bring at any time.

Snacks

Parents, please send a healthy snack & sippy cup with juice or water for your child to eat & drink at snack time. Please mark the snack & drink with your child's name!

Classroom Parties

Each time that a party is planned for the month; a sign-up sheet or will be used so that parents may sign up to bring in items. Parents can also volunteer in the classroom during a party. Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays at the ELC. They may be shared by parents or handled by the ELC school staff. Please call ahead and arrange the date with the teacher to avoid conflicts.

Clothing

Please mark your child's jackets, coats, sweaters and hats with his or her name. Please do not send any item that is not labeled to school. Outdoor play is an integral part of the program. As the weather gets cooler, please make sure your child has a jacket, hat and gloves. We go outside every day unless it is raining, snowing, or sub-zero weather. Please dress your child appropriately. You will also be asked to send in a seasonally appropriate set of clothing in case of an accident. Please label each item (underwear and socks too) and place them in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it.

Shoes Children must wear rubber-soled shoes or bring an extra pair of acceptable shoes to wear during free play. **Flip-flops, work boots and cowboy boots are not acceptable.**

Discipline

Classroom rules are established for the safety of every child. The Early Learning Center follows the “Assertive Discipline” policy. This policy gives short and simple rules, rewards and consequences. “Assertive Discipline” is used nationwide in public schools, churches and other organizations where a positive means of discipline is needed. Disobedient behavior is something we take seriously due to the chance of injuring other children. Teachers will issue discipline slips to inform parents of serious inappropriate behavior. After two slips, parents will be required to schedule a conference with the child’s teacher to discuss changing the child’s behavior. If your child is out of control or cannot be consoled or corrected, the teacher will call you to pick up your child.

Dismissal

For the safety and continuity of the classes, we reserve the right to ask students not to return to the ELC. Dismissal might result if a student faces circumstances such as biting others, hurting themselves, peers, teachers, or a behavior that causes a continuous disruption of the class. For a first-time offense, the parent is notified, given a behavior report and asked to address the behavior at home. For a second time offense, the parent and teacher will have a conference to resolve the problem.

Children Facing Challenges

If a child’s behavior or physical challenge is beyond the teacher’s abilities and/or the physical limitations of the church program, please be open to our recommendations. We are limited in our facility and teacher expertise in dealing with children facing significant challenges. ELC teaches may recommend that your child attend a school that has personnel trained to assist with your child’s specific needs.

**CONSENTS AND INFORMATION
TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE SCHOOL
ANNUALLY**



CONSENTS

Please read the forms and complete thoroughly. These forms must be done annually for each child attending. Return the entire Consent & Info Packet to Dir. Carolyn Colton or your child's teacher.

Read and initial each item you give permission for your child. Sign and date at the bottom.

Child's Full Name: _____

_____ I have read the entire Parent Handbook and any extra material included. I understand the contents and agree to follow the rules and regulations for the Early Learning Center as outlined.

_____ I give permission for my child to go on short walks with the preschool staff during school time.

_____ I give permission for ELC staff to put sunblock lotion on my child when they will be outside.

PHOTO RELEASE

_____ I grant to Early Learning Center/FUMCS, its representatives and employees the right to take photographs of my child in connection with the preschool and Church activities. I authorize the ELC, its assigns and transferees to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically. I agree that they may use such photographs of my child with or without their first name and for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and social media content. *Children will not be identified by their full legal names for privacy and security reasons.*

_____ I DO NOT authorize any use of photography where my child can be identified. Group pictures will have my child's face blurred or blocked out.

ARRIVAL & LATE POLICY and Fees

_____ I understand the start time and early bird fees.

Students are expected to be at the center by 9:00 AM. Arriving late disrupts your child's and the classrooms daily schedule. Early drop off is available: 7:30am-8:00am is \$4.00 fee per day, 8:00am to 8:50 AM is \$2.00 per day.

_____ I understand pick-up time and the late fee.

Children should be picked up at noon but no later than 12:10pm. There will be a 1.00 per minute late charge, which will be added to your monthly bill to cover the staffing for a child remaining after the center is closed. Please call if there is an urgent situation.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date

Printed Name _____

CHILD PICK-UP CONSENT

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____ Gender: _____

The following people HAVE MY PERMISSION to pick up my Child from the Early Learning Center.

1. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

3. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

The Following People MAY NOT pick-up my Child

1. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

3. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Any person unfamiliar to the ELC or Church Staff will be required to show proof of identification in the form a valid photo ID. (Driver's License or State or Tribal ID Card, A current Passport). Under no circumstances will your child be released to anyone other than those listed as approved above. *This form can be updated by the parent as often as necessary.*

Father/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mother/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Day Care Providers Name: _____

INDIVIDUAL CHILD'S INFORMATION

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____

Likes to be called: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Street Address:

City, State & Zip code:

Mailing Address (if different):

In an emergency, we will try to contact the people you list below and, in the order, listed. Please be sure to list yourself (Parents/Guardians) FIRST, followed by relatives or friends/neighbors you trust.

1. Name: _____ Relationship to
Child: _____
Phone: _____ Alt Phone:

2. Name: _____ Relationship to
Child: _____
Phone: _____ Alt Phone:

3. Name: _____ Relationship to
Child: _____
Phone: _____ Alt Phone:

4. Name: _____ Relationship to
Child: _____
Phone: _____ Alt Phone:

5. Name: _____ Relationship to
Child: _____
Phone: _____ Alt Phone:

Child's Physician: _____ Phone: _____

Child's Dentist: _____ Phone: _____

Any Allergies? If so explain?

Is your child on any routine medications? _____

Any recent hospitalizations or illnesses?

Medical Insurance Carrier: _____ Policy No. _____

I agree that the Director or her agent, acting on her behalf, may authorize the Emergency/Urgent care Physician available to provide urgent/emergency care in the event that I or the physician listed above cannot be reached immediately.

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

ALLERGY ALERT FORM WITH PHYSICIAN SIGNATURE (As needed)

Child's Full Name _____ **DOB** _____

ASTHMA: No Yes

Food Allergy: No Yes if Yes What: _____

Environmental Allergy: No Yes if Yes What: _____

Symptoms: *check all that apply*

___ Itching, & swelling of lips, tongue or mouth

___ Itching and or sense of tightness in the throat, hoarseness & cough

___ Hives, itchy rash and or swelling about the face or extremities.

___ Nausea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, diarrhea.

___ Shortness of breath, repetitive coughing and/or wheezing

___ "Thready" pulse, loss of consciousness

____Other:

Action Plan: (*PRINT LEGIBLY*) Medication: _____ Dose _____

Directions:

Physician's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Physician's Signature: _____ Date:

Parent Consent: I give my permission for the Church and/or Early Learning Center Staff to administer the above medication and follow the course of action as directed by the above named/signed physician. Staff will notify parent as soon as possible.

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

ALL ABOUT ME

All the information provided on this form is requested so we can get to know your child and to help them adjust to preschool. It will be kept confidential.

Date: _____

Childs Name: _____ Prefer to be called: _____

Describe your child:

Please circle all the words that best describe your child: *add any description we missed.*

Calm	Shy	Excitable	Sensitive
Cheerful	Loud	Quiet	Easily Angered
Stubborn	Destructive	Gives in Easily	Temper Tantrums
Jealous	Shares Well	Shares Poorly	Hyperactive
Hypoactive	Bright	Busy	Contented
Cautious			

Does your child learn best by: Seeing Hearing Doing

♥ How well does your child get along with other children? _____

♥ What are some of your child's favorite activities, games, interests, etc., _____

♥ Does your child have a favorite person or pet? _____

♥ What makes your child mad or upset? _____

♥ What do you find is the best way of calming your child when they are mad or upset?

♥ Should we be aware of any "Family" rules? _____

♥ Any special concerns or comments?

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR CHILD WITH US! We are honored!