



**Auburn UMC Preschool**  
**Parent Handbook**  
**2023-2024**

## **HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE PRESCHOOL**

Auburn UMC Preschool was founded in 1974 as an extension of the Auburn United Methodist Church ministry to families in the congregation and community. It is our mission to offer a nurturing Christian environment that will empower each child with a life-long love of learning allowing them to serve and transform their community. The preschool strives to achieve a balance between freedom to explore and express new ideas, and some degree of conformity to requirements of behavior and attainment of appropriate skills. The curriculum of preschool provides children opportunities for growth intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually by including developmentally age-appropriate themes, experiences, and Christian education.

**“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.”**

**Proverbs 22:6**

## ADMISSION PROCEDURE

All children must have a current immunization record on file and must be kept up to date throughout the school year. An immunization card must be on file in the Auburn UMC Preschool office before your child is permitted to come to class.

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We will be using a carline drop-off/pick-up procedure. Every family will receive 2 parking/pick-up signs at the beginning of the school year. You must have this sign with you, displayed in your window to pick up your child from school.

*Older siblings will be dropped off and picked up with younger siblings and taken to their class by a staff member.*

### Carline Locations:

Two-year-old classes -	Magnolia Ave. entrance to Mathison Lobby Portico
Three-year-old classes -	Magnolia Ave. entrance to Preschool Lobby
Four-year-old classes -	Gay St. entrance to Epworth Center Portico

Arrival Carline begins at 8:15. If you arrive after 8:25, please park and walk your child into the preschool office where a staff member will check them in and take them to his/her class. **Never allow your child to enter the building alone.**

Departure carline begins at 11:45. If you arrive after 11:55, your child will be taken to the preschool office where they will need to be picked up.

## LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The preschool day ends at 11:45 with the carline running until 11:55. If you are late, please park and come to the preschool office to pick up your child. On the first late pickup, parents will be given a warning. For any subsequent late pickup, parents will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 for the first 15 minutes and an additional \$10.00 for every 15 minutes after that. Please make sure to bring this fee with you when you pick your child up.

## BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday is an important day, and we would like to celebrate it at school. If you would like to bring a "special snack" that day, please notify your child's teacher. Birthday snacks must be pre-packaged and/or individually wrapped. Please check with your child's teacher to see if allergies need to be considered so the treat can be enjoyed by all. If you are sending invitations to a party that is being held outside of school, please be sure to include every child.

## CLOTHING

- Please send your child dressed for play. We like to do a variety of things that might make your child messy.
- Closed-toe shoes are required. **Please no flip-flops, crocs, or sandals.** These types of shoes do not securely attach to the foot and can prove dangerous when climbing on playground equipment.
- When the weather gets cooler, please send appropriate coats, jackets, or sweaters that are labeled with your child's name. Children play on the playground daily, weather permitting.
- Please be sure that potty-trained children are dressed in clothing that allows them to use the bathroom on their own. **Please no belts of any kind.**
- Please **label** lunch boxes, jackets, school bags, etc. with a permanent marker. As the seasons and clothes change, please remember to label everything that comes to school.

## COMMUNICATION

We feel that open communication between parents and teachers is of the utmost importance to your child.

- Auburn UMC Preschool utilizes Brightwheel as a tool for classroom management, online bill payment, and communication. It enables the school and teacher to send you notices, reminders, photos, and videos. Brightwheel also allows you the parent to have private communication with your child's teacher.
- Parent/Teacher conferences may be arranged at any time to discuss a child's preschool experience.
- If the school needs to be closed due to inclement weather, we will follow Auburn City Schools' decisions.
- We will provide Facebook and Instagram notifications through the Auburn UMC Preschool page for certain events such as school and church events, registration dates, etc.

- We ask that:
  - If your child is to be picked up by any other person other than you, (or will be picked up early), please notify the director and teacher.
  - If your child will be absent due to travel or illness, please notify the director or teacher. We worry about our children when they are absent.
  - All children have a permanent file with the child's doctor's name, phone number, and other emergency information. **Please contact the director if there are any changes to be made.**
  - If your contact information changes, please notify the Director as soon as possible.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Parents and children have the right to expect that all information about their family is confidential.

- A child's behavior and development should be discussed only with his or her teachers and parents.
- A parent does not have the right to know who injured their child; they do have the right to know the circumstances and how both children were cared for and/or disciplined.
- Photographs will be used on the website or publicly only with parental consent. A media release form will be on record for each child.

## **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS**

Disruptive behaviors of a student shall be defined as behaviors that generally disrupt the classroom, which are disobedient or disrespectful to teachers or the director.

This behavior shall include, but is not limited to:

- Failure to obey instructions.
- Talking when inappropriate
- Talking back to a teacher or the director
- Failing to remain seated, etc.

When disruptive behavior becomes a concern to a teacher or the director, a parent/ teacher/ director conference will be called. At least one guardian is required to attend this conference. If a child's behavior doesn't improve significantly after the conference, at the director's discretion, the child may be suspended from the preschool for one week. Per the director, the suspension is subject to being extended if the behavior continues.

## AGGRESSIVE AND/OR UNSAFE BEHAVIOR

Aggressive and/or unsafe behavior shall be defined as behavior in which inappropriate aggression is exhibited, or the child engages in unsafe, dangerous, or violent behavior.

This behavior shall include, but is not limited to:

- Kicking a student, teacher, or property in the classroom or on the playground.
- Hitting a student, teacher, or property with a hand or other item while in the classroom or on the playground.
- Throwing items in such a way that it places a person or property at risk.
- Biting.

## DISCIPLINE CONTROL POLICY

If an incident of aggressive and/or unsafe behavior occurs, this incident will be reported to the director and parents within three hours of the incident and shall be noted on the appropriate forms and filed in the student's records.

- The first incident of aggressive and/or unsafe behavior shall involve a notification to the parents of the child engaging in such behavior within three hours.
- The second incident of such behavior by a child will cause the parents of the child to be called immediately and will require that the child be picked up from school immediately.
- The third incident of such behavior by a child within a thirty (30) day period will result in a parent/teacher/director conference and can result in the student being suspended from the preschool for one week.

Additional incidents will result in a second parent/teacher/director conference and the child may be subject to additional suspension from preschool. If the behaviors continue after suspensions, the preschool board will then determine what further actions should be taken.

*In the case of a facial bite, severe bite, or broken skin, a parent of both children will be called immediately, and a decision will be made by the director and the teacher about what action should be taken.*

This policy is written for the safety and well-being of the child engaging in such behavior, other children in the classroom, and the teacher. These are general guidelines intended to aid the teachers, director, and preschool board in determining the most appropriate action for discipline situations.

## **DISMISSAL FROM PRESCHOOL**

In addition to our above-stated Discipline Policies, the Preschool board or Auburn UMC can determine if the actions of a parent or child enrolled in preschool warrant immediate dismissal from the preschool.

## **CONFLICTS INVOLVING PARENTS**

If any parent has an issue with a teacher or director regarding the treatment of their child or the operation of the preschool, then that parent must request a parent/teacher/director conference. This must be done by calling the preschool office and making an appointment. Under no circumstances should a conflict involving the behavior of a child, or the operation of the preschool be discussed or dealt with during drop-off or pick-up times, or during operation hours of the preschool, unless a conference has been scheduled. The teachers and the director need drop off and/or pickup times and hours of operation to educate and interact with the children, and to either safely bring the children into the building and classrooms or to dismiss them to their parent or caregiver. This is not intended to prevent general discussions between parents or teachers as to how the child's day has gone or to confirm information necessary for the operation of the school. It is to provide for the orderly operation of the school and to prevent attempts to resolve conflicts in front of the children.

## **PRESCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES**

### **Fire Safety**

Auburn UMC Preschool is inspected annually by the Auburn Fire Department. There are fire alarms, sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and emergency procedures to follow in case of fire. Specific emergency exit plans are posted in each classroom and our preschool staff is knowledgeable of the emergency procedure in case of fire. In the event you must pick up your child due to a fire, you will receive a pickup location via Brightwheel.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

A weather radio and severe weather warnings notify the Auburn UMC Preschool staff of severe weather conditions. When tornado sirens sound, all children are immediately escorted to the weather emergency areas of the facility. The Director monitors conditions and notifies Auburn UMC Preschool staff when it is safe to return to their classrooms.

Parents are encouraged to shelter in place during severe weather warnings. For your and your child's safety please DO NOT pick up your child during a weather emergency. Auburn UMC is an approved shelter by the Lee County Emergency Management Agency.

### **Emergency Contact**

It is required for each child to have 2 current emergency contact phone numbers. Parents must report changes in emergency contacts immediately to the office. In the case of an emergency, we will contact the first person listed and if they are not immediately available, we will call the next person until someone is reached.

### **Building Security**

During school day hours, the preschool front doors as well as our hallway doors will be locked from 9:15 to 11:40. You can enter the building through the Mathison Lobby.



## **PRESCHOOL HEALTH POLICIES**

1. If your child does not feel well (fever, sore throat, cough, nausea, diarrhea, etc.) please keep your child home. A parent will be called to pick up a child for the protection of others if the teacher feels it is necessary.
2. If your child contracts a contagious illness (chickenpox, etc.), please contact the school at once. The Director will notify other parents.
3. If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
4. No medications will be administered at school under any circumstances except for life-saving medication including but not limited to EpiPen, Auvi-Q, or rescue inhaler.
5. Children entering the 3 and 4-year-old program must be potty trained. Please refer to the Toilet Training section of the handbook.
6. Children need to be 24 hours free of symptoms before returning to school following an illness. A doctor's note may be required stating when the child can return to school, especially in cases of contagious illnesses that can easily spread such as but not limited to impetigo, Hand, Foot, and Mouth, Ringworm, etc.

### **GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL**

- Fever – must be fever free 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Diarrhea or Vomiting - 24 hours symptom-free from the last episode
- Strep Throat – cannot attend school until 24 hours after starting antibiotics and fever free.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - remain home for 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotic drops is given.
- Head Lice – 24 hours after treatment with medicated shampoo/ knit free.
- Ringworm – remain home for 48 hours after beginning the medication. The area infected must always be covered.
- Chicken Pox – cannot attend school until blisters have formed scabs.
- COVID – follow CDC recommended guidelines for isolation.
- Flu – must be fever free 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth

7. If your child becomes ill while at school, the Director will contact the parent/guardian immediately to pick up your child. If you are unavailable, your emergency contacts will be called. Your child will be separated from the other children while they wait for you to pick them up.
8. In the case of an emergency, EMS will be contacted first. The Director will then contact the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is unavailable, an emergency contact from the student's Auburn UMC Emergency Contact and Release Form will be called.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

We follow the Auburn City School System calendar; therefore, we will close for the same holidays that the school system closes. When severe weather is threatening our area, if Auburn City Schools close, then Auburn UMC Preschool will be closed.

In the event of the school closing due to unforeseen circumstances such as a natural disaster (i.e., tornado) or a national emergency (i.e., COVID), Auburn UMC Preschool will follow local, state, and national guidelines. Tuition for that month will not be pro-rated or refunded.

## SNACKS

- Please do not send peanut or tree nut products. **We are a nut-free facility.**
- Your child's teacher may advise of additional food restrictions due to allergies.
- Please note that snack time is meant to last for approximately 20 minutes. Please limit the number of choices in your child's lunchbox.
- Please send water bottles that have a straw. No twist-top bottles.

## TOILET TRAINING

We understand that toilet training is a process, but we require our three-year-old and four-year-old students to be independently toilet trained and in underwear, with no pull-ups, before they start attending school. A child is toilet trained when he or she initiates going to the bathroom and can independently adjust the clothing necessary to urinate or have a bowel movement.

Each teacher sets regular breaks during the day to allow children ample opportunity to go to the bathroom.

Accidents are expected from time to time and will be treated as such. Please send an extra set of seasonally appropriate clothing including socks in a labeled Ziploc bag for any unexpected accidents. Accidents will be handled on a case-by-case basis, if a pattern arises or if the child does not appear to be fully toilet trained, we will require that he/she be kept at home until the child is confident in their bathroom skills. Tuition will continue to be paid and the child's spot will be held until they can return to school.

If by the first day of school, a child is **not fully toilet trained** and needs additional time, they will need to remain at home until the child is confident in their bathroom skills. Tuition will continue to be paid and the child's class spot will be held until they can attend school.

## TUITION AND FEES

<u>Class</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>Yearly</u>
<b>2-year-old</b>	Tue./Wed./Thu.	\$230/month	\$2070/yearly
	Monday – Friday	\$285/month	\$2565/yearly
<b>3-year-old</b>	Tue./Wed/Thu.	\$230/month	\$2070/yearly
	Monday-Friday	\$285/month	\$2565/yearly
<b>4-year-old</b>	Monday-Friday	\$285/month	\$2565/yearly

### FEES:

Registration/supply fee: \$225.00 (\$50.00 for additional children)

- This fee is non-refundable.
- Registration is not complete until fee payment is made in full.

## TUITION PAYMENT

1. Tuition is due on the first day of the month.
2. Tuition payments are paid online through the Brightwheel platform.
3. A grace period extends to the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) of the month. If payment is received after the 10<sup>th</sup>, then a \$10.00 late fee will be added to your balance.
4. Children will be withdrawn from the program when an account is delinquent **60 days from the original due date**. Within the 60-day time frame, if you would like to appeal against the delinquent account, you may do so in person to the Preschool Board.
5. Yearly tuition is divided into 9 installments; therefore, holidays do not change the monthly tuition rate. Our program's costs remain ongoing, and tuition is not reduced for days missed, including weather closings or absences of children due to illness or vacation.
6. **A \$30.00 fee will be assessed for a check returned, marked "Insufficient Funds".**
7. The budget for the school is based on the number of children registering. If your child must be withdrawn from preschool before the end of the school year for any reason, a written 30-day notice and tuition payment will be required.

## Preschool Holidays and Events

*Please remember aside from the start and end of school, Auburn UMC Preschool will follow the Auburn City School Calendar. Auburn UMC Preschool will cancel classes if Auburn City Schools cancel classes.*

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|--|---------------------------|
| • Meet the Teacher                       | August 16 <sup>th</sup>   |
| • First Day of School                    | August 17 <sup>th</sup>   |
| • <b>No School</b> – Labor Day           | September 4 <sup>th</sup> |
| • <b>No School</b> - ACS teacher workday | October 16 <sup>th</sup>  |
| • Auburn UMC Fall Festival               | October 29 <sup>th</sup>  |
| • Halloween Parties                      | October 31 <sup>st</sup>  |
| • <b>No School</b> – Veterans Day        | November 10 <sup>th</sup> |
| • Thanksgiving Break                     | November 20 – 24          |
| • Christmas Parties                      | December 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| • Christmas Program                      | December 13 <sup>th</sup> |
| • Christmas Break                        | December 14 – January 5   |
| • <b>No School</b> – MLK Day             | January 15 <sup>th</sup>  |
| • Valentine’s Day Parties                | February 14 <sup>th</sup> |
| • <b>No School</b> – President’s Day     | February 19 <sup>th</sup> |
| • Spring Break                           | March 3 - 8               |
| • Easter Parties                         | March 27 <sup>th</sup>    |
| • Easter Program                         | March 28 <sup>th</sup>    |
| • Easter Break                           | March 29 – April 1        |
| • <b>No School</b> – ACS Weather Day     | April 12 <sup>th</sup>    |
| • Last Day of School                     | May 9 <sup>th</sup>       |
| • Graduation Program                     | May 10 <sup>th</sup>      |

