

CHAMBLEE METHODIST KINDERGARTEN
4147 Chamblee - Dunwoody Road
Chamblee, GA 30341

Kindergarten Office 770-457-2527
Church Office 770-457-2525
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Handbook
2022-2023

CHAMBLEE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
KINDERGARTEN AND PRESCHOOL

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www.chambleemethodistkindergarten.org

Dear Parents,

I am so pleased to welcome you and your family to our preschool and kindergarten. Our program has a wonderful reputation in the community, has been in existence over 65 years, and has a staff dedicated to making this year an exciting time of growth for your child. We believe that each child is a unique creation of God, and we look forward to learning what is special about your children.

Our program is one of many active ministries of Chamblee First United Methodist Church. A copy of the Kindergarten Committee's policies and responsibilities is listed in this handbook. We are pleased that our school enrollment and staff represent a number of different religions and national backgrounds.

Our intent is to nurture each child through a variety of age-appropriate, stimulating, and enriching activities presented in a Christian atmosphere of love and acceptance. We feel that we are partners with you in working toward the goal of fulfilling each child's potential. We will try to create an environment in which children love the joy and wonder of learning.

We are thrilled to be able to get back to a more normal year of school while keeping health and safety a top priority. We will continue to monitor the presence of COVID in our community, school and church. We will continue to monitor the health of our children and will make decisions based on guidance from the CDC. This handbook will outline more specifically our policies as they relate to the overall health of your child. Keep this handbook handy to be able to refer to it as the school year progresses.

This handbook also explains many other important policies and procedures of our school. You will want to read it carefully and become familiar with its contents. It will answer many questions you might have about our school throughout the year.

Our staff is excited about this school year; we are eager to meet and get to know each child and parent. We thank you for sharing your child with us during these special formative years.

Sincerely,

Mellie O'Keefe, Director

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Our School

PHILOSOPHY

Our weekday preschool and kindergarten program at Chamblee First United Methodist is one of the many ministries of the church and offers a child-centered curriculum in a loving, Christian atmosphere where children learn through hands-on, experience-based learning activities, where children are allowed to mature and develop within their own time frame, and where curriculum is based on age-appropriate, success-oriented learning experiences. We focus on all aspects of a child's development --- cognitive (readiness skills of all types), social and emotional (exhibiting respect for others and ourselves), physical (developing fine and gross motor skills), and spiritual (learning and growing in a Christian environment of love and trust.) Program goals for each age group as well as age-specific objectives are given to parents at the class meeting with your child's teacher in early September.

We feel that we are partners with parents in working toward the goal of fulfilling each child's potential. The aim of our program is to create an atmosphere in which children develop a sense of self-worth, respect for others, a love of learning, and a foundation for their future education.

INFORMATION AND TOURS

We invite children and families to learn more about our program through our website, Open House for Prospective Families, and school tours. Visit our website www.chambleemethodistkindergarten.org to learn more about us. To schedule a tour, call 770-457-2527.

MULTI-CULTURAL POLICY

Each child is welcomed as a special child of God and offered a quality educational experience. We seek to recognize, appreciate and respect the uniqueness of each child and each child's culture. We welcome families of all faiths, races, and cultures to our school.

STAFF

The teaching staff is a group of well -trained, highly-skilled, and experienced teachers. The staff maintains high standards and continued professional growth by attending workshops, seminars, in-service training and conferences throughout the school year and in the summer. They are challenged by and enthusiastic about working with young children. Each teacher has her own special talent which, when brought together as a whole, makes for a terrific staff!

The school holds memberships in the following organizations: Georgia Preschool Association, Association of Weekday Church Schools, the Georgia Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The school is nationally accredited by Cognia, an accreditation agency which uses research-based standards to assess and grade schools.

KINDERGARTEN BOARD

Purpose

The Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten Board is the governing body responsible for the operation of the Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten (CMK), a weekday ministry of Chamblee First United Methodist Church (CFUMC). The CMK Board is charged with providing a quality preschool and kindergarten program for children of church members and the wider community. In the name of Chamblee First United Methodist Church, CMK provides a Christian program of learning which has love and caring as its foundation. Each child is welcomed as a special child of God and offered a quality educational experience. The CMK Board feels proud to oversee this ministry. The CMK Board is responsible to the governing body of the church.

The CMK Board acts as:

1. The major decision-maker;
2. A policy-maker;
3. A discussion panel to hear parents' and CMK staff concerns or grievances;
4. A forum for discussion on topics concerning the Kindergarten and preschool.

Membership

The CMK Board is composed of church staff members and church members. In addition, non-church members who are a preschool or kindergarten parent can be asked to serve. The staff members on the Board are the Kindergarten Director, the Director of Children's Ministries, and the Financial Administrator. Church members do not necessarily have a child in our program, but the Board always has several parents of Preschool and/or Kindergarten students in our program. There is no set number for board membership, but there are usually 8-12 members. As long as the Board member is interested and effective s/he is welcome to remain a member; there is no set tenure.

Membership selection comes from nominations. Based on the recommendation of the Kindergarten Director, the Nominating Committee of the church asks a church member to be the chairperson of the CMK Board. The CMK Board chairperson and the Kindergarten Director select persons for Board membership. Those names are submitted to the Nominating Committee for approval. CMK Board members for the current school year are listed in the school directory.

Responsibilities:

The Kindergarten Director is responsible to the CMK Board in the following ways:

1. Preparing and presenting a proposed budget.
2. Preparing and presenting proposed salaries, tuition fees, and registration fees.
3. Recommending personnel decisions and staff assignments.
4. Having written reports at meetings to be approved and acted on by the CMK Board and to be entered as the official minutes.
5. Bringing concerns from staff and/or parents for discussion, consideration, and resolution by the CMK Board.
6. Keeping the CMK Board informed on curriculum and bringing changes to the Board for approval.
7. Bringing proposals on additions or deletions of classes and/or programs.
8. Communicating issues, trends, and information from other community preschools.
9. Communicating accreditation requirements and issues.

At all times, the Kindergarten Director is accountable to the CMK Board. The CMK Board Chairperson will provide a written evaluation of the Director once per school year.

The CMK Board's responsibilities include:

1. Approving budgets, salaries, and setting registration and tuition fees.
2. Approving personnel matters regarding hiring and termination of employees.
3. Assisting the Director with fundraisers and other special projects.
4. Approving any additions or deletions of classes and/or programs.
5. Helping set long term goals for the school.
6. Assisting the director and staff in evaluating the appropriateness of the program for children with special learning circumstances or needs.
7. Evaluating the Kindergarten Director and reporting to CFUMC Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

Feedback/Suggestions

We feel that the most positive emotional environment exists when parents and the program work together as partners. Over the years, parents have provided us with valuable input, which has assisted us with improving our program. A parent questionnaire is available every spring. We encourage you to answer the questions honestly and let us know your opinion. We encourage and respect parent feedback so that we can provide the best early childhood experiences for all children. At any other time throughout the year, please communicate any suggestions, comments, or concerns to the director and/or teachers.

Grievances

Though conflicts and grievances are rare occurrences at CMK, we have a process in place for handling them if they arise. We ask if you have a conflict or concern, you bring the problem to the attention of the child's teacher and/or the Kindergarten Director. In the case of a conflict or issue with the teacher, we prefer that parents attempt to address the grievance with the teacher before bringing the problem to the director. If the problem cannot be resolved directly with the teacher, then the director will assess the problem and conduct an initial investigation of the conflict. The director will work with parents to find a mutually satisfying resolution to the issue or concern.

If a resolution cannot be reached at this stage, the director and parent(s) will present the problem to the CMK Board or designated committee representative. Options for mediation, where a third party facilitates a discussion of the issue and helps the parties come to a mutually satisfactory resolution, or arbitration, where the issue is presented to the CMK Board by both parties and the committee determines an appropriate resolution, will be offered by the committee or representative.

Mediation can be facilitated by the CMK Board Chairperson, a designated Kindergarten Board member, or a designated Chamblee First United Methodist Church staff member. Through mediation, the parties work together to find a solution to the problem.

In the event the conflict reaches the level of arbitration, the CMK Board will hear from the relevant parties and then vote on an appropriate resolution. The decision of the CMK Board will be final.

Day-to-Day Activities

HOURS

Regular school hours are from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Kindergarten hours are from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Carpool begins at 8:45 am so that children arrive just before school and we expect them to be picked up on time between 12:00 pm – 12:10 pm (1:00 pm if in Kindergarten.) Being picked up on time greatly adds to your child's sense of security.

ORIENTATION

We provide several orientation opportunities before the first day of school. An orientation meeting just for parents new to the school will be held in late August to make parents aware of the policies and procedures which need to be followed to help the school run smoothly and to familiarize parents with the early childhood learning process. You will be able to meet other parents and have any questions answered at this meeting.

In addition to Orientation there are two days ("Meet the Teachers" and "short" school day) for the children to attend to allow the children to meet their teachers, visit the classroom and get acclimated to our school. Parents are encouraged to join us for Meet the Teachers day. The "short" day of school is just for the children.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

As the school year begins, CMK has several measures in place to assist staff in recognizing and learning our students and his/her class. Teachers will attach a tag to the student's tote bag which identifies the child by his/her first name, classroom and carpool number. These tags are to remain on the student's tote bag for the entire school year. In addition, teachers will place sticker nametags on each student upon his/her arrival to school for the first days of the school year to assist the staff with learning each student's name.

SUPPLIES

Most supplies will be furnished by the school, however, we do ask that you provide an inexpensive tote bag (not a backpack) suitable for carrying papers home from school. The tote bag should be about 12 inches by 16 inches and open at the top (not a fold-over top). Send it every day! Our teachers will place a zippered pouch on each tote bag for notes, newsletters, checks, etc.

The school will have inexpensive tote bags for sale at Meet the Teachers Day with the Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten logo on the totes for those interested.

We would appreciate it if you send such things as margarine tubs, oatmeal boxes, paper towel tubes, buttons, and dress-up clothes your family no longer needs. The teachers will advise you of other things like these we need during the year.

CLOTHING

Comfortable play clothes which the child can manage at bathroom time is encouraged. Children should wear socks and shoes designed for active school both indoors and out, not sandals, flip-flops, smooth-soled boots, or Crocs. This is for the safety and comfort of your child on the playground and during creative movement. Label all clothing (especially coats, mittens, jackets.) We can return lost items if labeled.

Rainwear and umbrellas are not necessary, since we use the covered portico during arrival and dismissal. A warm jacket for outdoor play in cold winter weather is necessary since we take the children outside daily, even if the weather is cold. Fresh air and active outdoor play are important for physical, cognitive, and social learning.

We also ask that each child keep a clean set of clothes in his/her tote bag in the unusual case of a potty accident at school.

Face masks/coverings may be required at some time during the school year. Please keep one in your child's bag.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The school strongly encourages parent involvement in all aspects of our program. We need parent volunteers for classroom parties, story time, special art activities, outdoor nature walks, the Scholastic book program, fundraisers, and snacks. We invite parents to visit our classrooms at any time to share special hobbies, talents and interests with us. Be sure to coordinate with your child's teacher any visit to the classroom so she can prepare the children for your visit.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

At times a teacher will need to be out due to illness, professional development, family circumstances or other reasons. The school provides a qualified substitute teacher during these times. CMK substitutes go through an application process to ensure they are qualified to be in our classrooms.

If you are interested in being a substitute teacher, please contact the director. You would be paid for this work, which is an important need in the school. A background check (paid for by the school) and a TB test are required.

COMMUNICATIONS - NEWSLETTERS AND NOTES

We try to keep the lines of communication open and active! We send monthly school newsletters that tell about upcoming events and class calendars via tote bag mail or e-mail. Always check the tote bag every day to see notes, but most importantly to see what your child has been doing. This is another way of communicating with you about topics in the classroom and the child's interests and progress.

The school uses e-mail for communication as well; make sure that we have a correct e-mail address for you. Reminders of upcoming church and school events are often sent by e-mail from the director. The school website will also have an up-to-date calendar. We also communicate with you via parent/teacher conferences. Two conferences are held during the school year - one in the fall and one in the spring and at any other time you request a conference. We are your partner in the development and education of your child, and partners must communicate. Parents have e-mail addresses and phone numbers of staff as well.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

During arrival and dismissal safety is the most important concern. We will use the covered portico area on the southern most side of the church. For safety reasons, we want to keep pedestrians and automobile traffic as separate as possible, (NO PEDESTRIANS CROSSING CARPOOL LINES.) We encourage you to use the carpool lane for drop off and pick up.

Starting this routine early really helps your child transition to the school day. Teachers and staff will assist your child in exiting the car and can help provide positive, encouraging words to start the day. If you plan to not use the carpool lane, please park in the parking spots closest to the sidewalk along the church building to avoid having to walk across the parking lot.

Your family's carpool number will be sent home in your child's tote bag. Always use your number when picking up your child(ren). Keep it visible in your windshield so that we may have your child(ren) waiting for you when you pull into the portico. These unique carpool numbers are an added level of security so that we know the appropriate person is picking up your child.

We put strong emphasis on the children's safety at all times, especially during drop-off and pick-up time. With this in mind, we ask that you follow these rules:

1. Never let children out of the car if no one is at the portico door.
2. Wait for car doors to be opened and closed by the staff.
3. Only side car doors nearest the entry will be used to avoid having anyone walk between cars. Your child will need to exit/enter the vehicle when assisted by a teacher from the back seat behind the passenger side of the car. This is the safest way to avoid crossing behind or in front of a car in the carpool line. If you are also dropping off a child for PMO, please put that child in the backseat behind the passenger seat. We will no longer walk between cars to get children out.
4. Cars must be fully stopped when loading and unloading (**please put the car in park.**)
5. During carpool time, please keep children seated inside the car. For their safety, do not allow children to put their arms and heads out of the car windows or sunroof.
6. In the afternoon, display your carpool number as soon as you are in line so that we may have your child(ren) ready for you when you get to the door. Please avoid having the number lying flat on the dash or hidden by windshield wipers. Hanging your number from the rearview mirror using a hanger is helpful.
7. During afternoon carpool, our staff will assist children into the back seat only (air bag safety).
8. Please pull out of loading area into a parking space to fasten children in car seats.
9. Please do not engage in any electronic communications (phone calls, text, social media, etc.) while in the carpool line and the portico area so as to devote full attention to children and traffic.
10. Let us know in writing or by e-mail if someone different is picking up your child (or call the school office before 11:30 am). This person should be listed on your emergency forms as well.
11. Please **DO NOT** at **ANYTIME** leave your car parked in any portico entrance to come inside (even for just a few minutes). This blocks all traffic coming in.

Parents of 2 year old children may wish to walk their child to and from the classroom for the first several days of school. Consider the needs of your child and discuss what may be best for these young children with their teacher. If you choose to walk in, remember to park closest to the sidewalk along the church building.

At 9:05 the doorway at the carpool portico into the building will be locked. For the safety of all our children the side building doors must be locked at all times.

LATE ARRIVAL

If you are running late in the morning, please plan to park your car near the church office entrance portico and enter through the main door coming into the atrium of the church building. The front desk volunteers will be happy to greet you and assist you in finding your child's classroom if needed. Be sure to use the doorbell buzz in system when arriving at the church.

LATE PICK-UP

Picking up children promptly every school day is vital to building their sense of security. The joy and excitement of a wonderful morning at school quickly vanish when a child is consistently last to be picked up.

Children who are not picked up by 12:10 pm will be taken to one of the Lunch Bunch classrooms so that the staff may finish their work of cleaning up and getting ready for the next day. The Lunch Bunch fee will be billed to you the following month. Please park and come in for your child if you are late.

The Kindergarten Board has instituted a fee of \$10 to be applied for anyone who is late picking up their child, including after enrichment classes. The purpose is threefold:

1. Since carpool begins at 12:45 pm or 1:45 pm, children should not have to wait more than 15 minutes. These two afternoon carpool lines move quickly since there are fewer students at school then, so a child still waiting at 1:00 pm or 2:00 pm is usually the only one remaining.
2. If we have not heard from you by 1:00 pm or 2:00 pm, we have no alternative but to phone those relatives or friends **listed on the emergency contact list you have provided**. Calling them unnecessarily inconveniences and/or alarms them and often means that both of you are on the way to pick up your child.
3. Lastly, the staff member who remains with your child is then unable to finish her duties on time and may then be late picking up her own children or meeting her own responsibilities or appointments.

Please understand how your lateness will affect your child and the school. It is most important to your child that you make every effort to be on time for dismissal. If you will be using a nanny or someone other than you for afternoon pick-up, make sure they understand these policies.

In case of emergency, please call someone else to pick up your child if possible. Call the school (770-457-2527). If no one answers the school phone, call the church office (770-457-2525) and let us know that you or someone whom you have designated is on the way so that we may reassure your child and plan on who will wait with your child. Most importantly, allow extra time in your schedule for unexpected delays so that your child will be picked up on time.

MESSAGES

Please let us know if there is a change in your child's schedule, such as going home a different way, going home with another child---- anything different. Put the message in writing and put it in the zippered pouch attached to your child's tote bag, or send an e-mail to the school office (mokeefe@chambleeumc.org.) We must have your permission for your child to ride home with someone different.

If during the day it is necessary for you to get a message to your child's teacher, you may call the school office at **770-457-2527**. Teachers are instructed NOT to use cell phones or email while supervising children during the school day.

If you are phoning the school between 11:40 am and 12:15 pm with an important message regarding your child's transportation on that day, please remember to call the church number (770-457-2525) since no one is in the school office to answer the phone during carpool time.

CHAPEL

On a Wednesday and Thursday of each month (you will be notified of the exact days in the monthly calendar), Chapel is held at 9:15 am in the church sanctuary. You are invited to attend every month. Our music teacher leads the children in some songs, and the Director, one of the pastors, or one of the ministerial staff will give a short talk and prayer.

The emphasis in Chapel is on the nature of God----He is a loving, caring Creator and He shows love and care to each one of us through nature and people around us. We are a part of His plan and encourage everyone to model this love of others and care for His world. Sometimes pictures or objects are used to illustrate points in the talk. The atmosphere during Chapel is warm, accepting, loving and relaxed. We hope parents will attend as often as possible.

FIELD TRIPS

The kindergarten class plans to take at least one field trip during the school year. A permission form and detailed information will be sent home prior to each trip. We also have special events/visitors come to the school that take the place of field trips; some examples are the fire department, musicians, storytellers, puppet shows, or community helpers. We feel that all of these things are enriching experiences for children.

MUSIC

We are fortunate to have an outstanding music program. Each class goes to music class twice a week. Classroom teachers may also have music during regular class sessions. Our music curriculum consists of singing, movement, games, rhythm instruments, listening and dramatization of songs. Children sign songs about God's love, our world and family.

CREATIVE MOVEMENT

Special creative body movement classes are held throughout the year; each class attends twice per week for about 15-20 minutes. The major goals are large motor development and coordination, body core development, bilateral coordination, and balance. The children use stretching exercises, running, ball rolling, bean bag tossing, obstacle courses, and other forms of exercise. They also learn to participate appropriately in group activities by taking turns and following rules of fair play.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

CMK recognizes that virtual learning is not age appropriate for our students. Therefore in the event of a school closure, teachers may provide a daily check-in via electronic means to serve as a springboard for at home activities. Tuition payments will not be refunded, and teacher salaries will be paid if the closure is less than four weeks.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual student pictures are taken in the fall (usually October) and class pictures are taken in the spring (usually March or April). These pictures are available for parents to purchase, but please be assured no one is required to make a purchase.

SNACKS

Snacks are provided daily by parents and served in the middle of the morning. We encourage parents to send nutritious snacks. A list of suggestions, including suggested quantities and serving requirements, is at the end of this handbook (see page 22). Children are proud when they have brought the snack for the morning, and it is a good experience in sharing. Snacks may be simple or elaborate, homemade or store-bought. Your help with this is appreciated and helps us in keeping tuition costs down. Your teacher will be in touch with you about your assigned week. Cold water is served daily, so a beverage is not necessary.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays (and un-birthdays for children who have summer birthdays) are exciting occasions at the school. Children enjoy sharing a special snack with their classmates. You may also send or bring a beverage such as 100% juice or milk.

You may provide cups and napkins but please no favors. If your child wants to give favors or something special, you can select a book to share and to remain a part of the classroom materials. **No candles (fire marshal regulation) or balloons, please.**

Please do not send birthday party invitations to school unless everyone in the class is included. Please check with the teachers for an updated list of students. We adults understand when not all children can be invited, but it is difficult for children to understand. No matter how carefully the child distributes invitations, such wonderful plans cannot be kept quiet and someone is hurt if everyone is not included. You may wish to use e-mail or regular mail to send invitations.

SHOW AND TELL

Show and Tell for older classes is designed primarily to foster language development and to help the child develop poise in speaking before the group. Each child can feel that he/she is making a contribution to the group, and therefore, develops a stronger positive self-concept. Teachers may handle the scheduling in different ways and will tell you their procedure in their parents' meeting in September.

Nature provides many wonderful resources which can be used for Show and Tell. Encourage your child to bring such things as objects found in nature, a favorite possession which your child loves to tell about, books, a memento from a trip, or something your child has created. If your child has no special thing to show, opportunity will be given to tell the group something that is of interest. Some things that are NOT appropriate to bring to school include toy guns, knives, money, valuable jewelry, etc.

We let the children see and hear about items at Show and Tell time but do not let them play with these things at school. The idea of possession versus sharing is still fragile at this age so toys from home stay in the child's bag during play time.

LUNCH BUNCH PROGRAM

Lunch Bunch is offered daily from 12:00 noon until 1:00 pm and is staffed by CMK teachers. Children bring a lunch from home for a time of fun and relaxation. Please send nutritious lunches, ready to eat, which don't require cutting, refrigeration, or heating.

For dismissal, children go with the teacher to the portico area at 12:45 pm to be picked up by 1:00 pm. Loading cars begins at 12:45 pm and all children should be picked up by 1:00 pm unless they are participating in an enrichment classes until 1:45 pm.

There is an extra cost for the lunch bunch hour and the CMK staff will record attendance, and you will be billed monthly by e-mail for the days attending.

PAYMENTS

Tuition checks are due by the 10th day of each month. On the 1st of each month, a bill will be sent via e-mail. Make checks payable to Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten (CMK). We do not operate with a profit margin, so our obligations cannot be met if tuition is not paid each month. The amount of tuition is based on the entire school year and is divided into nine equal monthly payments which are completed April 1st (students enrolling after September 1st will have a May payment). No refunds are given for absences. You may pay for more than one month at a time and you may also combine tuition payments for siblings enrolled at CMK. Checks should be placed in the zippered pouch or mailed to the school rather than carried in the child's hand. Cash tuition payments should be given in person to the Director. Tuition checks should be separate from checks written for PMO and enrichment classes.

Lunch Bunch bills will also be sent to you at the first of the month via e-mail following the month being billed for, and are due by the 10th of the month. You may include this amount with your tuition check.

Health & Safety

STUDENT HEALTH

Our goal at CMK is to keep everyone healthy throughout the school year. Therefore, our policies reflect best practices as identified by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the CDC, and our accrediting agency, COGNIA.

We recommend that children wash their hands every day as soon as they get home from school. Careful hand washing is important to help slow down the spread of illness.

We urge you to keep children at home if there are signs of illness (fever, cough, rash, runny nose, vomiting, or diarrhea) and to send them to school regularly when well. Please let us know within 24 hours if your child contracts a contagious or communicable disease (such as chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, pin worms, viral infections, mumps, measles, scarlet fever, and COVID), and we in turn will notify other parents. If your child is not well enough to play outside at school, please keep your child at home.

Since COVID will continue to be a contagious virus in our community, decisions will be made based on the latest guidance from the CDC and other guiding agencies. CMK reserves the right to adjust any policy based on real-time circumstances.

We may ask you to obtain a COVID test before sending your child back to school if they have been exhibiting symptoms of COVID. Results will need to be shared with the school before the child can return to school. We expect parents to let us know if anyone in the family has been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID and to self-isolate for the recommended time period before returning to school.

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will remove the child from the classroom, we may ask the child to wear a face mask and we will call you. If you are unavailable, we will call one of your emergency contacts. The intent of this policy is to protect the spread of germs during the school day. Also know that if your child doesn't feel well, being at school will not be a positive experience.

ILLNESS

Please keep your child home with any of the following:

1. Any fever greater than 99.5 orally within the last 48 hours without fever reducing medicine.
2. Diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours.
3. Strep throat treated less than 24 hours and fever within 24 hours.
4. Chicken pox until the last lesion has completely crusted (usually 7-10 days).
5. Influenza until at least 48 hours after the last fever and child feels up to activity.
6. Pink eye until it has been treated at least 24 hours and there is no drainage or crusting, unless it is bacterial instead of viral, which may take longer.
7. Croup within the last 48 hours and cough is still frequent.
8. Sinus infection and without fever for 24 hours and child feel up to activity.
9. Measles, roseola, or rubella until rash has cleared, usually at least 5 days.
10. Fifth disease for 24 hours after diagnosis.
11. Skin rash or boils of unknown origin.
12. Pneumonia, bronchitis, or asthma treated less than 48 hours.
13. Tonsillitis within 48 hours of symptoms.
14. Gastrointestinal illness within 24 hours, and until stool is well-formed and fewer than 3 per day.
15. COVID-like symptoms if exposed or until test results return.

The vast majority of runny noses are not allergic but viral in nature, especially if the discharge is not clear. If the discharge is constant and the child is unable to control it with tissues or blowing, then the child should be at home. We do not expect a child to stay home for the 7-10 days it takes the common cold to run its course, but the child should remain home while sneezing, coughing, and runny nose are frequent.

Prescription medications may be administered only with written permission from the parent. The medication must be brought to the school in the original prescription bottle, showing prescription number, name of medication, date filled and child's name, physician's name and directions for dosage. Over the counter medications are not permitted unless prescribed by a physician and the signed request is kept with the medication. In most cases, however, our 3-hour day allows time for parents to administer all medications at home.

STUDENTS WITH ALLERGIES

For safety and consistency, the school has the following policies regarding allergies:

1. A student with an allergy to insect bites must provide 2 current Epi-pens to be left at school at all times. These pens will be stored in the classroom and the "To Go" bag or First Aid kit so that it will be available both indoors and outdoors.
2. A student with an allergy to any food product which requires an Epi-pen must provide 2 current Epi-pens to be left at school at all times. They will be stored in a designated cabinet within the classroom and the "To Go" bag and these locations are made known to all staff.
3. A student with any food allergy significant enough to require an Epi-pen may only have snacks sent from home. ALL snacks, including food for parties, must be provided by the parent in containers labeled with the child's name. For special occasions, such as holiday or birthday celebrations, the parent may wish to check with the party-planners to see what is being served so that the parent may send in something similar to what the rest of the class is having.
4. A classroom may be designated "peanut and/or tree nut free" from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm only, with the cooperation of the parents, teachers, and director.
5. The parents of any student with an allergy that requires an Epi-pen must meet with the child's teachers and the director prior to the start of each school year. The parent must provide the school with a medical condition form (given by the school.)
6. For the safety of the child, any student with a food allergy significant enough to require an Epi-pen may not stay for Lunch Bunch unless given prior permission by the child's classroom teachers and the Director.
7. Children with milder food allergies which do not require an Epi-pen may in some cases be required to bring snacks from home if the foods are common ingredients found in many recipes or processed food items. These children may stay for Lunch Bunch only with the consent of the teachers and the director.
8. If a child may need an antihistamine such as Benadryl or Zyrtec due to food allergies or insect bites, it must be provided by the parent, be in its original container within the expiration date, and have the child's name and correct dosage on it. The parent must provide the school with a medical condition form prior to the beginning of school (and the school will provide you this form to complete).
9. All children will be asked to wash their hands after eating lunch, before playing with toys in the classroom.
10. Parents should notify the teachers if there are restrictions for cooking or craft activities involving touching food.

FOOD INTOLERANCE/SENSITIVITY

Children who have a food intolerance or sensitivity may be asked to bring a snack from home every day or bring into the classroom an appropriate snack that the teacher can give that child every day. Unfortunately, our teachers don't have the time to read all the packaging labels for all the snacks that are sent in by other families. For the safety of the child, the parent will need to send in an appropriate snack.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children attending Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten must meet the Georgia state standards of immunization. Up to date immunizations help ensure the health and safety of all our children at school and in the church community. We require a Georgia 3231 immunization form to be current and on file before a child begins school. The only exceptions that will be made are:

Medical Exemption: The medical exemption is applicable when a child has a long-term condition that contraindicates immunization. The pediatrician must provide detailed documentation regarding the reason for the exemption. Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten reserves the right to obtain a second opinion. Any medical exemption must be reviewed and renewed annually.

Delayed/Alternative Vaccination Schedules: Parents whose children are on a delayed or alternative vaccination schedule must submit documentation from the child's pediatrician indicating the reason for the delayed/alternative schedule that will be followed. A "Parent Refusal to Vaccinate" form will not be accepted as a reason for the delayed or alternative vaccination schedule.

Epidemic, Outbreak, Exposure: Please note, in the event of a contagious disease epidemic, outbreak, or exposure, children with medical exemptions or delayed/alternative vaccination schedules will be required to remain at home until the Georgia Department of Public Health announces the outbreak has ended.

All exemption requests will be reviewed and approved by the Kindergarten Board annually.

TOILET TRAINING

All children enrolled in 3's, PreK, and Kindergarten must be completely toilet-trained at the beginning of the school year to attend classes. They should be independent enough to attend a 3-hour school day without having frequent accidents and should be cooperative when asked to visit the restroom and be able to use it independently. Children should be wearing underwear, not pull-ups or diapers, at school.

To clarify, our definition of completely toilet-trained is as follows:

1. The child recognizes the need to go to the bathroom.
2. The child tells an adult of this need.
3. The child enters the restroom on his/her own.
4. The child is able to put clothing off and on with little or no assistance.
5. The child is able to wipe appropriately and flush.
6. The child washes his/her hands and resumes activity.

If a child is not sufficiently toilet-trained to do the above consistently, the director may ask the parent to keep the child at home until training is complete. We understand that an accident may occur, but frequent accidents may result in our requesting that a child be picked up from school. With additional accidents, the parent might be called to change the child and take him/her home for the rest of the morning. Our purpose is not to punish the child but to help the child develop toilet training skills in a comfortable environment.

Sometimes children are able to use the toilet sufficiently for the 3-hour morning but not after lunch. Children who have accidents during Lunch Bunch may be asked not to attend Lunch Bunch until they are fully toilet-trained and can take care of their own needs.

HEAD LICE

Occasionally we will have a child with head lice. Head lice can sometimes be a difficult problem to resolve. The school will take steps to stop the spread of head lice in a classroom.

All cases of head lice must be reported to the director even if the child has been treated at home. If a sibling has head lice and the CMK student has been treated preventatively,

parents should still notify the director. When head lice are spotted on a child at school, the parents will be called to pick up the child and begin treatment. The child may return to school the next day, provided live lice are gone and the hair is as nit-free as possible. If a parent discovers the lice at home, please notify the director. The child may return to school the next day after treatment, provided live lice are gone and the hair is as nit-free as possible.

The specific treatment plan is left to the parents to decide. Some families consult their pediatricians for advice, while others rely on online information and photos. Some families consult one of the professional lice remover services available in the neighborhood. Parents may be asked to share with the director what steps have been taken to eliminate the lice, and it is up to the discretion of the director whether a child may remain in school that day (based on examination of the child's scalp by school personnel).

When a case of head lice is identified in a classroom, all families in that class will be notified (the child will not be identified by name). The school will request that the families closely monitor and inspect their child's hair and scalp every day for about two weeks before sending their child to school. Parents unfamiliar with head lice should check online for photos and methods for detecting them. School personnel may also check all of the children's scalps upon arrival and will request that a child be pick up immediately if lice or nits are present.

School staff will ensure that the affected classroom is properly vacuumed and shared items such as dress-up clothes and hats are temporarily removed. Please know that head lice actually prefer very clean hair since they can cling better to a clean hair shaft, so the presence of head lice does not mean that a child or his/her environment is unclean.

If multiple cases are identified in a classroom or at the school, the school may take additional actions to prevent more lice infestation.

DISCIPLINE

We believe that discipline is an opportunity to teach, not to punish. If there is a problem, the teachers assess the situation and help the child decide what a better choice of action might be. Better yet, the child's attention is diverted to some other area of interest (positive redirection). Mainly, we will try to find out the source of the undesirable behavior. If there is a persistent problem, we will talk with the parents, but most day-to-day situations are solved during the morning. Corporal punishment is never used.

BITING

Some young children go through a biting phase that is troubling to parents. Biting happens for many reasons under a variety of circumstances, but usually stops when a child can express needs and feelings with words. If biting occurs at school, staff will work to determine possible reasons, provide re-direction, and teach more appropriate behavior. A note will always be sent home to the parents of both the biter and the child who is bitten.

If biting continues, the parents, teachers, and director will have a conference to discuss the situation and will work together toward a solution. Parents may be asked to pick up the child from school immediately or to keep the child home for a period of time. If the problem persists, the child may need to be removed from the class.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Kindergarten Board of Chamblee First United Methodist Kindergarten reserves the right to accept or decline the application of any child having a physical, cognitive, or emotional condition, which, in the Board's sole judgment, poses a possible threat to the health, welfare or safety of other students, or requires a student/teacher ratio lower than planned for by the school.

The Board may require a child to submit to an evaluation or examination by a Board - approved team prior to or during enrollment. This may include medical examination and testing. If during the school year a child exhibits conditions or symptoms indicative of infectious or communicable disease, the Board may require the child to submit to such evaluation. Pending completion of evaluation, the Board may prescribe reasonable limitations for the child. The recommendations of the evaluation team will be reported to the Board which will determine subsequent actions to be taken. All information relating to such evaluations and Board decisions will be treated confidentially.

The school cannot accommodate any child having a physical, mental or emotional condition or a learning disability which requires special supervision or instruction (without prior consent of the Director or Kindergarten Board) and/or which requires the dedication of special facilities or staffing for the child.

EMERGENCY PLAN

Fire drills and tornado drills are held regularly. The drills will be a combination of scheduled and surprise drills, both for the children and the staff. Evacuation routes and staff responsibilities during evacuation are posted in each room.

If the school building is evacuated for any reason, all of the children and staff will go to the Activities Building (the Gym). Parents would be contacted to pick up their children from this building. If for any reason the front driveway on Chamblee-Dunwoody Road is blocked, parents should use the back entrance to the church property from Commodore Drive in Huntley Hills. We recommend that parents use this entrance once or twice during the year in order to be familiar with it if necessary.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Chamblee Methodist Kindergarten will follow the guidelines for school closings due to inclement weather of DeKalb County Schools. Please check the internet, email, or TV for the announcement of the DeKalb County Schools. If they are closed, we will be closed also. We will also send an email to our families announcing the school closing. If there is a problem that pertains only to CMK, we will communicate with you via phone or email. We will not make up days that have been missed unless deemed necessary by the Director and the Kindergarten Board.

Occasionally we will open school on a day when DeKalb schools are closed. We will assess the school building and the grounds to make sure it is safe to drive and safe to park. We also will check to be sure the heat and electricity are working and will make a determination as to whether we can safely have school. These decisions will be communicated with parents via email from the Director and/or from the teacher. The safety of our children is our main concern so we will use good sound judgement when making these decisions.

Additional School Information

WITHDRAWALS / TERMINATIONS

Should it be necessary to withdraw a student because of transfer or other reasons, at least two weeks' notice in writing must be given to the Director. The tuition agreement signed upon enrollment states refunds are not given.

The school also reserves the right, with at least two weeks' notice in writing, to ask that a child be withdrawn if we feel our school cannot properly meet the needs of a child. The parent will be informed of the problem and the school will work with the parent, if requested, in seeking resources which may be helpful for the child.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As part of our annual budget, the school sets aside a small amount of scholarship money to assist those families who are undergoing financial hardship from loss of a job, illness in the family, or other serious circumstances. If you are in need, contact the director. You will be asked to complete a brief scholarship application, describing the reasons for your need. The application will be kept completely confidential; only the circumstances will be reviewed by members of the Kindergarten Board (no names attached.)

INSURANCE

Our registration fee includes a fee for school accident and/or injury insurance. Because of the increased cost of insurance and to keep our registration fee as low as possible, our policy is written to cover any excess expenses that a parent's own policy does not cover.

DATA PRIVACY

Records concerning your child (enrollment forms, health records, observations records and all other information about your child) are confidential information and will only be accessible to you, our school Director, the staff and the persons designated by our accreditors who validate our program for accreditation. We will give information to others only with your written consent.

The school directory lists addresses and phone contact information for the students, and each class will have an e-mail list for parents. All of the contact information may be used only for school purposes and should not be used for solicitation or any other reasons.

Many teachers take photos of class activities for the parents of students in their class and post pictures via a password-protected site such as Shutterfly. Only parents will be given permission to access these sites. These are for parents only and should not be forwarded. The majority of pictures accessible to parents are of group activities; however, if you prefer your child's picture not appear on the password-protected site, please notify the teacher.

Parents should not post any photos of school activities on social media unless your child is the only student in the picture.

Nutritious Snack Guidelines

The school encourages good nutrition and eating habits as part of the basic education of young children.

We offer the following suggestions when considering your snack selection for your child's class:

1. Simple is better.
2. A good rule of thumb: A fruit or a veggie plus something crunchy.
3. Avoid sugary or high fat snacks.
4. Sweet treats should be restricted to special events only.

Serving Size Guidelines

The following list should assist you in providing the correct amount of snack for your child's class. Some of the more frequent snack items are listed. Quantities are for **each day**. Snacks typically consist of **two different items** such as a handful of crackers and ½ piece of fruit. You should provide enough for the **total class plus two** to cover mishaps and the teachers who sit with the class at snack time.

Two and Three Years Old

Snack Crackers – 1 large box
Goldfish Crackers – ½ cup per child
Saltines and Graham Crackers – 1 box
Muffins – 3 mini-size or 1 large per child
Bananas and apples – ½ per child
Carrot sticks and dip – 4 sticks per child

Teacher suggestions: 2's prefer to be served small pieces. Please avoid really sweet items and runny foods like applesauce and yogurt. Mini-muffins are easier for them than large muffins.

Four and Five Years Old

The above snacks listed for 2's and 3's plus the following:
Graham cracker-peanut butter sandwiches – 2 squares per child
Mini-bagels and cream cheese – 2 per child
Trail mix – ¾ to 1 cup per child
Cheese – equivalent of 1 wrapped slice or 1 stick
Pretzels – 1 large bag
Snack crackers – 2 boxes

Teacher suggestions: Four and five years old children especially enjoy spreading their own peanut butter and cream cheese.