Wesley's Circle of Friends

Preschool Program

A Ministry to the Community

For Children and Families

PARENT HANDBOOK

Wesley Church

2540 Center Street

Bethlehem, Pa 18017

Office 610-865-5715 ext 12

Email susan@wesleychurch.com

Rev 8/31/26

Welcome

Dear WCOF Families,

Thank you for choosing Wesley's Circle of Friends Preschool (WCOF), our ministry to the community for children and their families. We are excited about our innovative program and look forward to serving your family's needs.

Wesley's Circle of Friends Preschool has been helping church and community families since 1996. For children ages 12 months to 4 years, WCOF provides a warm, loving environment where children can learn and grow. We are dedicated to nurturing life-long learners and developing loving relationships within our community.

Our teachers take time to know your child's unique strengths and help your child reach their full potential. Our class sizes are small, ensuring your child will receive individualized attention and loving care.

Please read this handbook carefully. Its purpose is to inform you of WCOF's philosophy, our policies, and our daily procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the WCOF Administrator. Thank you for choosing WCOF preschool to start your child's educational journey! We look forward to wonderful adventures together.

Many Blessings,

WCOF Preschool Teachers

WCOF Preschool Administrator

Susan Matacavage

susan@wesleychurch.com

WCOF Preschool Board of Directors

Parent Reviews

"Our daughter started in the toddler room and went from crying through the morning to not wanting to leave. The love she received from her teachers and all the staff at Wesley was remarkable, and we are so grateful for it. We loved watching her learn and grow and look forward to the years to come."

-The Weikel Family

"Our children have attended WCOF Preschool for the past 5 years, and we couldn't' be happier with the supportive environment, the curriculum, teachers, and children. Both our boys have been well prepared for kindergarten. Absolutely a wonderful program!"

-Anonymous

"Wesley Circle of Friends has been nothing short of incredible for our family. As a parent of a child with autism, I have been overwhelmed by how warm, welcoming, and accommodating they have been. Their communication is always excellent, my daughter has made so many loving friends, and the environment is truly inclusive, friendly, and happy."

-Anonymous

"*My daughter and son both attended Wesley Circle of Friends…….. Wesley's Circle of Friends not only prepared my children for Kindergarten but did so in a fun, nurturing environment. I will forever cherish the memories and friends my children made at Wesley."*

-Kristen Kubinsky

"Words cannot express how grateful we are to WCOF. The preschool team is extraordinary! Our son's last year of preschool has been more amazing than we ever could have imagined."

-The Stier Family

Our Mission:

To respond to the needs of young children and families by providing a safe, nurturing Christian environment and offering learning through play experiences and age-appropriate activities.

Our Staff:

Staff members attend weekly staff meetings as well as team meetings, teacher in-services, and CPR/First Aid Training. All staff members have their PA Criminal Background Check, the PA Child Abuse History Clearance, the FBI fingerprint based record check, and the National Sex Offender Registry clearance, and are trained in Safe Sanctuaries procedures.

Admission Guidelines:

- Your child must be at least 12 months old and walking by October 1 and no older than 5 years old to participate in our program.
- To enter the 2-, 3-, or 4-year-old class, your child must be of that age by October 1. Birthdays which occur during the enrollment year do not mandate a transfer to an older age class.
- The 2-year class does not require your child to be potty trained.
- Children entering the three-year-old class must be potty trained by October 31, to remain in the three-year-old class.
- Children entering the four-year-old class must be fully potty trained and independent in the bathroom.

Potty Training Policy:

Generally speaking, children are ready to start potty training between 18 months and three years old. Every child is different. At WCOF, we don't potty train, but we do support your efforts at home while your child is at school. Our view on potty training is that it is a team effort. We do have the following requirements:

- While potty training, your child needs to wear a pull-up to school.

- Once your child can remain dry for two weeks, they can transition to regular underwear while at school.

Potty Training Policy (cont.):

- We understand that children in training have accidents, however if your child is having three or more accidents at school in a week, we will require them to return to using pull-ups while in school until they are able to remain dry for two weeks.

- In order to be successful with potty training at school, your child will need to be verbal and request if they need to use the potty outside of their regular classroom potty breaks.

Enrollment Guidelines: Please follow these steps to enroll your child at WCOF:

- Schedule a tour with the Administrator and/or check for availability.

- Complete the registration forms including all emergency contact information and additional details about your child's needs.

- Pay the registration fee $100 per child, check made payable to Wesley Church, with WCOF on the memo line with your child's name.

- Have your child's pediatrician complete the Child Health Report form and return it prior to your child starting preschool. *Children younger than two years old will need an updated health form every six months.* This can be mailed to the church at 2540 Center Street Bethlehem PA 18017, dropped off in our locked mailbox at the main entrance of the church, or emailed directly to: susan@wesleychurch.com.

- Complete and return the signed acknowledgement page of the Parent Handbook no later than Welcome Day.

- WCOF Preschool begins registration for the next school year on February 1 for the children currently enrolled. On March 1, all remaining spaces are open to new families in the community.
  Enrollment is based on a first come, first served basis.

Preschool Schedule:

Toddlers	9:30 – 12:00 pm
Twos, Threes, and Fours:	9:30 – 1:30 pm

- Please adhere to the drop off and pick up times as noted so our dedicated teachers and staff are respectfully appreciated.

- If you are late for pick-up (1:40 pm or later), your child will be taken to Extended Care and you will be invoiced for their time in Extended Care.

Extended Care Schedule:

*Morning 8:00 – 9:30 am	All Ages
Lunch Bunch 12:00 – 1:30 pm	Toddlers
After School Care 1:30 – 4:00 pm	All Ages

**If you need child care earlier than 8:00am, special arrangements will need to be made with WCOF.*

We ask that you sign up at least 1 week in advance for extended care to ensure that we have adequate staff and availability. We have class size limits, and the Extended Care room is frequently at capacity. Extended Care is offered on a first come first served basis, unless prior arrangements have been made for the entire school year. If you have an emergency need for extended care, please contact the extended care coordinator ***and*** classroom teacher as soon as possible.

If you need to reach the morning extended care staff regarding schedule changes, an inability to enter the building, etc., please contact Ms.Scharee at (570) 856-4932.
If you need to contact the afternoon extended care staff, please contact Ms. Diana at (610) 570-7874. If you don't receive a response within 10 minutes, please email the Administrator at susan@wesleychurch.com.

All Extended Care requests must be coordinated by emailing:

wcofextendedcare@gmail.com

Security System: All doors are kept locked during regular preschool hours.
To access our preschool, families will need a key fob. A $10 security deposit, ***exact cash amount only***, is paid per key fob, for as many regularly scheduled pick up persons as needed.

Parking Procedure: Please follow carefully.

1. Park in a parking space in the back parking lot.
    a. Do **not** park in the spaces along the grass.
    b. Do **not** park next to the sidewalk.
    c. The driveway must remain completely open for two-way traffic flow.
    d. The handicapped parking is **reserved** for those with a designated plate or placard; please be respectful.
2. Drive **SLOWLY** through the parking lot and watch for small children.
3. **Always** hold your child's hand and **WALK** through the parking lot.
4. **Always** keep a watchful eye on your child.
5. Do **not** leave siblings or other children unattended in the car. If you need assistance with drop off or pick up due to a sick or sleeping child, please contact your child's teacher.

Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures:

The following procedures will help protect our children during arrival/drop off and pick up for all families.

Drop-off:

- Please accompany your child to the drop off area for their classroom
    - Toddlers (front entrance)
    - Twos, Threes and Fours (Fellowship Hall entrance)
- Sign in your child, including who will be picking up, at what time, & initial the sheet.
- If you are dropping your child off to Morning Extended Care, be sure to stop by their classroom to sign them in.
- If someone is to pick up your child, other than the sign in sheet designates, a phone call to your child's teacher and/or an email to the Administrator is required.
- If you arrive and your child needs to use the bathroom right away, please let one of their teachers know and they will get them to the bathroom.
- If you arrive after 9:40, please enter through the front of the building.

Absences:

Please contact the office (susan@wesleychurch.com) and/or your child's teacher via voice mail or email if your child will be absent for the day.

Pick-up:

- We will be using curbside pickup procedures at Fellowship Hall for dismissal.
    - *Toddlers leaving at the regular dismissal time of noon, will dismiss at the front entrance, following the same procedure as drop-off.*
- Please pull all the way up to the end of the driveway, or up to the car in front of you if you are not the first to arrive, and remain by your car until we bring your child out to you. *Please don't leave large gaps between you and the car in front of you; this will allow for a much more efficient dismissal for all.*
- Please make sure that your placard is in the passenger's side window of your car so that we can make dismissal as efficient as possible. (If you do not have your placard, we will ask to see your photo ID)
- We will call all cars up until the end of the sidewalk. After all cars from the first line advance, the second set of cars will be called.
- Teachers will bring out the children in the order of the family's position in line.
- As your child is safely fastened in their car seat, please pull forward and slowly proceed down the driveway to the exit. Please stay in line. If the car in front of you has not pulled forward, please do not leave the line and drive around them. This creates a very unsafe situation, and the safety of all children is extremely important to us.
- If you are running late and arrive to pick up your child after 1:40, your child will be taken to the extended care room and you will be invoiced for the time they are with us. (Extended care is invoiced on the quarter hour).

All children and siblings must remain with parents/guardians while on church property before children are signed into school and after they are signed out.

Thank you for helping us keep all our families safe and secure at Wesley Church.

Playground use after pick-up:

After picking up your child from WCOF preschool, you may choose to stay on property to allow your child time to play on the playground.

If you choose to stay and allow your child to play after the regular school day, please park your car in the parking lot and come to the rear Fellowship Hall door (closest to the playground) to pick up your child. Please be patient as we will be dismissing the car line children first.

If you are picking up your child from extended care, please park in the parking lot, enter the building through the extended care door as usual, and exit through that door as well. When you exit our building, please keep your child by your side until your child is safely on the playground. Once you pick up your child from the WCOF staff, they are your responsibility and must be supervised at all times while playing on the playground. Please follow the basic rules of the playground which include up ladder only, down slide only and no throwing mulch.

Re-entry to the building is not permitted.

Please remember that children must be **supervised always**, and are asked to **remain respectful** of the church property.

Communication:

Monthly newsletters from individual classrooms will be sent home in your child's folder. Important information regarding special events, school closings, and classroom celebrations will be in the newsletters. Please take time to read the monthly newsletter and ask any questions you may have.

Toddler and Twos Classes will share regular communication regarding developmental successes and any challenges to coordinate the best care for your child.

Threes and Fours Classes will have formal conferences in February and as requested by the family for addressing specific concerns.

We also invite you to sign up for your child's classroom ClassDojo.

Appropriate Clothing:

As we try to go outside every day, please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Preschool can be messy; please send your child in clothing that is comfortable and may get dirty. Please label your child's jackets, hats, mittens, etc. and update spare clothing regularly for changing seasons and proper fit. All children must wear either a diaper, a pull-up, or underwear while attending WCOF Preschool.

Snacks and Lunches:

Parents are asked to provide a midmorning snack for your child. Please pack a small, healthy, shelf stable and easy to eat snack in a small container or baggie with ***your child's name written on it***. The snack should be put in the ***side pocket of their backpack*** so that they are able to easily access their snack on their own. An afternoon snack will be provided for children staying in Extended Care past 3 pm.

Please send a bag lunch, preferably finger foods, and a drink. Be sure to specify food allergies on your child's registration form and update us to any changes throughout the year.

THIS IS A PEANUT FREE PRESCHOOL. PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD IN WITH PEANUT BUTTER OR ANY PEANUT PRODUCTS IN HIS/HER LUNCH!

Parent Involvement:

Families are encouraged to participate in program activities and provide input on a regular basis. Below are ways to be involved here at WCOF.

- Communicate with teachers and administrator
- Attend special events held at the preschool
- Encourage family and friends to attend special events
- Help with fundraisers
- Complete program evaluations and surveys

Snow Days:

We follow Bethlehem Area School District for closings and snow delays. WFMZ radio, and WFMZ website (https://www.wfmz.com/weather/stormcenter/), and ClassDojo will post any weather closings or delays. You can also sign up for automatic text messages from WFMZ. This is the *most efficient* way to get this information, and we encourage you to sign up for this service. Parents are not reimbursed for snow days.

Illnesses:

If your child is ill or experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not bring your child to school. If your child experiences any of these symptoms while at school, you will be asked to pick up your child as soon as possible:

- Diarrhea: Three or more watery stools in a 24-hour period or one bloody stool
- Nose: Green or yellow discharge
- Vomiting: Once or more in the past 24 hours
- Rash: Body, heat, or allergic reaction, especially if accompanied by a fever
- Eyes: Mucus or pus-like discharge, pink
- Sores: Oozing sores which cannot be covered or cold sores around the mouth
- Sore Throat: Especially if accompanied by a fever or swollen glands
- Lice, scabies; Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun.
- Any diagnosed contagious and/or communicable illness. The child will need a doctor's note to return to school.
- Fever (as defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics): Temperature of 100.4°F or above in the past 24 hours. Your child may return to school when he/she is fever free for 24 hours **without medication.**

Please let us know what your child is experiencing if he/she is sick so that we may responsibly and confidentially inform other families.

COVID Specific Procedures:

WCOF will follow all current Covid-19 guidelines and recommendations as provided by the CDC. (Updates provided as necessary) ***WCOF is "mask optional"*** at this time, subject to CDC recommendations.

Medicine:

WCOF staff are not permitted to give any child medicine. In emergency situations ONLY, staff will administer a parent/guardian provided EpiPen or inhaler/nebulizer for an allergic reaction. Parents must complete all registration forms including emergency contact numbers. Child medical history forms must be updated regularly to include any allergy information and doctor's orders for emergency treatment.

If your child has been prescribed an EpiPen, you must submit a completed, signed, and dated *Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan* from your child's physician.

Billing:

Tuition is due by the first of the month. Tuition bills will be emailed to parents approximately two weeks prior to the date they are due. Payment for extended care will be billed separately after the month in which it is used, and will be due upon receipt. Extended care cannot be prepaid. Tuition is paid for September through May. It is the same amount for each month. You will not be reimbursed for sick days, snow days, or vacation days.

WCOF will not charge a fee for checks returned for insufficient funds. However, WCOF will pass along any fees that the bank has charged to the church for the returned check, and the family will be responsible for paying that fee to WCOF.

WCOF preschool accepts checks or cash only. It is the responsibility of the family to pay tuition on time. Please note that if you are paying by cash, it must be the **exact amount** since we are unable to make change. Checks made payable to Wesley Church should include your **child's name** and either **"tuition" or "ext. care"** on the memo line. They may be:

- Mailed to Wesley Church
  2540 Center St
  Bethlehem, PA 18017 ATTN: WCOF
- Placed in a sealed envelope with your **child's name** and either **"tuition" or "ext. care"** written on the envelope and then given directly to your child's teacher or the Administrator.

Failure to pay tuition and/or extended care fees by their due date will result in the following actions:

- An email, written or verbal reminder for fees not collected.
- Monthly tuition or extended care not received by the 10th of the month, will incur a $10 late fee.
- Unpaid tuition may be the cause for disenrollment of the child from WCOF's care.
- Any family's unusual financial circumstances will be brought before the Wesley's Circle of Friends Board for consideration.

Withdrawal:

To withdraw your child from the program, you are required to give a 30-day notice. If a 30-day notice is not given, you are required to pay the next month's tuition.

If you will be reducing the number of days enrolled for the week, we will reduce your tuition the following month.

If you would like to add more days that your child attends per week (which will be based on availability) we will bill you separately for the days your child will attend that month and then change your tuition payment for the months to follow.

Behavior Policy: To maintain a safe and educationally sound environment in all the classes, we have adopted the following policies.

All behaviors are expected to be age appropriate for that classroom. The teachers are responsible for identifying behaviors that are inappropriate based on health, safety, and disruption of the class. There are some unacceptable behaviors such as biting or extreme aggressive behaviors, hitting, kicking, pushing another child or teacher, which may immediately terminate a child's enrollment at WCOF preschool. Should such an incident occur, the following steps will be taken:

- Upon the 1st incident of unacceptable behavior, parents will receive written notification of the behavior and will be expected to address this behavior with their child.

- Upon the 2nd incident of unacceptable behavior, parents will be required to attend a conference with the teacher and WCOF Administrator to establish a plan of action.

- Upon the 3rd incident of unacceptable behavior, parents will be required to attend a meeting with a WCOF Board member and the WCOF Administrator to determine if Wesley's Circle of Friends preschool is the appropriate place for their child.

Behavior Policy (cont.):

If a child repeatedly exhibits unsafe behaviors during the school day and resists teachers' attempts to calm the child and bring them back to the group's activities, teachers may reserve the right to have a parent come to pick up their child.

If a child has been diagnosed with any type of special needs, and the behavior is related to those special needs, a BHT (Behavioral Health Technician) or aide will be required in order for the child to attend our preschool. If the child is having extreme behavior issues, then the Administrator and WCOF Board may have the child take a leave of absence from the classroom until a BHT or aide can accompany the child during the preschool hours. We will coordinate as best we can with aides to enable the child to continue to grow and thrive. However, in some circumstances, a child's needs may be greater than what WCOF can provide. Occasionally, the preschool is not a match for the child's needs and therefore, you may be asked to find another school for the child's best learning and growing opportunities.

Dismissal Policy:

WCOF preschool reserves the right to dismiss a child from our program in the judgment of the teacher and the WCOF Board. Parents may request a conference to discuss the reason for dismissal.

Such reasons for immediate dismissal include:

- A child is aggressive towards another child and/or staff and has received 3 behavior incident reports.
- A child causes harm to others or self and has received 3 behavior incident reports.
- A family fails to honor any rules or regulations stated in the WCOF handbook provided by the Wesley's Circle of Friends Preschool, including payment obligations.
- The child's needs are beyond WCOF preschool's scope of care.

Addendums:

WCOF preschool reserves the right to issue addendums to this *Parent Handbook* in order to comply with state regulations and /or for other safety related concerns.

Addendums will be distributed to each child's parent/guardian, and will require a signature indicating that the parent/guardian received the addendum.

WESLEY CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM
2540 CENTER ST
BETHLEHEM PA 18017
610-865-5715
Wesley's Circle of Friends PRESCHOOL

Subject: Non-Discrimination in Services Policy Statement

To: Patients/Clients/Residents/Parents and all applicable

From: Candy LaBar/Wesley United Methodist Church
Susan Matacavage/WCOF Advisory Board

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race (to include hair type, hair texture, or hair style), color, religious creed (to include all aspects of religious observances and practice, as well as belief), disability, ancestry, national origin (Limited English Proficiency), age (40 and over), or sex (to include pregnancy status, childbirth status, breastfeeding status, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, affectionate or sexual orientation, and differences in sex), and retaliation.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any individual/client/patient/student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Wesley United Methodist Church
Wesley's Circle of Friends Preschool
2540 Center Street
Bethlehem PA 18017

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 225, Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675 Harrisburg, PA 17120
Inquiries: (717) 787-1127
Email: RA-PWBEOAO@.pa.gov
(Within 90 days from the date of incident)

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centralized Case Management Operations
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 509 HHH Bldg
Washington, D.C. 20201
Customer Response Center: (800) 368-1019
TDD: (800) 537-7697
https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/complaints
Email: ocrcomplaint@hhs.gov
(Within 180 days from the date of incident)

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
333 Market Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
https://www.phrc.pa.gov/Complaints/Pages/How-toFile-a-Complaint.aspx
Inquiries: (717) 787-4410
TTY users only: (717) 787-7279
(Within 180 days from the date of incident)

Please fill out the bottom portion of this page and return to the Administrator by September 2nd.

By completing this page, the WCOF Board of Directors, the WCOF Administrator, and teaching staff will know that you have read and understand our policies, procedures, and all information in this handbook.

Thank you for taking the time to read the WCOF Handbook and choosing WCOF Preschool.

____ Yes, I have read and understand the WCOF Handbook. I am willing to follow the Wesley's Circle of Friends procedures and policies. I understand the WCOF preschool has a dismissal policy and if my family does not follow the Wesley's Circle of Friends policies and procedures, then my family may be dismissed from the preschool.

_____

Child's Name Child's Classroom

_____

Parent's Name Date