

**POLICIES & PROCEDURES
PARENT HANDBOOK**

Methodist



Preschool

Excellence in Early Childhood Education

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Matthew 19:14

Canyon Lake United Methodist Preschool

**206 Flintstone
Canyon Lake, Texas 78133
830-899-7104**

MISSION STATEMENT

Excellence in Early Childhood Education

Methodist Preschool is a Christian based early childhood education center. We believe that children learn best through playful and engaging activities that center on the child's interests and support each child's unique learning style. We also believe that children are a gift from God, created uniquely and individually, and we treasure our time with them. Our purpose is to foster social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual growth in a loving, nurturing, clean, and safe environment. Methodist Preschool delivers excellence in early childhood education by providing a high quality curriculum and environment, promoting Christian values, and preparing the whole child for a lifetime of learning!

Canyon Lake United Methodist Church supports the efforts and mission of the Methodist Preschool program.

PROGRAM GOALS

Methodist Preschool's low student-teacher ratios help teachers work one-on-one with every child in our classrooms. Teachers are certified early childhood educators and highly qualified early childhood instructors who have a genuine commitment to, and extensive knowledge of, quality early childhood education as it relates to the individual child. All staff members participate in training throughout the year to stay updated on the latest child development research, early childhood education methods, child safety practices, and classroom management techniques. Our program offers a theme-based curriculum that provides students with hands-on lessons, allows exploration and play, improves vocabulary through inquiry and discussion, develops problem solving skills, and enables the application of their learning to real world experiences. The Methodist Preschool curriculum aligns with the local school district's academic scope & sequence, Texas's Head Start programs, and TEA's pre-K guidelines, and the exit guidelines exceed the requirements of school readiness recommended for kindergarten.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Methodist Preschool enrolls children from birth to 5 years of age regardless of race, religion, or gender. All are welcome! We offer 2 day, 3 day, & 5 day preschool programs with classes beginning at 8:30am and dismissing at 2:15pm. Early morning and after school programs are offered to extend the school's total operating hours from 7:00am – 5:30pm.

TUITION & FEES

Periodic fees and monthly tuition are paid for services provided and assist in funding the Methodist Preschool program. A non-refundable registration fee of \$75 will be required upon any enrollment of a student. You may hold a student's place in the program for the following year by paying an early registration-holding fee of \$100 by the end of March of the current school year. This fee will be applied to your first month's tuition when the new school year begins in the fall.

Tuition is based on how many days our program is open in a nine-month period, beginning in September and ending in May. It is prorated so that you have the convenience of paying the same amount each month. You will still be required to pay the full amount even if your child misses school days or there are scheduled school holidays. Tuition will be billed and is due on the 1st day of the month from September to May. A late fee of \$25 will be assessed if tuition is not received by the 5th of the month. Non-payment may cause your child to be disenrolled and lose their spot on the roster.

Program	Tuition Rate
FULL DAY	
<u>Infants/Toddlers (0 months – 23 months)</u>	
2 days Mon., Wed.	\$360
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.	\$475
5 days	\$650
<u>Preschool (2 years – 3 years)</u>	
2 days Mon., Wed.	\$300
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.,	\$360
5 days	\$575
<u>Pre-K/Kindergarten* (4 years – 5 years)</u>	
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.	\$360
5 days	\$575
HALF DAY	
<u>Infants/Toddlers (0 months – 23 months)</u>	
2 days Mon., Wed	\$260
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.,	\$350
5 days	\$520
<u>Preschool (2 years – 3 years)</u>	
2 days Mon., Wed.	\$220
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.,	\$300
5 days	\$440
<u>Pre-K/Kindergarten* (4 years – 5 years)</u>	
3 days Mon., Wed., Fri.	\$300
5 days	\$440

Additional Fees:

Registration Fee	\$75	
Late Pick Up (after 5:30p)	\$5 per minute	
Extended Care	\$10/hr Preschool/PreK	\$15/hr Infant Toddler
Early Drop Off	\$4 Preschool/PreK	\$8 Infant/Toddler
Late Drop Off	\$3 Preschool/PreK after 8:30	\$3 Infant/Toddler after 9:30
Extra Day	\$30 Preschool/PreK	\$45 Infant/Toddler
Missed Sign In/Out	\$3 per day	

TUITION ASSISTANCE, DISCOUNTS, AND REFUNDS

Scholarships, or tuition assistance, may be available for those who qualify. Please see the Director if you have any difficulty in paying tuition rates or fees. We are always available to help you in any way we can! If you choose to withdraw your child from the program for any reason, you must notify the program Director.

Tuition refunds are at the discretion of the Methodist Preschool Board and Finance Board at the church.

Sibling discounts are as follows: 25% off first sibling, 50% off second sibling, etc.

CLASSES & PLACEMENT

Class placement is based on the student's age as documented on or before September 1st. If we feel that your child will benefit from a different class-age group, we will assess his or her abilities, inform the parent of our decision, and obtain approval for the placement.

Student age:

0 months – walking or 12 months

12 months & walking – 23 months

2 years

3 years

4 years

5 years*

Program class:

Infants

Toddlers

Preschool 2's

Preschool 3's

Pre-Kindergarten

Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten

*Students who are age-eligible for Kindergarten, but may benefit from an additional year in Pre-K, or students who wish to enroll in our kindergarten program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Infants/Toddlers – Children will become accustomed to routines in an academic and social setting that will encourage the growth of their physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual selves.

Preschool 2's – Students enrolled in these classes will participate in a pre-academic schedule that includes play-based instruction and student-focused exploration. This class is designed to prepare young children for group-centered activities.

Preschool 3's – Students will build academic-readiness skills that are age-appropriate, play-based, and student-centered. Teachers will foster physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual growth by providing whole-class and individual students lessons.

Pre-Kindergarten – This class allows students to learn through play, whole body instruction, and hands-on experiences. Children will participate in classroom mentorship opportunities, incorporate problem-solving strategies, and apply learned concepts to the real world around them. This class is designed to prepare children for Kindergarten and complies with TEA's Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines.

Kindergarten – This is an inclusive, private kindergarten program that provides students with the necessary academic skills required to be successful in an elementary school setting. Curriculum is aligned to the Kindergarten TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) set forth by the Texas Education Agency. Students will participate in individual student/teacher instruction, whole group instruction, and teacher-guided/student-led instruction.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

During enrollment, parent(s)/guardian(s) will provide the school with the following admission information:

- Enrollment information form, filled out online by legal parent/guardian
- Child's current immunization record
- Vision and Hearing Screening record (4 year olds and older)
- Health Care Physician's Statement

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will have access to their child's online enrollment profile and must update any changes in email, address, phone number, health-related issues, or family situations. Only the parent(s) or guardian(s) enrolling the child may make any changes or additions to the child's admission and enrollment information.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our class schedules are packed with activities specifically planned for your child. It is important that your child attends regularly and arrives on time for their enjoyment and learning potential. All students are required to be present in class by 8:30am. A late drop off fee will be assessed for consistent tardiness. If your child will be absent, or late due to a scheduled appointment, you must notify the director as soon as possible.

Please use the rear entrance of the church building (purple Methodist Preschool doors) to drop off and pick up your child. You must walk your child in through these doors and sign in on the tablet outside the door of your child's classroom. Each child must arrive and leave in the presence of a teacher. Please sign your child out before you leave with your child. Failure to sign in/out will result in a fee billed to your account. Your child must be released to you as the parent or guardian or to an authorized person listed on your child's enrollment form. If your child is to be picked up by anyone other than a designated person on the enrollment form, the director is to be notified prior to dismissal. Upon arrival for pick up, this person will be required to show identification by means of TDL# or photo I.D., and the information provided will be kept in your child's file for future reference.

Half-Day students may begin dropping off for the Preschool day at 8:15am. Dismissal for Preschool is 2:15pm. Early Morning Care is available from 7:00am – 8:15am. Students will be signed in by parents and taken to the classrooms at the start of the preschool day by the teachers. If you drop off before 8:15am, your child will be taken to the morning care room and parents will be charged accordingly. Extended Care is available from 2:30pm – 5:30pm. Students will be taken to the after school classrooms at 2:30pm and will need to be picked up by 5:30pm and parents will be charged accordingly. Half-Day students not picked up by 2:30pm will be taken to the Extended Care classrooms and parents will be charged accordingly. Full Day students may begin dropping off at 7:00am and must be picked up by 5:30pm.

Our teachers need time to prepare for the day's activities or tend to other children currently in the classroom, so we request that you keep conversations with them brief during arrival and dismissal times. Discussions about your child are very important to us. We ask that you schedule a time to talk in depth with your child's teacher or the Director after school or during office hours.

CURRICULUM & ACTIVITIES

All programs will offer a variety of age appropriate activities that will accommodate the individual needs of the students. These activities will be designed to help the children grow cognitively, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Student progress will be documented periodically and kept on file. Parents will be given copies of all documents associated with their child. Supplementary learning will be implemented to assist in engaging parent and child in active learning outside the classroom and help apply the skills learned at school to the world around them.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

Parents will need to provide a small list of supplies for each child upon enrollment. Additionally, your child will need to bring a few personal items *daily*. Among the items needed is a FULL SIZE bag or backpack, a standard folder, a change of clothing (all these items must fit in the backpack), and an insulated lunch box/bag. Children will also need a few other items to leave in the classroom. A full list of supplies (per age/class group) is available on our website and in the preschool office. When the supply is low, or a personal item has been lost or damaged, parents will be notified and must replace them. A notification system is set in place for replacing student supplies:

1. A verbal request and/or a written note/message on your child's daily report indicating the item(s) to be replaced. Parents/guardians are requested to bring in the item(s) on the child's next school attendance day. No other actions are needed.
2. Upon second notification, an official supply request letter, along with a secondary verbal request, will be issued to the parent/guardian indicating the item(s) to be replaced. Parents/guardians are required to sign and date the letter upon picking up the child. The item(s) must be brought in on the child's next school attendance day.
3. If, after the verbal and written notifications, the child still does not have the item(s) requested, Methodist Preschool will charge a per item usage fee (based on the purchase price of the item).

CHILD'S CLOTHING & PERSONAL ITEMS

Please provide your child with a FULL change of clothes (including socks and underwear) in his or her bag in case of accidents. For infants, toddlers, and potty-trainers, we request at least 3 changes of clothes. If a child does not have extra clothing available, we may utilize the preschool's supply. Parents are requested to wash and return the item when the child returns to school. A \$3 per item fee will be assessed and parents will be charged accordingly if the preschool's item is not returned.

Your child should be dressed in comfortable play clothes appropriate to the season. NO pajamas or costumes - exceptions will be made on special days only. Tennis shoes are favorable. Please do not send your child in leather-soled shoes, slides, or flip-flops. Sandals that buckle securely are allowed. Children need to run and jump with ease and safety!

Please send a complete change(s) of clothing in a zip-lock bag marked with your child's name to keep in their backpack/school cubby. Preschool can be messy and accidents can happen. You must label everything brought to the Methodist Preschool. This includes bags, cups, lunch boxes, coats, extra clothing, etc. If items are not labeled, teachers will be required to put the child's name on the item in permanent marker.

Because our staff cannot assume responsibility for lost or broken toys, children are NOT allowed to bring personal toys from home. A teacher may plan a special day for items to be brought that correspond with the curriculum. A note will be sent home letting you know the day and what type of items can be brought.

COMMUNICATION

Parents are welcome to visit us anytime. Please note that non-parent volunteers for events will be required to submit a background check. See the Director for a form.

Parent/teacher conferences may be scheduled through the classroom teacher and approved by the Director. Student observations, quarterly progress checklists, and annual assessments will be discussed with every parent at the time of their scheduled parent-teacher conference.

Methodist Preschool uses digital and published media to communicate with our families concerning their child's day. Daily reports on meals, naps, bathroom/diapering, incidences, and other classroom activities are documented and sent through digital applications. Daily Folders will be sent home with your child containing newsletters, calendars, returned student artwork, and important information. Parents are required to check this folder daily to keep up with your child work and any preschool news. The front hallway information boards will post all calendars, newsletters, announcements, invitations, and other relevant preschool information. Parents must check this board on a regular basis. Methodist Preschool has established a Facebook page and invites parents to "like" the page so they can receive reminders, photos, commentary, and other important updates. The preschool's website is continually updated with new information, schedules, announcements, and photos.

MEALS

Methodist Preschool will provide and serve a nutritious morning and afternoon snack for all classes. We do not have a cafeteria staff, so please send a healthy lunch, including a drink, and all needed supplies with your child every day. We regret that we are unable to refrigerate or heat the children's lunches. Please include ice packs, forks, and/or spoons if needed for your child's lunch. The preschool staff will assist your child in opening packaging and pouring beverages if necessary. However, extensive preparation (i.e. cutting, peeling, or mixing foods) cannot be expected. Please have all foods easily accessible for your child to encourage independence during lunchtime.

Methodist Preschool cannot guarantee a meal replacement if you forget to pack a lunch for your child. Parents will be notified if their child does not have lunch and will be required to bring one immediately. If the preschool substitutes a snack item for a missing lunch for your child, the parent/guardian is expected to replace the substitute item immediately.

Infants must have bottles with formula or breast milk to be given during mealtimes. Parents may provide solid foods as long as they are initially introduced at home.

This handbook specifies that the parent provides the child's meal from home and the parent understands Methodist Preschool is not responsible for the nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily food needs.

REST TIME

It is required by the state of Texas that licensed child-care centers provide a time of rest if the center is in operation for more than five hours per day. Therefore, children enrolled at Methodist Preschool will take a supervised rest time daily. Your child may bring a small blanket, pillow, or "lovie" from home to lie down with. All items must be kept in their backpacks or on their hooks and used only during rest time. Even if your child does not require a nap at home, he or she will be taking a quiet rest time every day. Children are not required to sleep, but must rest quietly for a minimum of 30 minutes. Teachers will provide quiet, solitary activities for children who do not sleep. Teachers will not be allowed to deliberately keep a child awake.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Outside play is an important part of your child's development and will be a part of your child's daily activities. Help your child enjoy this part of their day by dressing them appropriately. All students, including infants, will be required to go outside every day. However, we will not go outside if the temperature drops below 50° or the weather is inclement. Instead, children will play on special indoor equipment. Please make sure children have shoes that will allow them to run and play safely. We recommend closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes.

HOLIDAYS & WEATHER

Methodist Preschool loosely follows the Comal ISD's academic calendar. We are closed on the same winter and spring breaks, and on the same holidays. We also follow Comal ISD's pattern of opening and closing school, or delayed hours, in the case of severe weather. If the schools are closed, so is the Methodist Preschool. Additionally, our staff will contact parents or guardians immediately should severe weather threaten the area.

BIRTHDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

We love celebrations, and birthdays are among our favorites! Parents may bring a special treat for their child on his/her birthday, such as cupcakes, brownies, or cookies. However, all items must be store bought, and ask your child's teacher about any allergies that are present in your child's classroom. Party invitations must be handled in a discrete and respectful manner. Please understand that even small children can be very perceptive and very sensitive. Talk with the teachers if you wish to pass out invitations.

We also love any other reason for a party! There will be several celebrations throughout the year for special occasions and holidays. Dates for these parties will be sent home with your child and posted on the school bulletin boards in the hallway. We encourage all of our parents to participate in our festivities.

DIAPERING/TOILET TRAINING/RESTROOM BREAKS

Infants and toddlers will have diapers changed every hour while in care at Methodist Preschool. Parents/Guardians must provide a full package of diapers and wipes to keep at school. Notification will be sent when the supply is low and replacement is required. If the supply is out and the child is changed using preschool supplies, \$3 charge per diaper will be assessed and parents will be billed accordingly.

Methodist Preschool requests that all children enrolling in the two year old classes must begin or be in the process of toilet training. We will help your child in every way to begin this new adventure. Sometimes it is easier to learn if peers are learning, too! Toilet training two-year-olds will need pull-ups with removable/adjustable sides. Please send one full package of training pull-ups with your child and we will notify you when the supply is low. Three and four year-olds must be toilet-trained. Four year-olds must be able to tell the teacher when they need to use the restroom. We understand accidents can happen - especially if a child is so engrossed in their play and learning! Therefore, we have regularly scheduled restroom breaks throughout the day to help your child remember.

BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

We will provide a comfortable place in the infant room that enables a mother to breastfeed her child. Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care.

GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE

The staff will guide your child in a loving and Christian manner. Our staff will relate to the children with courtesy, respect, and acceptance. Your child's teacher will show competency, good judgment, and self-control in guiding your child's development and meeting his/her individual needs. Our staff will consult the director and the parents with unusual or difficult discipline problems. Harsh or physical punishment shall not be permitted. Please refer Methodist Preschool's Guidance and Discipline Policy. Parents/Guardians will be required to sign and submit the policy agreement.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS & MEDICATIONS

Our health policies at Methodist Preschool are developed from guidelines set by the State of Texas Department of Human Services. We ask the cooperation of parents in maintaining these health standards. Please refer to Methodist Preschool's Student Illness Policy. Parents/Guardians will be required to sign and submit the policy agreement.

We must have documentation of hearing and vision screenings for children 4 years and older. Every child enrolled at Methodist Preschool must have an up-to-date immunization record according to the Texas State Health Department on file with us.

Medications may be administered at Methodist Preschool. Parents are required to fill out a Medication Administration form for every day your child needs to be given medications. Medications must be in their original container with the child's name and prescription label on the container. All medications must be taken at home at the end of every day.

STUDENT ILLNESS

Students must not come to school if they are ill. The following conditions require exclusion from the preschool:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Pink Eye
- Head Lice
- Strep Throat
- Ringworm
- Any other communicable disease

Please refer to the Methodist Preschool Illness Policy for a complete list of illnesses and the procedures required.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

If your child cries when you leave, please know that we all understand how you feel. It can be heart wrenching for a parent. A few suggestions that might help are as follows:

- Follow the same routine at drop-off every class day. Repetition helps children understand that you will be back!
- Please don't "sneak out" when your child isn't looking. It's best to hug them and say goodbye. They learn to trust that you will return.
- Let your child bring a special "lovey" from home to have at rest time.
- Don't come back into the room after you have left. Stand by the door, out of sight, if you wish. If you come back into the room, it will only prolong your agony, as well as your child's.

Be assured that we will hold, hug, and love your child for as long as it takes for them to feel safe and secure. Usually, the child will stop crying at drop off time after a couple of weeks. Younger children may take a little longer. However, your child will pick up on your emotions, so stay happy and positive as you say goodbye. Don't hesitate to talk to your child's teacher or other parents who have gone through this if you need some extra reassurance.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of an emergency wherein the children are in immediate danger, teachers will be alerted to instigate the following procedure:

- Children will be organized in a quiet and calm manner in order to be moved to a designated location, based upon the situation.
- Teachers will have emergency bags with contact numbers to notify parents as soon as children are in a safe and secure setting.
- Transporting mode of moving the children will be determined by need/incident.
- Teachers will remain with the children at all times until picked up by parents.

It should be noted that all parents are made aware of procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. They also have the director's phone number.

Evacuation Procedures (for drills and emergencies for limited mobility)

Staff will take young toddlers and limited mobility children and place them in the cribs in the toddler room. These cribs will be used to transport the children to the evacuation site.

Fire

Methodist Preschool will conduct a monthly fire drill. When the fire alarm sounds, teachers will gather the children and head to the nearest exit. Each teacher will take their tablet and an *emergency bag with them that will include a class list with children's names and parent contacts, a flashlight, first-aid kit, Kleenex, hand sanitizer, Ziploc bags, latex gloves, and a two-way radio*. They will assemble in designated areas to wait for further instruction from the Director. When the director has made contact with all teachers and all children are accounted for, the Director will shut off the alarm and instruct the teachers to resume their scheduled day. In the event of a real fire, the local fire department will be contacted. The director and the classroom teachers will contact the children's parents to come get them from school. Parents must sign out each child with the classroom teacher. The director will ensure that all children have been picked up and signed out before releasing teachers and staff.

Severe Weather

Methodist Preschool will conduct a quarterly severe weather drill. Heavy rain can cause severe flooding in and around the Canyon Lake area. The Director will announce a severe weather alarm (by going from classroom to classroom). Teachers will collect their children and take their tablet and emergency bag to a designated area. When the director has made contact with all teachers and all children are accounted for, the director will instruct the teachers to resume their scheduled day. In the event of actual flooding, children will be moved to the upper floor of the building (to the sanctuary). The director and classroom teachers will contact the children's parents to come get their children from school. Parents must sign out each child with the classroom teacher. The director will ensure that all children have been picked up and signed out before releasing teachers and staff.

Campus Evacuation

In case of an emergency wherein the children are in immediate danger, teachers will be instructed by the director to follow the emergency evacuation procedure. Children will be taken to our evacuation site. Teachers will take their emergency bags and tablets to notify parents as soon as the children and staff arrive at the site. Transporting the children will be determined by need/incident and could result in the use of staff vehicles. The director will ensure that all children are in attendance and loaded safely into the vehicles before departure. The children will be transported to the Cranes Mill Baptist Church parking lot. Children will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than a parent or legal guardian who has signed them out and notified the director that they have possession of their child.

Cranes Mill Baptist Church
10215 FM2673, Canyon Lake, TX 78133

Lockdown

Should it be necessary for the preschool to go into lockdown (when an immediate threat or danger is present on campus), students and staff will be secured inside classrooms and all doors to the building will be locked and guarded. Police will be notified to assist on campus to remove the threat. Staff and students will not be allowed out of the classrooms until the danger has passed.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Suspected cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Department of Family and Protective Services to:

Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline
1-800-252-5400

Staff members are required to directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and will complete all necessary paperwork. The staff members should inform the Director and/or Assistant Director of the report and together decide whether or not to inform the parents of the report.

If a Methodist Preschool staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to the

Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Methodist Preschool will cooperate with any DFPS investigation. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Termination of employment after a child abuse allegation is at the discretion of the Director and Preschool Board.

For more information for parents reporting child abuse and neglect, please contact the hotline

MINIMUM STANDARDS & LICENSING REPORTS

Parents may view the State Minimum Standards for childcare licensing and view Methodist Preschool's inspection reports at any time. These can be viewed online at:

www.dfps.state.tx.us

Or you may contact them at the following address or phone number:

Child Care Licensing Office (San Antonio)
3635 SE Military Dr.
P.O. Box 23990
San Antonio, Texas 78223-0990
(210) 337-3399

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Methodist Preschool requires the parent/guardian to review the additional policies provided online. Signing the Parent Handbook Agreement indicates that you have read the policies and agree to their terms.

Methodist Preschool Guidance and Discipline Policy

Methodist Preschool Illness Policy

Methodist Preschool Lice/No Nit Policy

Methodist Preschool Biting Policy

Methodist Preschool Safety & Security Policy

Methodist Preschool Student Attendance Policy