



# SCHOOL FOR LITTLE CHILDREN

*Bellaire United Methodist Church*

4417 Bellaire Boulevard Bellaire, TX 77401 713.666.1111

**Early Learners**

and

**Preschool**

**2023-2024 Parent Handbook**

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# Welcome!

We're so glad to have your family at School for Little Children. For more than 70 years, School for Little Children has been a steady presence in children's lives and a place where children can grow and **learn through play**. It's a privilege to partner with you during these important early childhood years of development with your little one.

## Philosophy

School for Little Children provides a safe nurturing environment that promotes the development of the whole child. Experienced teachers provide developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that encourage intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth.

## Mission Statement

The School for Little Children staff and families will work as a team to provide quality early childhood education in a Christian environment as an extension of the Bellaire United Methodist Church family outreach ministry.

## NAEYC Accreditation

Since the 1980s our programs have been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Accreditation is a voluntary program for centers that choose to meet the high quality standards defined by NAEYC Accreditation criteria. The criteria can be found on the NAEYC website at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org). Currently, we are accredited through May 2025.

## Licensing

We are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and meet all Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers. A copy of these standards and our licensing inspection reports are available in the School for Little Children office and online at [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Search\\_Texas\\_Child](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child). For more information these numbers may be helpful:

Childcare Licensing: 713-287-3236

Child Maltreatment Statewide Intake: 800-252-5400

Online: [dfps.state.tx.gov](http://dfps.state.tx.gov)

## Insurance

As a ministry of Bellaire United Methodist Church, School for Little Children is covered for liability under the church's insurance policy.

# Enrollment

Registration for all School for Little Children programs for the next school year begins in February and continues until classes are full.

Applications and registration information are available at [bellaireumc.org/preschool](http://bellaireumc.org/preschool) for all current families and new families in mid January and are due in mid February. A random lottery determines placement. Church members and currently enrolled families have priority. Places are filled in the order of their lottery number.

Parents will be notified of their status by the middle of March. Enrollment is complete when all fees have been paid, and when the May tuition for the upcoming school year is paid.

## Wait Lists

Wait lists are created from applications remaining after all places have been filled. Any openings during the school year are filled from these lists. Wait lists are active until January. January is the last opportunity to enter SLC for the school year. Wait lists are then discarded and registration for the next school year begins as described above.

## Enrollment Contracts

All families will sign and return an Enrollment Contract which states the terms of the financial obligation for the school year. The contract includes information specific to each child and family.

## Withdrawal

If it is necessary for a child to withdraw from the program, parent(s) must submit notice in writing **at least 2 weeks in advance**. Please note that the registration fees and May tuition paid prior to the start of school are non-refundable upon withdrawal. Not all children are ready to enter a group program. We reserve the right to determine if a child should not attend. In this case, refunds will be made for the unused days.

## Grievances

Any grievances should be brought to the attention of the Director. Every effort will be made to resolve problems and issues related to the children, the school, and the staff, while giving the best interest of children the utmost importance. In the event of a lack of agreement between a parent and the School for Little Children staff, the Director will ask the School for Little Children Board of Directors to arbitrate, and all parties will abide by their decision.

## Confidentiality

School for Little Children ensures confidentiality of child and family information. Children's files are kept in a locked file cabinet in the office. Only School for Little Children staff and regulatory authorities have access to this information. A "Consent to Share Information" letter must be written by a parent and submitted to the SLC office in order for any information to be shared with outside professionals or schools.

## Program Evaluation

At the end of the year you will be given a survey and asked to formally evaluate our program. We use the survey responses to maintain our areas of success and to make helpful modifications to our program. We value your ideas and suggestions at any time during the year as well as on a formal evaluation.

# Tuition

Tuition is due on the first day of each month. Tuition is an annual amount which is divided into equal monthly payments (balanced billing) for your convenience. (*Note: May tuition is paid prior to the start of school and is non-refundable.*) Families may also make one payment at the first of the year or divide the year into two payments. Tuition is due regardless of whether your child is absent. It is important that payments be made promptly. **A late fee of \$50 will be charged for tuition received after the 10th of the month.** Families with two or more children in School for Little Children programs receive a five percent discount.

The annual registration fee is due upon registration, is non-refundable, and is in addition to tuition.

There are three ways to pay tuition.

1. Parents can establish auto-pay electronically through SmartCare each month by debit from a bank account with no convenience fee. (*This is the option most parents choose.*)
2. Tuition may be paid electronically through SmartCare by credit/debit card. Credit card payment has a convenience fee.
3. Parents can pay by check in the SLC office. Checks should be made payable to School for Little Children.

We do not accept cash.

In the event that your child's class is required to quarantine for two weeks, the teachers will provide alternative learning opportunities for the class. There will be no tuition refunds.

In the event of a **significant unscheduled interruption** to the school year such as a major weather event or other crisis, tuition will be adjusted based on the amount of time school is closed as outlined in the chart below.

If school is in session *one week or longer* in a month:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>Educational Support</u>
Current	full	yes
Second	half	yes
Third	zero	yes
Fourth	zero	no

If school is in session *less than one week* in a month:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Tuition</u>	<u>Educational Support</u>
Current	half	yes
Second	half	yes
Third	zero	yes
Fourth	zero	no

# Curriculum

## **We know that children learn best through play.**

We offer a play-based curriculum derived from

- NAEYC guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- High/Scope Key Experiences for Infants/Toddlers and for Preschoolers
- Texas Education Agency Curriculum Guidelines

These three curricula sources provide objectives which are offered daily through play activities in classroom learning centers. Children are offered a variety of materials to explore new concepts and add complexity to their understanding of previously learned concepts. Activities include language, literacy, creative representation, initiative and social relationships, music, movement, classification, and a variety of early math skills.

Teachers are attuned to their students and thoughtfully plan experiences that meet children's needs and interests. While at school children can expect to play with a variety of materials appropriate for their age and stage of development, and at the same time provide a challenge for growth. If there is an unscheduled interruption to the school year such as a major weather event or other crisis, teachers will continue to provide educational support to students and families for a period of time. (See tuition chart on page 5.)

## Assessment of Developmental Growth

Teachers assess the growth and development of children through classroom observations throughout the year. Teachers are trained to use assessments, and parents have an opportunity to see the assessment instrument and learn how it is used. We use a variety of assessment methods in order to assess learning across differing cultures, experiences and abilities. These include a developmental checklist, anecdotal notes, the documentation of children's learning activities, and anecdotal contributions of parents.

We find assessment helpful for several reasons. It helps parents and teachers communicate effectively about the growth, needs, and interests of the child. When outside screenings and diagnostic testing are needed, assessments provide helpful information. They also give teachers valuable information needed to adapt and design lesson plans to meet the developmental needs of individual children or the class as a whole. Assessments help teachers gather information on all areas of a child's development and learning including cognitive skills, communication skills, approaches to learning, health and physical development, as well as self-help skills.

Assessment information is exchanged with parents twice yearly. You will receive the developmental checklist at the Parent/Teacher conference in February and then again at the end of the year in May. These records are kept confidential per our Confidentiality Policy.

When special services require information from classroom observations and/or norm-referenced/standardized tests for eligibility for services, other professionals may be granted permission to assess the child in the classroom setting. Please notify us before scheduling outside professionals or when requesting we share records with others. (See *Confidentiality*.)

# Educational Evaluations, Learning Differences, Special Needs

We want to make sure that School for Little Children is the best learning environment for your child. *If your child has had an educational or developmental evaluation, please share the results with our Director.* While we are able to meet the educational needs of most children, please keep in mind that this is not a therapeutic setting, and School for Little Children is not the optimal environment for every child. Early intervention in the right setting is vital for optimal success, and we can guide you to find the right setting if we determine our school is not a match for your child's needs. When a parent, teacher and the Director agree there is a need for a professional evaluation, we are glad to provide a list of referrals. For children who have identified learning differences or special needs, we are glad to work with professionals to carry out individual goals or IEPs.

## Discipline and Guidance

At School for Little Children we take a “whole child” approach to learning. We teach and foster growth in all areas of development. The domains of social and emotional development are no exception. At SLC “discipline” means teaching. Every day we help children learn to express their feelings, negotiate conflict, self-regulate, and have appropriate social interactions. We use a variety of positive and age-appropriate guidance methods which include redirection, modeling, prompting, coaching, and direct teaching so that children may fully participate in our program.

Physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion is not permitted in any circumstance except when restraint is necessary to protect a child from harming him/herself or others. **At no time will teaching staff use physical punishment or engage in psychological abuse or coercion.** When a child displays challenging behavior we will make every effort to address the behavior. We will first assess the function of the behavior through observation and documentation. We will then work with parents and, if needed, other professionals to develop a plan to address the behavior using positive support strategies. We will have regular follow-up meetings to assess progress. In the rare event that these methods are unsuccessful, the Director, the child's teachers, and parents will work together to find another suitable school setting.

School for Little Children complies with federal and state civil rights laws. A child will be immediately and permanently excluded from our school if the child or the adult(s) accompanying the child are found to be in possession of a weapon or incendiary device as these are unlawful and in conflict with Bellaire United Methodist Church's stated policy.



# Preventing and Responding to Child Maltreatment

In accordance of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) minimum standards 746.501 (25), School for Little Children provides annual training to all staff on preventing, recognizing and reporting child maltreatment. Training includes warning signs that a child may be a victim of maltreatment and prevention techniques for child maltreatment. As a licensed child care center, we are required by law to report all suspected cases of child maltreatment immediately to the TDFPS Child Abuse Hotline or a law enforcement agency.

*Failure to report suspected child maltreatment is a crime.*

For parents and caregivers, we recommend the awareness and prevention help provided in the website “Help for Parents. Hope for Kids” at <http://www.helpandhope.org/>

If you or your child is a victim of maltreatment, please refer to the reporting contact information below.

- Child Maltreatment Statewide Intake: **800-252-5400**
- Online: [dfps.state.tx.gov](http://dfps.state.tx.gov)

## Security

Health and safety is a priority. School for Little Children staff members and enrolled children are permitted in the school and on the playground. Parents and other visitors will be allowed in the building and on the playground as long as public health guidelines permit it. *Any visitor including parents must first check-in in the SLC office. Any visitor will receive a health screening if and when mandated before being admitted.*

We have a security guard present during school hours who assists with traffic, secures all entrances to the school and playground, and makes regular rounds to help maintain a safe environment.

School for Little Children and Bellaire United Methodist Church is a non-smoking facility. Firearms, other weapons, and incendiary devices are not permitted at school. Failure to comply with this policy will result in immediate and permanent exclusion from School for Little Children.

## Gang-free Zone Statement

We are required by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services to notify parents that School for Little Children is located in a gang-free zone. Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center or school is a gang-free zone, meaning that any criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

# Health Records

Health records are kept confidential and may be accessed by School for Little Children staff and emergency medical personnel only. See Confidentiality Policy on page 5.

## Emergency Procedure

All teachers and staff are certified in CPR, the use of AEDs, and First Aid. In the event of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and then notify you immediately.

## Food Allergies

If your child has food allergies, please provide an individualized Action Plan from your child's health provider. Include your written permission for School for Little Children to post your child's name and food allergy in the classroom as a visual reminder for teachers and staff. If your child needs to have allergy medication available at school, it will be stored in a secure location that is accessible to staff.

## Administration of Medication

Your child will be at school for only a few hours each day. If possible, please plan to administer medication to your child outside of school hours. We follow State Guidelines regarding the administration of medication including over-the-counter products. If your child must have medication while at school, we will give you a form to complete with exact instructions for timing and dosage\*.

**Do not send any medication for your child to administer to himself or herself. Medication should never be left in a backpack at the classroom. Please send any medication to the School for Little Children office.**

\*Trained staff will administer both prescription and over-the-counter medications only if the child's Health form documents that the parent or legal guardian has given written permission. This record should include instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended medication for that child; alternatively, the licensed health provider's office may give instruction by telephone to the trained staff.

Sunscreen and bug repellent are considered over-the-counter medications. If you want your child to wear sunscreen or bug repellent, please apply them before school.

# Health

## Immunizations

All incoming students **MUST** be up to date on their immunizations at all times, as defined by the Texas Health Department and Child Care Licensing. **Parents are responsible for providing current immunization records.** Bellaire United Methodist School for Little Children will not accept affidavits or exemptions for reasons of conscience or parent choice. We will consider exceptions for documented current medical reasons, at the discretion of the School for Little Children Director. (An affidavit signed by the child's physician stating that the immunization poses a significant risk to the child or a member of the child's household must be submitted to School for Little Children prior to the start of school and will be kept on file.) If a child falls out of compliance with immunizations, he or she may not attend school. An updated immunization record must be submitted to the school office before the child can return to school.

The following immunizations are required:

DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis), HepB, HiB, MMR, Polio, Hepatitis A, Varicella, Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV7)

If a disease for which an immunization is available and is reported, any underimmunized child will be separated from exposure.

All School for Little Children staff regularly complete an Employee Health Assessment with their physician. Teachers will receive adult immunizations if a risk to a child is identified.

## Hearing and Vision Screenings

All children in Pre-K classes will have a vision and hearing screening by a certified screener. Parents will be notified only if their child needs to be referred to a health care professional for further evaluation.

## Face Coverings

*This policy will be in effect when public health guidelines or mandates warrant it.*

All adults at School for Little Children will wear face coverings. Face coverings are required in all public areas of the buildings such as the hallways and restrooms. Face coverings for adults are highly recommended in classrooms, but teachers *may* remove face coverings while in their own classroom or on the playground. Face coverings for children under two are prohibited. Face coverings for children older than two are permitted, but not required. **Children who wear face coverings at school must be able to wear them independently without reminders.** If a child protests or removes their face covering, teachers will not coax or attempt to persuade the child to wear it.

# Health

## Preventing Illness

The health of children and adults at school is a high priority. Keeping in good health takes cooperation from everyone—families, children and staff. Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent illness. We teach children proper handwashing techniques by direct instruction and modeling. Children and staff wash their hands upon arrival and many other times throughout the day. We request that parents/caregivers make sure children wash their hands upon returning home from school.

Hand sanitizer is available at school for children two years old and older and may be used with supervision on occasion, but it will not be used to replace handwashing.

**To prevent the spread of disease it is important for children to stay home when they are ill. Children who present signs or symptoms of illness upon arrival will not be admitted to school.**

## When to Keep Your Child at Home

Help us provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone at school by keeping your child at home if he or she:

- is unable to participate comfortably in all activities
- has a greater need for care than teachers can provide while caring for other children
- is irritable or is generally not himself/herself
- had a fever greater than 100 degrees in the last 24 hours
- had diarrhea or vomited in the last 24 hours
- has been taking an antibiotic for less than 24 hours
- has nasal discharge
- has a sore throat
- has shortness of breath or a constant cough
- has chills
- experiences loss of taste or smell
- has any symptoms of a possible communicable disease including known contact with someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19.

**Please notify the Director if your child has a communicable disease so that other parents may be alerted.**

# Health

## Illness at School

If a child becomes ill while at school we will care for that child until a parent/caregiver arrives. The child will be removed from class and comfortably monitored in a separate area near the school office. Parents should have plans in place to pick up a child within 30 minutes of notification from School for Little Children.

## When to Return to School

Some of the symptoms that would keep a child from attending school could be attributed to illnesses other than COVID-19, however, we ask that you join with us in being abundantly cautious.

If your child has a diagnosis **other than** COVID-19, your child may return only:

- with a “Return to School” note from a physician OR
- when fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea have subsided for 24 hours without medication AND
- when other symptoms have subsided enough that the child feels well and can fully participate

The Harris County Public Health Department, the City of Houston Health Department, and Texas Child Care Licensing asks that we follow the CDC guidelines for exposure and confirmed cases of COVID-19. CDC guidelines are updated from time to time, and School for Little Children will adapt when new guidelines are in place. Please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about when an exposed or infected person may return to school.

## Additional Policies for COVID-19

**If a child or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19, you will notify School for Little Children immediately**, and we will notify the Harris County Health Department, the City of Houston Department of Health, and Child Care Licensing to report the case. As is required of licensed child care centers, we will follow current CDC guidelines and any other instructions from local health authorities. Any child or staff member who has had close contact with an infected person may return to school when the CDC guidelines for individuals have been met.

# Emergency Plans and Procedures

First and foremost, we will do all in our power to keep your children safe and comfortable.

- School for Little Children teachers and staff are trained in CPR, the use of AEDs, and First Aid. We have first aid supplies available.
- If evacuation of the building is required, we will follow our regular fire drill procedures. (We practice fire drill procedures once a month as well as inclement weather and emergency lock-down drills quarterly). If necessary we will relocate to the parking lot across New-castle.
- If we are required to “shelter in place” we will move to the gym. If necessary, the building will be locked down, and we will seal doors and vents. Emergency food and water supplies will be available.
- For weather emergencies, we will gather in the Family Life Center hallway until it is safe to return to the classrooms.
- In case of emergency, we will contact you by email through our SmartCare platform which gives us direct access to all emergency contacts for children. We may also post information on Facebook and Instagram: BellaireSLC.
- Parents can help us by keeping emergency contact information current at all times.
- In most cases School for Little Children will follow HISD’s lead in closing school due to major weather events or other crises. You will be notified by email about closures and when school will resume. School closure may also be posted on the School for Little Children Facebook and Instagram accounts at BellaireSLC.

## Arrival and Departure

Children will arrive by a carpool line in one of two parking lots. To make carpool run smoothly and quickly, your child's class will have a designated location and time for arrival. You will receive specific instructions, including identification signs for your cars, before school begins.

*Drive very slowly at all times. Cell phone use is prohibited in our carpool lines.*

Upon **arrival**, staff members will be present to guide cars. A staff member will approach the car, greet your child, and if necessary, assess your child's health and ask the driver to answer health assessment questions. If your child is healthy, he or she will be escorted by a staff member to class. Children will never walk to class alone. **If your child displays any symptoms of illness, he or she will not be admitted to school.** See page 12 for a list of symptoms.

*Carpool will begin and end on a specific schedule. Children who arrive after 9:45 will not be admitted.*

For dismissal, parents/caregivers will park, enter the building or playground, and wait outside the classroom door for children to be dismissed. Teachers will dismiss children one or two at a time to make sure each child unites with the proper adult. Then children and adults will exit the building and return to cars.

It is important that you pick up your child at the time and location specified for your child's class. If you need to pick your child up early, please park in the south parking lot along the building and call our office. We will escort your child out to you.

Please notify the office and teachers in advance when someone other than a parent or caregiver is to pick up your child. Those picking up a child must be authorized by the parents as an Authorized Pick Up Person.

*If public health conditions are such that it is necessary to restrict persons in the building, we will shift departure procedures to a carpool line. If carpool is necessary, for departure, staff members will be present to guide cars. A staff member will verify the identification sign posted in your car and escort your child to the car.*

# School Schedule

School will be in session:

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Friday

Any variation to this schedule , such as early dismissal days, will be represented on the school calendar.

# School Calendar

A printed school calendar will be distributed to parents before school begins. An electronic version of the calendar can be found on our website at [bellaireumc.org/preschool](http://bellaireumc.org/preschool).

# Communication

We will make every effort to provide ongoing communication throughout the year. You will receive information both from the office and from your child's teachers. Following are some ways we communicate with you:

- Our Facebook page and Instagram account: **BellaireSLC**
- Email
- Back-to-School Visitation Days for students before school begins
- Back-to-School information folder
- Parent Orientation
- Fall phone conferences
- Spring phone conferences for Early Learners parents
- Parent/Teacher conferences for Preschool parents
- Photo sharing
- Videos
- Dry-erase boards by classroom doors



## Parent Participation

We encourage parents to be active participants in a child's learning experience. When public health conditions are such that it is possible, teachers will provide opportunities for parents to be involved in the classroom. Teachers have the latitude to determine what is appropriate for their class based on children's age, comfort, and individual needs within the group. School for Little Children teachers will share information about classroom life and welcome parent observations and input about home life.

There are several parent committees which give families an opportunity to build relationships, model service, and benefit the school. The committees address events, culture, gardening, classroom support, outreach, etc. Information about committees and ways to get involved is provided at the beginning of the year.

# Classroom Information

## Back-to-School Visitations

Prior to the start of school, each child and a family member and/or caregiver will visit the classroom to meet the teachers and become familiar with the surroundings. We find that these visits help children feel comfortable and ease the transition to school. The teachers will contact parents to schedule a visit.

## Clothing

Please dress your child for active play which will include sitting on the floor, playing in sand, painting, or participating in other messy activities. Shoes should have rubber soles. Flip-flops, “dress-up” shoes, and slippery shoes are **not** safe for school. Cowboy boots should only be worn during rodeo week. In cold weather dress your child in clothing warm enough for outdoor play. **Please put your child’s name in all removable clothing.**

## Photography

We take many photographs of children in their classes. These photos are used to share with parents, document a child’s learning and may be used in educational presentations, or on our website or social media. Teachers have private class photo share sites, and you will receive further details before school begins. Photos will only be used with your permission on the Waivers and Release form.

## Celebrations

Holidays are kept low key at School for Little Children. We ask that children not wear costumes to school for Halloween or at any other time. We also ask that you not bring treat bags or other candy to school for Halloween or Valentine’s Day. It has been our experience that these things distract children from the wonderful learning experiences that teachers have planned for them.

Birthdays are important and are recognized at school. Teachers will provide you with information about ways to celebrate birthdays specific to your child’s class. When planning a birthday party, please extend invitations from home; birthday invitations may not be sent home from school.

# Classroom Information

## Food

Each day at school, parents will provide a small snack and lunch for their child. The purpose of eating together is so children can take a little break from play, practice social skills and manners, and practice self-help and fine motor skills. Teachers will provide more specific information about food, beverages, and containers before school begins. While parents are responsible for the nutritional content of their child's food, our general guidelines are as follows:

- Send food in a container that your child can manage with very little help.
- Label the container with child's name.
- Send healthy foods such as fresh fruit, vegetables, and protein.
- Avoid processed foods and foods high in added sugar. Read labels before you pack!
- Food must be safe to serve at room temperature. We do not heat, refrigerate, prepare, or store food for children.
- Children under three years old should have pre-cut, bite-size pieces.
- Water may be sent in a sport bottle or sippy cup labeled with child's name. Juice is not permitted.

We are not permitted to serve the following foods to children younger than 4 years old because they are potential choking hazards:

- |                |                              |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| • hot dogs     | • pretzels                   |
| • whole grapes | • spoonfuls of peanut butter |
| • nuts         | • chunks of raw carrots or   |
| • popcorn      | meat larger than can be      |
| • raw peas     | swallowed                    |

## Food Allergies

We have experience in accommodating food allergies. If your child has a food allergy, please plan to talk with the teachers prior to the start of school to discuss any potential modifications to classroom life. If your child needs medication for allergies, see page 10 for more information.

If your child is in class with a child with food allergies severe enough to limit the foods classmates may bring, parents will be notified in advance. When necessary, parents will be given a list of foods that are safe to bring into class.

# Classroom Information

## Dual Language Learners

We welcome children who are learning more than one language. If your child speaks a language other than English at home, teachers will partner with you to help your child be as comfortable as possible in class. Teachers may request from you common phrases you use at home and share with you common phrases used at school. Teachers have experience pairing words with pictures to make language more visual while children are learning English. We have a variety of books in languages other than English, but we welcome suggestions of books or materials that will help us honor a child's home language and culture in class.

If you prefer to communicate in a language other than English, we will work with you to find someone who can serve as an interpreter.

# Physical Activity

Physical activity is an important part of children's development. Daily physical activity gives children opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills, use their imaginations for creative play, and begin to build life-long, healthy habits to take care of their bodies. Activities may include, but are not limited to, running, jumping, balancing, climbing, digging, pushing, pulling, gardening, drawing, pedaling, and role-playing.

## Playground Information

Children have a minimum of 50 minutes of playground\* time in their schedule daily. Classes are staggered so that only children of similar age are on the playground at the same time. Classroom teachers are with their class for the duration of their time on the playground. Children are encouraged to play actively (in both structured and unstructured ways) to develop motor control, explore the natural world, and have positive social interactions with peers and adults. \*In inclement or extreme weather, children will play in the gym. Extreme weather is defined as rain with thunder/lightening, temperature over 100 degrees or under 20 degrees. Our strong preference is outdoor play, yet teachers have discretion to combine indoor and outdoor active play time to total 50 minutes.

If you want your child to wear sunscreen or insect repellent, please apply them before school. See page 10 for further information.

Please see page 18 for guidance on appropriate clothing.

Please become familiar with our simple playground rules. Teachers teach children these rules. We want to be united in our expectations for appropriate and safe playground behavior.

## General Playground Rules

- Sand stays in the sand box.
- Walk on paved areas and on structures.
- Ride vehicles in one direction following the arrows.
- Sit in swings and swing properly without twisting.
- Slide down feet first on your bottom on the slides.
- Wear shoes at all times.
- Toys or equipment should be played with on the ground, not on structures.
- Hands must be on bars at all time. No hanging by knees without hands on bars.

# Early Learners

Ducklings, Ponies, Kitty Cats, Lambs, Dolphins, Owls

## What to Bring

All belongings, including food containers, must be clearly marked with your child's name. All children should bring the following items:

- a snack and lunch—see page 18 for details
- a sport bottle/sippy cup with water
- bag or backpack with a change of clothing and ample disposable diapers or underwear; we will provide a bag tag to attach to your child's bag
- one “lovey” or other security item
- outerwear for cool weather

## Daily Information Sheet

A significant way teachers communicate with parents is through the Daily Information Sheet. Parents must send a Daily Information Sheet each day with their child. This form includes helpful information about your child that teachers need as well as an emergency number where the parent may be reached that day. **Your emergency phone number is vitally important.** Please be sure the office has current emergency contact information.

The Daily Information Sheet will be returned to parents on Tuesday or Friday. The back will be filled out by teachers with brief information important to parents concerning eating, developmental information, activities, special requests, etc.

A supply of these forms is furnished to parents at the beginning of the year. Additional forms are available online at [www.bellaireumc.org/preschool](http://www.bellaireumc.org/preschool).

## Toileting

Children who are being toilet trained at home often regress at school during the process. This is normal and to be expected. Please send adequate clothing in preparation for toileting accidents. If your child is in the very early stages of toilet training, a diaper may be more suitable. Please talk to your child's teachers so we can provide consistency.

# Early Learners

Ducklings, Ponies, Kitty Cats, Lambs, Dolphins, Owls

## Conferences

Teachers will contact you for a phone conference in late October or November to share how things are going at school. Teachers welcome parents' thoughts and observations about their child's development and adjustment to school.

In February, teachers will again contact you for a phone conference. Shortly before, you can expect to receive a copy of your child's Developmental Checklist and other relevant assessment information to reference during the phone conference.

At other times during the year, teachers and parents may communicate through written notes, emails, telephone calls, or scheduled conferences. Teachers are not free to talk with you about your child when they are in the classroom or during carpool. When there are questions, special concerns, or information teachers should have, please set an appointment to talk with your child's teachers.

# Preschool

Ladybugs, Cardinals, Turtles, Bunny Rabbits, Dragonflies, Honeybees,  
Monkeys, Butterflies, Roadrunners, Zebras

## What to Bring

All belongings, including food containers, must be clearly marked with your child's name. All children should bring the following items:

- a snack and lunch—see page 18 for details
- a sport bottle with water
- bag with a change of clothing including underwear; we will provide a bag tag to attach to your child's bag
- outerwear for cool weather

## Conferences

Teachers will contact you for a phone conference in late October or November to share how things are going at school. Teachers welcome parents' thoughts and observations about a child's development and adjustment to school.

In February, teachers will host an individual Parent Teacher conference with each family. Classes will not meet on two dates in February to accommodate conferences. Conferences are scheduled for half hour slots. At the Parent Teacher conference, parents can expect to receive a copy of their child's Developmental Checklist and other relevant assessment information.

At other times during the year, teachers and parents may communicate through written notes, emails, telephone calls, or scheduled conferences. Teachers are not free to talk with you about your child when they are in the classroom or during carpool. When there are questions, special concerns, or information teachers should have, please set an appointment to talk with your child's teachers.

## Field Trips

School for Little Children does not transport children in vehicles. Walking field trips are planned very rarely for the Pre-K classes. Before any field trips, parents will be notified of details and will be asked to sign a permission slip for their child to participate. Parents will be asked to chaperone to maintain safe adult:child ratios. Teachers will take emergency forms, a cell phone and a first-aid kit with them. Walking field trips will observe all pedestrian safety guidelines. Teachers will count children upon departure, arrival at destination, upon departure back to school and upon arrival back at school.



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Accredited by the  
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
National Academy of Early Childhood Programs