

Wilmington Island Methodist Church Preschool

PARENT HANDBOOK



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*"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."
Proverbs 22:6*

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Wilmington Island Methodist Church Preschool. Thank you for enrolling your child in our preschool and for entrusting us with your most precious gift from God.

Our staff is a very dedicated group of professionals and they will provide your child with a warm, caring, and safe environment to ensure that each child can reach his or her maximum potential while they are playing, learning, growing, and having fun!

Your child's classroom teacher and assistant are trained to help your child develop and build on skills through developmentally appropriate activities. Your child will participate in a variety of experiential and play activities that will promote cognitive, language, pre-literacy, gross/fine motor skills, and social skills in a Christian environment where Christian values are taught through role models of our staff, through the Bible, religious songs, practices of prayer, puppet ministries, and Chapel time.

We want to help your child develop and to be inspired to become life-long learners and followers of Christ. Enjoy each stage your child enters, as they grow up so quickly. Thank you for sharing your little one with us and we look forward to an exciting school year.

Kids first,
Wendy Amerson

Director of Preschool Programs
Wilmington Island Methodist Church Preschool

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH

The mission of Wilmington Island Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ by inviting, incorporating, nurturing, and serving.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE PRESCHOOL

The mission of Wilmington Island Methodist Preschool is to serve the church and community by providing a preschool ministry which encourages and stimulates each child through developmentally appropriate experiences that promote positive physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual growth in a Christ-centered environment.

PHILOSOPHY

WIUMC strives to direct attention to the Christian faith by sharing, teaching and modeling values pertinent to Christianity—love, faith, hope, caring, sharing, forgiving, cooperation, and appreciation. The Preschool will teach, model and encourage reverence towards God and faith in His son Jesus Christ through introduction to Bible songs, stories, prayer, and chapel experiences. The WIMP is a ministry of the Wilmington Island Methodist Church. The Preschool recognizes each child as a child of God and is committed to enabling children to live life in the fullness that Jesus proclaims. Through the ministry of the Preschool, we extend the nurturing ministry of the church to our community. WIMP is open to all children without regard to race, creed, sex or national origin. The Preschool is a qualified non-profit organization as defined by current state and federal tax regulations and is accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission.

PRESCHOOL BOARD

The Preschool advisory board supports and gives guidance to the Wilmington Island Methodist Church Preschool. The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Preschool remains faithful to its mission. Members shall act at all times in the best interest of the Preschool, its employees, and its students while remaining faithful to the mission and purposes of the Church.

ACCREDITATION

The WIMP is fully accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission and we will work diligently to maintain that accreditation. Accreditation ensures we are providing a safe, professional, and academically sound program.

STATE EXEMPTED PROGRAM

As a church-sponsored Preschool program, we are exempt from many of the state rules and regulations that the public schools must meet. This means we are exempt from having a state license. As an exempt program, we choose our own curriculum, determine our own schedule, and design our classrooms to best meet the needs of our programs, while simultaneously serving the needs of the church.

One condition of the exemption from the state rules is that parents are notified and sign a waiver that they understand we are not licensed by the state. We will maintain our accreditation and our exemption allows freedom for us to operate within the confines of state regulations. A state license is not required for us to operate. This is typical for church-run preschools.

REGISTRATION

Registration will be staggered, giving priority to active members of Wilmington Island MC, currently enrolled students, and former students of WIMP. Registration begins in January each year.

Church Member Registration

Active members of Wilmington Island Methodist Church will receive priority in registration at the Preschool. Members will have an early registration period, before registration is open to alumni or the community. This will consist of a one-week period.

Alumni Registration

Alumni of Wilmington Island Methodist Preschool will also have priority in registration before the general public. Alumni are defined as having attended the Preschool previously, being the sibling of a former student, or the child of a former student. Alumni must have left the Preschool in good standing. Alumni will register at the same time as currently enrolled children.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Every child at the WIMP is required to have an up to date Immunization Record (Ga Form 3231) **by the first day of school** and parents are required to provide the preschool with updated forms as records are updated. We are no longer going to accept the Religious Affidavit for Immunizations beginning the 2020-2021 school year. There will be no exceptions.

CHILD PLACEMENT

Children will be placed in classes based on their age as of September 1 of the current school year. Children in the 3 and 4 year old classes must be toilet-trained. No exceptions. Final placement of the children will be determined by the Director.

TUITION

- Preschool tuition is a yearly cost. You may choose to pay yearly in full which is due on September 1st of the new school year or you may pay in 8 equal monthly payments from September-April.
- Monthly tuition payments are due on the 1st of each month and late after the 5th. Payments made after the 5th will be assessed a \$25 late fee.
- Payments may be made in cash, check, or online through the preschool website. Please see Preschool Director for cash payments. Payments made by check may be dropped in the payment box on the preschool office door. Our returned check fee is \$30.
- Tuition payments 30 days past due will result in withdrawal from the WIUMP program
- Please note that if you child is registered for both 2 yr old classes you will be responsible for tuition for each class. We do not offer a 5 day "rate" for the 2 year old classes.

Classes	Registration Fee (Due at Registration)	Supply Fee (Due August 1 st)	8 Monthly Payments (September-April)	Yearly Tuition (Registration & Supply fee not included)
MMO Classes (Tues/Thurs)	\$150.00	N/A	\$160.00	\$1280.00
2s-2day (Tues/Thurs)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$160.00	\$1280.00
2s-3day (Mon/Wed/Fri)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$235.00	\$1880.00
3s-Flex (Mon/Wed/Fri)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$235.00	\$1880.00
3s-Flex (Mon-Fri)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$350.00	\$2800.00
3s-5day (Mon-Fri)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$350.00	\$2800.00
4s-5day (Mon-Fri)	\$150.00	\$50.00	\$350.00	\$2800.00

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year there are a select number of partial scholarships available to be granted for extreme circumstances. Please see the preschool Director for application. Applications must be submitted by August 1st each school year and will be evaluated and will be granted or dismissed by the preschool Board.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

We depend upon your child's continued enrollment for a successful school year; however we understand that unexpected events may require you to withdraw your child from preschool. We would like the opportunity to assist your child through this transition. We require two weeks (10 business days) notice for withdrawal and completion of the Intent to Withdraw form. Prior notice gives the opportunity for another child from our waitlist to take your child's spot in class. Withdrawal is not official until the Intent to withdraw form has been received.

Registration fees and supply fees are non-refundable when a withdrawal takes place. Any pre-paid tuition will be refunded. Attendance for any part of a month requires a full month's tuition payment. Please ensure your child's account is current before withdrawing from preschool.

DISCRETIONARY ENROLLMENT

As a private, Christian preschool it is our desire to open our doors to a wide variety of God's children. However, some children have special needs that we are neither trained, nor equipped to accommodate. Enrollment is at the discretion of the Preschool Director in conjunction with the Preschool Board. The Preschool reserves the right to discontinue services at any time.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The preschool is open during the school year Monday-Friday from 9AM-1PM. During summer the preschool is open by appointment.

PARKING LOT

When visiting the preschool for any occasion, please park in the large lower lot not crossing of the double blue lines painted near the playground. Please enter the parking lot from Cromwell Road and exit the parking lot onto Cromwell Road. DO NOT enter/exit from Wilmington Island Road. We keep this area free of cars because children and parents are walking into the building and this helps keep everyone safe. PLEASE share with those also picking up your child.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

Drop off each morning is at 8:50 AM. Please have your child at school on time.

Pick up each day is 12:50 PM. After 1:00 PM a \$15.00 late charge will be added to your account for each occurrence.

For the safety of our students and staff, parents will need to park and come to the door to pick up their child. No one other than a parent or designated individual by parent may pick up a child. Individuals may be asked to show a valid ID for the safety and security of the student. Car safety seats are required. Children transported in vehicles must be safely buckled into car safety seats that meet state requirements. If this requirement is not met, we will contact someone from your emergency contact list to pick up the child. In the state of Georgia, both parents have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. If such a document exists, please provide notification to the Director and copies of the paperwork for your child's file. A shared custody pick-up agreement can be arranged as needed.

MMO 1- main preschool door

MMO 2- main preschool door

2 year old class (2 day)- main preschool door

2 year old class (3 day)- main preschool door

3 year old class (3 day)- glass double doors on the back hall

3 year old class (5 day)- glass double doors on the back hall

4 year old class (5 day)- glass door coming from the courtyard

ATTENDANCE

We know that illness and other emergencies will cause a child to be absent from school on occasion. However, it is important that your child come to school on a regular basis in order to get the most from their preschool time with us. Our teachers have carefully planned the lessons and curriculum that will help your child keep on target developmentally.

Parents of students who are habitually late or with excessive absences will be asked to meet with the Director to formulate an action plan for success and/or may be removed from the preschool.

When a child is late or habitually absent they miss some key foundations on which future learning will take place. We also ask that children arrive on time. When children miss the first part of the day, they miss important teaching time. Also, when a child arrives late; they cause a disruption for the other students who are already busy with work and play. Every minute counts in a half day instructional program. When dropping off or picking up PLEASE DO NOT park in front of the playground or in the handicap parking spaces. PLEASE park on the right side of the painted blue line in the large parking lot. This is for the safety of our children. PLEASE share with those also picking up your child.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

You were asked to provide two emergency contacts on your child's registration form. Persons listed on the emergency contact list must be at least 18 years old. It is your responsibility to update this information as needed. If your child becomes injured or sick, you will be notified as soon as possible; if you cannot be reached at either of the numbers you provided, the emergency contact will be called. Please do not add further distress to a sick or injured child by being unavailable.

SAFETY

The building doors are locked at all times. If you come to the preschool outside of pick up times, please ring the doorbell and someone will assist you as soon as possible.

Our Preschool conducts monthly fire drills and a yearly severe weather drill. This is for the safety of the children and is required by the Georgia Accrediting Commission. School Closings We follow the Chatham County Public School system for school closings due to severe weather. If the public schools are closed or dismissed early, so is the Preschool. If public schools have a delayed opening of two hours or more, the Preschool will not open that day. Please listen to your radio or TV for announcements or may check our Facebook page for updates. Days the Preschool is closed due to inclement weather will not be made up.

COMMUNICATION

The preschool will be using the Remind App to disseminate classroom and school information. Please download the app before open house. Your teacher will add you to the appropriate class. We will also be using email as a source to get information out to parents. Please make sure you are checking your emails to stay in the loop about what is going on in the preschool.

Please do not call or text your child's teacher during school hours. If you have an emergency, call the preschool office 912-999-6470 or the church office 912-897-2835 and a note will be delivered to the teacher.

CONFERENCES

Your teachers are always willing to take to time to schedule a conference with you concerning your child. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year; please take advantage of these opportunities to meet with your child's teacher one on one. If you require more time with your child's teacher, please contact her to arrange a meeting. Remember, changes at home affect a child's behavior at school. Please keep us informed of your child's home life so that we can be sensitive to his or her needs. All information will be kept private and confidential.

DIAPERING/TOILET TRAINING/SOILED CLOTHING

MM0 and 2 year old classes are required to stay in diapers or pull ups with easy open Velcro sides (not traditional pull-ups) until children are 100% toilet trained.

All 3 year olds and 4 year olds must be completely toilet trained by the first day of school in order to stay enrolled. No pull ups are allowed in the 3 year old and 4 year old classes. **After the first accident at school, students will be sent home for 2 weeks until they are fully toilet trained.**

100% toilet trained means:

- children are able to control their bladder and bowel movements independently
- children tell an adult that they need to use the restroom outside of schedule restroom breaks
- children can undress and redress after using the restroom
- children are able to wipe themselves
- children are able to wash their hands independently after using the restroom

Soiled clothing will not be cleaned. They will be bagged and sent home that day. If you would prefer them to be disposed of, please share this with your staff member ahead of time.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is intended to protect children and teach them responsibility for their own actions. We believe discipline should be done with love, respect, and patience. Discipline should be used to change the behavior, not the child. Your child's teacher will explain the classroom rules and consequences for breaking those rules to the class. Rules and consequences will be tailored to each child's age and level of understanding. The child will first be redirected to another activity. If redirection is unsuccessful, a time-out of 1 minute per age of child will be given. In some cases, a privilege such as line leader may be taken away temporarily and the child will be given an opportunity to earn it back. The teacher will be clear about her expectations and be consistent and fair with enforcement. Teachers will put emphasis on praising good behavior. No corporal punishment will be used. No child will be punished for toilet accidents. Discipline and Plan of Action forms will be filled out to inform the parent of any behavioral problems and/or incidents. If a child displays persistent behavior problems, a parent-teacher conference will be requested to try to offer solutions for the problem/issue at hand. If the behavior is serious in nature, or is a constant disruption to the class (three or more times) or causing physical, emotional, and/or mental harm to others, and the above action does not correct the behavior, the Director reserves the right to withdraw the child from the school. Once behaviors have improved, the parents may ask the Preschool Board to allow the child to return. This request may be granted if space is available and the behavior problem has been corrected. If the problem should recur, the child will be removed and will not be allowed to return to the school for at least one year.

BITING POLICY

Biting is a developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive and without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The Preschool staff will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times. The safety of the children at the Preschool is our primary concern. Should biting occur, both set of parents will be notified. If a second incident occurs, parents will be called and the child must be removed from the Preschool for the remainder of the day. After a third incident, the child will be removed from the Preschool until the behavior is under control. Parents are still responsible for tuition during time of suspension.

CURRICULUM

In all of our 2s, 3s, and 4s classes we use the The Zoo-phonics® curriculum. The Zoo-phonics® Multisensory Language Arts Program is a kinesthetic, multi-modal approach to learning all aspects of language arts. It is a method developed to make children strong readers and spellers using a "phono", "oral", "visual", "kinesthetic", and tactile—whole brain approach. Students actually learn the sounds of the alphabet and advanced phonemic concepts through an easily understood, concrete method of presentation.

Our classes use the Handwriting without Tears curriculum. The Handwriting Without Tears® curriculum draws from years of innovation and research to provide developmentally appropriate, multisensory strategies for early writing. The program follows research of how children learn best and includes materials that address all styles of learning.

For our Christian education component in our classes, we have developed our own curriculum teaching well known stories from the bible. This is a childhood ministry that recognizes the learning ability of preschoolers by introducing biblical truth at church with verses through stories and music in a whimsical age appropriate way. Children are welcomed with play time, songs and simple crafts and activities. Teachers present age-appropriate lessons using large, colorful felt board stories and story books.

Bible Stories we teach:

- Creation
- Adam and Eve
- Moses
- Birth of Jesus
- Story of Daniel
- Story of Jonah
- Story of Joseph
- Story of David
- Noah and Ark
- Easter

CHAPEL TIME

We are a Christian preschool. Once a week, our students attend Chapel in the church sanctuary. During chapel, the children hear a Bible story that affirms God's love for them through Jesus Christ, sing a song, and say a prayer together. This is part of our mission as a ministry program of Wilmington Island Methodist Church. In addition to chapel time, prayers are said in the classrooms daily during circle and before snack.

LUNCH

All lunches should be sent in a paper bag for easy disposal or in a plastic bento style box. WE prefer brown sack lunches. **No traditional fabric/porous lunch boxes.** Please write your child's name on the paper bag/bento box. All individual prepackaged food items that are unopened will be sent home on Friday. Please include plastic ware if necessary and do not provide anything that needs to be heated. Sippy cups or water bottles may be sent each day, but must be sanitized when they return home each day.

Your child will need to bring a lunch each day to school. Please make sure to include a drink and utensils if needed please. Lunch time is a great time to help foster your child's budding independence as well as a great opportunity for social development. Please make sure to provide a kid friendly lunch that does not need to be heated or refrigerated. No sodas please.

BIRTHDAY

We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday at Preschool and making it special, but if you would like to send a small treat for the class to eat at lunch, please talk to your child's teacher. We will take pictures/videos and happily share those with you. Please limit items to cookies, muffins, donuts, or small cupcakes. Please **NO** balloons, decorations, or treat bags at school. If your child has a summer birthday, she or he can celebrate a "half birthday."

SUPPLIES

A supply fee is paid each year for all preschool students, so there is no back to school supply list. However, we ask that you please provide a change of clothes, pair of shoes, pack of diapers and wipes to keep in your child's cubby throughout the year depending on what is needed for their age. Please bring these items during open house and place in your child's cubby. When additional items are needed, we will notify you.

BACKPACKS

No backpacks are allowed each day.

PERSONAL ITEMS

All personal items need to be marked with your child's name. The Preschool will not be held responsible for lost items.

TOYS

There are special days when children are asked to bring an item from home to show the class; otherwise, please **do not** send toys or other items with your child to school. Toy guns, toy knives, and other toys that encourage violent play are not allowed at school.

DRESS CODE

Children's clothing should be washable, comfortable, modest and appropriate for play outside. Clothing should be easy for your child to use the restroom unassisted in the 3s and 4s classes or for the 2's easy to be changed. Please no belts, hard to snap or button pants, or overalls. Footwear should be rubber soled closed-toed shoes with ties or Velcro fasteners with socks. Please no shoe laces. These get very nasty outside and in the restroom. For safety reasons, please no flip-flops, slip on shoes, loose sandals, and hard-soled boots or rain boots.

Preschool Health Policy

We have a 48 HOUR return to school policy for ANY symptoms listed below.

If your child has been sick, currently sick, or if they have siblings that have been sick, please do not send them to school. Children are required to be free from the following symptoms/situations for **a FULL 48 hours** without **ANY** medications before returning to school. If your child comes to school with any of these symptoms or develops symptoms while at school, they will be sent home.

- **Fever above 99.7**
- **Stomach ache**
- **Diarrhea and/or vomiting (EVEN IF THEY ARE FEELING WELL OTHERWISE)**
- **Skin conditions, such as rashes**
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (starts with a fever, reduced appetite, sore throat, and/or a feeling of being unwell or not themselves) Check for sores in mouth or rash.**
- **Pink Eye or watering eyes**
- **Excessive coughing or coughing with mucus**
- **Runny nose, with green/yellow discharge**
- **Excessive sneezing (Allergies will need a doctor's written clearance to be at school)**
- **Open wounds- wounds should be covered with a bandage**
- **The student has had a confirmed positive or presumptive positive diagnosis of COVID 19**
- **Someone in the student's household has a confirmed positive or presumptive positive diagnosis of COVID 19 or the student has been in close contact with someone with a confirmed positive or presumptive positive diagnosis of COVID 19**

Please let your teacher know if your child will be absent due to any sickness. This helps us contain and/or mitigate any contagious viruses in the classrooms. The Preschool staff will not dispense any medication.

If a family member was exposed or is presenting symptoms of any contagious illness:

We STRONGLY encourage you to keep your child home if a family member living in the same household has been exposed to illness in order to reduce the number of those potentially exposed at the preschool. This could be Covid-19, Flu, Hand Foot and Mouth, stomach bug, flu, pink eye or any other contagious illness.

We work hard to keep everyone happy and healthy at school. Please help us by reducing your risks outside the preschool and keeping your child home if they are not feeling well. Working together will help reduce our risk and help mitigate the chance of the preschool closing due to sickness.

The preschool reserves the right to close classes if it is in the best interest of the health and well-being of our students and staff.

HEALTH PROCEDURES THE PRESCHOOL WILL CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT

- Clean and disinfect on a daily basis
- Maintain an adequate ratio of staff to children
- Air Purifiers and UV disinfecting machine in the classrooms
- Use designated doors by class for drop off/pick up each day
- Require no backpacks to lessen the opportunities of germ travel from school to home.
- Increased focus on independent hand washing/drying skills at home and at school with children.
- Increased focus on sneezing into the elbow and washing hands after every sneeze.
- Increased focus on helping children learn how to blow their nose at home and at school.
- Close classes to avoid spread of contagious element

LICE POLICY

Just as with any other contagious condition, we ask that you let us know if your child has lice. We will treat this information confidentially and not identify your child/family, but we do want to make sure other families are notified of possible exposure. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. However, they are easily spread and must be dealt with quickly. Our school follows the No-Nits Policy because it's very difficult to explain or enforce limited head contact to preschoolers. We know this might be an inconvenience to some of you, but we believe that this is in the best interest of the majority of our families.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents and/or grandparents of our students are encouraged to participate at the Preschool. We host many fun events during the school year to keep you involved in the preschool and offer ways to help our preschool and be a part of our community.

- Join our substitute teaching list
- Share a special skill or talent with your child's class or with the entire Preschool
- Volunteer in the Preschool, please contact your child's teacher.
- Sign up for mystery reader
- Help out in the office or classrooms

Preschool Email preschool@islandmethodist.com

Preschool Website <https://www.islandmethodist.com/preschool>

Join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Islandmethodist.preschool/>

Follow us on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/wilmingtonislandmethodistprek/>

Online payments may be made at <https://tinyurl.com/y9aeqrxa>

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Please sign and return this form stating that you have read the 2022-2023 parent handbook and that you are willing to abide by the school policies. If you should have any questions about our policies please contact the Director.

I _____ acknowledge I have received and read the parent handbook for the Wilmington Island United Methodist Preschool and am willing to abide by the school policies to ensure a safe and loving environment for my child(ren).

Classroom:

_____ MMO1

_____ MMO 2

_____ 2s/2day

_____ 3s/3 day

_____ 3s/5 day

_____ 4s/5 day

Child's Name _____

Printed Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____