

Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church Mother's Morning Out

Accredited by FCCPSA
(Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools Accreditation)

Parent Handbook

(Revised 09/18/2018)

*Then Jesus took a small child. Jesus stood the child before the followers.
Jesus held the child in his arms and said, "If a person accepts children like
these in my name, then that person is also accepting me.
And if a person accepts me, then that person is also accepting
the One (God) that sent me." (Mark 9:36-37)*

Thank you for choosing Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church Mother's Morning Out Program! We are honored that you have chosen our program to care for and minister to your child. We look forward to growing in faith, hope and love with you, your child and your family. The purpose of our program is to extend the ministry of Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church by providing educational and developmental opportunities in a Christian atmosphere. Parents can enjoy a much-deserved break while their children spend the morning playing and learning with friends in a fun, safe, Christ-centered environment. We believe that children deserve to be children and that each child is a one-of-a-kind work of God's art. We strive to instill in all children a positive self-image and confidence in their own abilities. Children have a natural curiosity and desire to learn. We believe that structured play experiences keep the children active and engaged while learning. We believe that the home, school and church must work together and we encourage interest and participation in our program.

God Bless!

Contact Information
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If you do not have a church home, we invite you to worship, praise and pray with us on Sunday mornings at 10:00a.m. (Combined Blended Service). Many of the families in MMO are also members of the church and we would love to have you as our special guest. The nursery is always available during the services and your child will already know quite a few friendly faces there.

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Accidents

Although we try to prevent them, unfortunately accidents do happen. If your child has a minor accident, the staff will administer first aid with TLC (Tender Loving Care). An accident report will be completed, will need to be signed by the teacher, director and parent, and will be placed in your child's file. In the event of a major accident or injury, you will be contacted immediately. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contacts will be tried in the order in which you list them, so that the child can be picked up. If immediate medical attention is required, the staff will call 911 and have the child transported to the hospital/doctor on the registration form. We hope that this never happens, but in the event it does, we want to be prepared. Your child's safety is our utmost concern.

Behavior Management & Discipline

Discipline means guidance in the form of helping children change undesirable behavior into more acceptable, satisfying behavior. It is helping a child learn self-control and self-direction. It is

our policy that discipline is to be guidance that improves, strengthens, molds, and helps a young child control his/her actions. For that to happen we must set the example for the child to follow, have consistent guidelines, give positive re-enforcement, provide acceptable choices, set realistic limits, use consequences that are related to the behavior, encourage the child to express feelings with words (when they are able), and listen carefully to what the child is trying to communicate. Under NO circumstances will a child be subjected to any form of harsh or physical punishment, made fun of, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused, denied food or rest, left alone or unattended, or allowed discipline of children by children. Children will be positively directed, re-directed and praised often. Please let the teacher know what behavior management method you prefer or are using with your child and we will work together to ensure consistency.

Reasons a child would be sent home for the day

- A child who has been crying nonstop for at least 30 minutes with no sign of calming down.
- A child who is sick.
- A child whose behavior is harmful to the children or teacher, extremely disruptive to the class, or disrespectful to the teacher.

Reasons for dismissal from the program

(Rest assured that every effort will be made to work with parents and child before dismissal occurs.)

- Non-payment of fees - any account that is 30 days behind will make the child subject to dismissal from the program (Please speak with the Director before this happens.)
- Extremely disruptive, destructive or dangerous behavior of a child towards his/herself or others.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special and should be celebrated! Parents are welcome to send a special snack on or near their child's birthday. If your child has a summer birthday, you may discuss with your child's teacher a special day to celebrate with classmates. Please let your child's teacher know in advance before bringing in treats.

Biting

We understand that biting is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors to deal with in a group childcare setting. We have implemented the following policy in regards to biting:
1st biting occurrence- Child will be taken aside and the behavior discussed with the child by the teacher. An incident report will be filled out for each child and parents will be notified.

2nd biting occurrence- The above will be reinforced and the parents will be asked to come and pick up their child.

3rd biting occurrence- The above will be reinforced and the child will be removed from the program for a one –week waiting period at home with a parent/guardian.

4th biting occurrence- The child may be asked to leave the program until the next pre-school year.

Clothing & Diapering

Please send your child in play clothes that fit comfortably for running and climbing on the playground equipment, sitting on the floor for circle time or for making crafts. They will get messy during the day! We do use washable paints during art and the children wear art aprons, but paint somehow always finds a way onto clothes. Please send a change of clothes with your child in a plastic bag- accidents will happen during lunch, playtime and even during diapering and bathroom breaks. We will go outside, weather permitting, so please be sure that your child has the appropriate outerwear for each day's temperature, etc. Please dress your child in closed toed and closed back shoes and socks. Please no cowboy boots or other hard soled shoes since little fingers can get easily and accidentally stepped on. We ask that if your child is still in diapers, please dress them in clothing that makes diapering easier, i.e. elastic pants or shorts (no overalls please!)

Emergency & Security Procedures

It is very important that you sign your child in and out every day on the sheet located either inside or outside of your child's room. This is how we are able to keep attendance and have the most current contact number in case of emergencies. Your child will be released only to the custodial parent or legal guardian & the person(s) listed on their registration form. For the safety of the child, we require a pick up password on file and provided by the child's guardian in case of any pickup changes done by phone. Make sure that the password is easy for you to remember. Although you may never need to use the pick-up code and it may seem like a hassle, it is just another level of safety and protection for you and your child.

We conduct fire drills and severe weather drills throughout the school year. Our program follows the Escambia County Public Schools in cases of severe weather and school closings. If the public schools are closed, we are closed as well. In case of an actual emergency, we will contact you with information and the procedure for picking up the children. (Reminder: Please keep us updated on any changes to emergency contact numbers!)

Fees (Registration & Tuition)

The registration fee is only collected one time (at the time of registration) and is \$50 per child, \$100 max per family. This fee is non-refundable. The monthly tuition fee is per child and is as follows: (3 days - \$165/month) (2 days - \$125/month). A 10% discount will be given to families that have 2 or more children attending MMO. Tuition is due on the 1st of the month (September-May). A \$10.00 late fee will be charged for delinquency after the 10th of the month. If the tuition and late fees are not paid by the 15th of the month, your child may be removed from the MMO program. Should there be a problem with getting payment on time, please contact the MMO Director. We will do everything we can to find a solution. **No credit or prorating will be given for illness, holidays, vacations, or bad weather.** A \$25 service charge will be applied to all returned checks. If a check is returned twice, you will be asked to pay future tuition on a cash only basis. You may pay with check (made out to MGUMC) or cash. There is a payment box located in the hallway. You can place the cash in the envelopes provided. Be sure to include your child's name, amount and date so that your account can be properly credited. These fees are necessary to keep the program running and to cover the costs of supplies, teacher salaries and teacher training requirements.

Food & Lunch Policy

Lunch will be served everyday around 11:30 a.m. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide a well-balanced meal and drink for his/her child. We will provide a snack and water earlier in the day. The MMO staff will not cook or heat any food, as we are not certified to prepare lunches. Please be sure to list any food allergies and sensitivities that we should be aware of on both the child's registration form and on the separate snack list. We also ask please no candy or gum in your child's lunch.

Forms

The following items will need to be completed and turned in before your child's first day:

- Registration Fee
- Registration Form (including signed Influenza Virus brochure)
- Snack list
- Birth Certificate
- Custodial papers (only applicable in cases of divorce, separation or adoption.)

The following forms can be obtained from your child's pediatrician or the Health Department.

- Florida Certificate of Immunization (Blue DH Form 680 or 681)
- Student Health Examination (Yellow DH Form 3040)

Health & Illness

We follow hygienic practices at MMO, which includes regular hand washing, use of disposable gloves when changing diapers, or when exposed to bodily fluids, disinfecting of tables used as eating areas, and disinfecting of toys. We encourage children to use and dispose of tissue properly and to wash their hands or use a hand sanitizing gel afterward. For safety reasons, we will not administer medication. If your child is on medication, be sure that it is taken before they are brought in. We ask for parent's cooperation in keeping their child at home whenever he/she is sick. You are the most comforting person to your child when they are ill. A child should stay home or will be sent home if the following symptoms are observed:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Vomiting or excessive diarrhea
- Severe, continuous cough
- Yellow or green nasal discharge
- Rash of unknown origin

If your child has a fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea at home, or if they are sent home from MMO with these symptoms, your child must be SYMPTOM FREE for 24 hours WITHOUT the use of medication before they can return to MMO. This is to help illness from spreading in the classroom to friends and teachers. We thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school healthy!

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease, please notify the MMO Director so that we may contact other parents.

A child with the following communicable diseases will not be permitted to return until a licensed physician states in writing that he/she has been diagnosed, treated and presents no risk to him/herself or to others:.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Chicken Pox	German Measles	Influenza
Measles, Mumps, Rubella	Meningitis	Whooping Cough	Strep Throat
Head Lice	Hepatitis	Shigella	Tuberculosis
Impetigo	Rotavirus	Fifth disease	Scarlet Fever
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)		Hand-Foot-Mouth disease (Coxsackie Virus)	

Personal Belongings

We ask that children please keep personal toys at home. These special items can cause hardships in the classroom. Our program does not allow toy weapons of any kind. If your child, however, has a special item that comforts them (stuffed animal, blanket, etc.) please feel free to bring this item to class where it can be put in the child's cubby. If there is an item that will help the child feel secure, we are happy to let them have it! We will strictly limit pacifiers being used in the classroom. We have found that not having the pacifier while playing and being at school helps to promote verbal communication and expression.

Photographs

We may occasionally take photographs to promote and inform the Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church (MGUMC) and community of our MMO program. Photographs could be used on the MGUMC website and on MGUMC/MMO brochures. No child's name will be used in these publications. However, the photographs used and displayed in the classrooms, on MMO bulletin board displays and on our private Facebook group may have the child's first name included (i.e. cubby identification, class parties, etc.) A photograph release form is on the registration form.

Potty Training

Potty training is done in our 2 year old class with children that have expressed an interest or are starting at home. We ask that if your child is potty training, please put them in pull ups that are detachable on the sides, as they make for easier removal and re-changing.

All children entering into the 3 year old class **MUST** be fully potty trained. If more than 3 accidents occur in a week's time, we will get with you to discuss the situation.

Program Classes & Schedules

Our Mother's Morning Out Program follows the same school holidays and breaks as Escambia County Public Schools. You will be given a copy of the school calendar at orientation. Children will be placed in classes based on their age as of September 1st (No exceptions). We have 2 classes consisting of a 2 year old class and 3 year old class. Our program hours are Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9:00a.m.-1:00 p.m. The doors will open at 9:00 a.m. Parents will be expected to be prompt in picking up their children. If a parent is more than 10 minutes late on two occasions, arrangements will be made for the parent to pay the teacher who stayed with your child at a rate of \$2.00 per minute.

Staff

Our teachers are committed to the well-being of the children and are the backbone of our program. All MMO staff have completed a thorough background screening and fingerprinting, are CPR & First Aid Certified and have been trained through the Department of Children and Families Child Care Certification. The State of Florida requires that all members of childcare facilities be on the lookout for, and report to the State, any and all cases of abuse to a child. Our staff is therefore obligated to report to the State any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

Withdrawal from program

If your child needs to be withdrawn from the MMO program, it is requested that you give a two weeks written notice so that arrangements can be made to fill the vacancy.