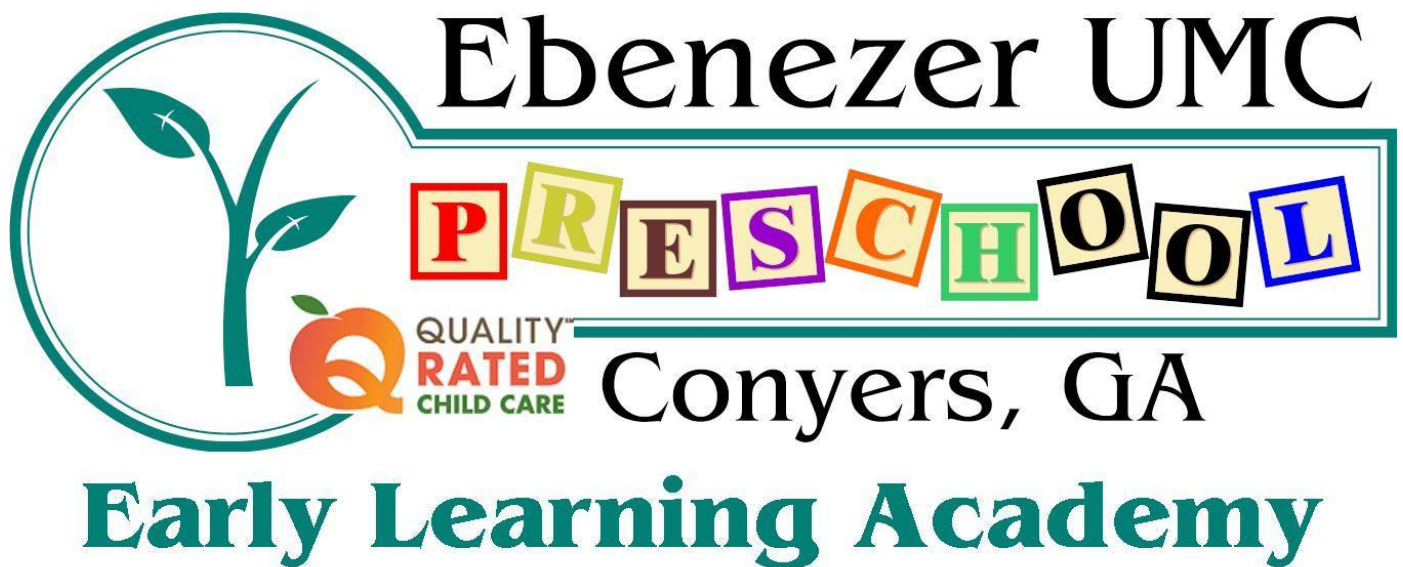


Parent Handbook



IMPORTANT DATES

2025-2026

KEY
SCHOOL CLOSED
Parties/Celebrations – all parties and special events begin at 3:00 pm
Morning Celebrations – breakfast parties beginning at 8:30 am
First and Last day of school

2025	2026
August 4th – First day of school for 2025-2026	January 1 st – New Year's Day
September 1 st – Labor Day	January 19 th – Martin Luther King Day
September 5 th – Grandparent's Day Celebration	February 13 th – Valentine's Parties
October 31 st – Trunk or Treat	February 17 th – Presidents' Day
November 27 th & 28 th - Thanksgiving	April 2 nd – Easter Party
December 4 th – Christmas Program @ 6:00 pm	April 3 rd – Good Friday
December 19 th – Christmas Parties	May 14 th – Graduation
December 24 th – 26 th – Christmas Break	May 25 th – Memorial Day
	May 30 th – Breakfast with Parents K.I.S.S. – Kids Invite Someone Special
	June 19 th – Juneteenth
	July 4 th – Independence Day
	July 30 th – End of Summer Bash
	July 31 st – Teacher Workday
	August 3 rd – First day of school for 2026-2027

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This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Ebenezer UMC Preschool policy, practices and standards. Electronic copies (PDF) of the handbook are available on our website at <http://www.ebenezerconyers.com/preschool.html>. Printed copies are available upon request. Ebenezer UMC preschool reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director, Pastor, or Preschool Executive Board. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook by email or notification sent home in your child's bookbag.

Welcome and Introduction

Thank you for choosing Ebenezer UMC Preschool for your child's early education and spiritual development. We believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual development. As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

History

We hope that this handbook will be a helpful tool and answer many of the questions that you may have about Ebenezer UMC Preschool. If you have questions, please contact our directors using the contact information listed below under "Administration".

Ebenezer UMC Preschool opened in September 1987 as a half-day program following the Rockdale County School System calendar. The original location of the preschool was in the Fellowship Hall next to our historic chapel which is now known as the Student Warehouse. At that time, we offered classes for ages 2 to 5 years old. In 2000, the preschool moved to EUMC's Education Building. Our desire has always been to provide quality care and education for our community. We began to realize that a half-day program was no longer meeting the needs of our community. In 2013, we started the process of becoming a state licensed year-round, full day program. On October 31, 2014, we received our license from Bright from the Start and, shortly thereafter, we received our first star in the Quality Rated program and have since received our 2nd star. In December 2024, our preschool moved back to its original location so that our program would be completely self-contained with a kitchen and attached playground. As a ministry of Ebenezer UMC and with a faith-based curriculum, we continue to strive to be the best we can be for our students and their families.

Philosophy

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following principles are excerpted from the *Georgia Early Learning Standards* and serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- ✓ Each child develops at an individual rate and has personal approaches to learning.
- ✓ Young children learn through developmentally appropriate play and social interaction.
- ✓ Young children learn best when all aspects of development (physical, emotional and social approaches to learning, language and literacy, and cognitive) are treated as interconnected.
- ✓ The child's family, educational setting, community, and culture shape the child's development.
- ✓ Early learning experiences must draw on and enhance the connections between each family and the early childhood program.
- ✓ Early learning experiences must support diverse culture, home language and individual learning potential of each child.
- ✓ Early childhood teachers play a powerful role in the education of young learners and deserve dignity and respect from the community at large.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at https://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

fax:

(202) 690-7442

email:

program.intake@usda.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
FNS-425
January 2014
Slightly Revised April 2022

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

General Center Information

ADMINISTRATION

Director:
Melissa Boone
directorpreschool@ebenezerconyers.com
Office: (770) 760-7146

Pastor:
Rev. Dr. Robert Lee Crawford
robert.crawford@georgiaumc.net
Office: (770) 922-8447

Church Administrator:
Paige Rogers
paigerogers@ebenezerconyers.com
Office: (770) 922-8447

HOURS AND HOLIDAYS

Ebenezer UMC Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. We are open year-round from January to December. When you enroll your child, you will need to declare the normal hours that your child will attend. This will help us to ensure adequate staffing and meal preparation. We do not allow parents to bring children after 9 am or 10 am with a doctor's note. **NOTE: As per Bright from the Start, children are only allowed to attend school for no more than 10 hours per day.**

The center will be closed in observance of the below listed holidays. If a holiday falls on a weekend day, Ebenezer UMC Preschool will close the Friday before or Monday after the holiday.

<i>New Year's Day (January 1st)</i>	<i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (3rd Monday in January)</i>	<i>President's Day (3rd Monday in February)</i>	<i>Good Friday</i>
<i>Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)</i>	<i>Juneteenth (June 19th)</i>	<i>Independence Day (4th of July)</i>	<i>Labor Day (1st Monday of September)</i>
<i>Election Days (1st Tuesday of November)</i>	<i>Thanksgiving Day and Day After (Last Thursday and Friday in November)</i>	<i>Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after Christmas</i>	<i>New Year's Eve Close at 3 pm</i>
<i>Professional Learning/Teacher Workday</i>			

Tuition costs are averaged over the year; therefore, full tuition is due these weeks. If a holiday falls on a weekend, we will be closed on a designated alternative day that will be announced in advance.

WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

Families will be given a two-week notice in the event of additional closings. A calendar of holidays/school closings will be provided to you at the beginning of each school year.

Ebenezer UMC Preschool will remain open during most severe weather. The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

In the event that Ebenezer UMC Preschool closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up within 1 hour to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home. Families will still be charged during weather closings.

In the event that a child needs to take an extended absence, such as a summer break or personal leave, and wishes to return to the program after a period of time, a fee of 50% of the weekly tuition must be paid each week the child is not present. More than two consecutive weeks of non-payment and no contact with the Director could result in termination of enrollment. Extended absences must be communicated in writing to the Director at least 30 days before an extended absence.

RATIOS

At Ebenezer UMC Preschool, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children</u>
Ones	1 staff for every 6 children
Young Toddlers	1 staff for every 6 children
Toddlers	1 staff for every 9 children
Early Preschoolers	1 staff for every 9 children
Preschoolers	1 staff for every 7 children

LICENSING

Ebenezer UMC Preschool is a public program voluntarily licensed by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Bright from the Start. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office, on the bulletin board outside of the office, and at <http://dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CCLCRulesandRegulations.pdf>.

GEORGIA QUALITY RATED SYSTEM

Ebenezer UMC Preschool is a 2-Star participant in the Georgia Quality Rated System. Parents and families can familiarize themselves with those requirements by visiting <http://dec.al.ga.gov/Prek/LearningEnvironment.aspx>.

UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS

Each fall, Ebenezer UMC Preschool completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. Most forms may be completed electronically; if you wish to receive a PDF version of the enrollment forms, please provide your email address to the Director.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physicals and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. You may bring these items to the office, or you or your physician can scan and email them to our office.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as address, contact information, place of employment or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form **must** be completed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a top priority for Ebenezer UMC Preschool. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual. When discussing a child's activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families.

TWO-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM AND DIAPERING PROCEDURE

The following information is specific to the toddler, and two-year-old program rooms:

- ✓ Parents must supply diapers, diaper cream, extra clothing, pacifiers and blankets for rest time. Please label all items with child's name.
- ✓ Children may ONLY use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day.

Parents are to provide an adequate number of diapers and pull-ups each day to care for their child. There will be a \$2.00 per diaper fee if we need to use our diapers.

Children who are being potty-trained will need extra underwear, two changes of clothing (including socks and sometimes shoes), and a pull-up to be kept in their bag each day (do not put these items in a plastic bag inside their book bag). The staff and parents will work together as a team with potty-training.

SPECIAL NOTE: Children in the threes and fours classes are to be fully potty-trained. Our definition of fully potty-trained is "no daily accidents."

Fees and Billing Policies

WEEKLY TUITION & REGISTRATION FEE (Effective January 1, 2025)

	FULL DAY (6:30 am – 6:00 pm, Monday – Friday)
Early Toddlers	\$185
Toddlers	\$185
Early Preschoolers	\$185
Preschoolers	\$185
Annual Registration (non-refundable)	\$100

Our tuition costs are averaged for a period of one year. Your tuition helps to support the staff and is therefore due whether your child attends one day or five days. You must make your tuition payment in order to hold your child's place. Tuition is due on Friday for the next week. **There will be no discounts for not attending a week.** A late fee will be assessed on Monday of \$30. Termination of care may result for any unpaid balance after 2 weeks unless arrangements have been made with the Director. Late fees are assessed on all accounts with a balance.

Tuition may be paid in advance monthly or weekly. Monthly payments must be made on the 1st of each month to avoid accruing a late fee. If tuition is not paid by the 5th of the month and there has been no communication with the Director, termination of your child's attendance may result.

There will be NO DISCOUNTS for the days that the preschool is closed.

No refunds, prorates or credit is given for changes in family schedules or absences due to illness or injury. By enrolling your child, you are agreeing to the weekly tuition fee for as long as your child is enrolled, regardless of the number of hours you and your child use the service. CAPS parents are responsible for the week's tuition if their child is out for the week. CAPS does not pay when your child does not attend.

We make every attempt to run our center efficiently; however, due to the increased cost of staffing, continuing education and equipment, there may be an annual increase in tuition. If there is ever a need to increase the cost of tuition to maintain our high quality, parents will be provided with written notice at least 2 weeks in advance.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

Ebenezer UMC Preschool closes at 6:00PM, Monday through Friday. Parents will be charged based on the below chart a child is present after 6:00PM:

Arrival 6:01-6:05	\$10 late fee
Arrival 6:06-6:15	\$3.00/minute
Arrival 6:16-6:30	\$5.00/minute
Arrival after 6:30	\$12.00/minute

Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Director stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, we will try to contact everyone on the emergency contact list. If we are unable to get in touch with anyone or the child is not picked up within 30 minutes of the center's closing, our administrative staff will notify the Department of Family and Children Services and/or the Rockdale County Police Department. At the discretion of our administrative staff, we may contact the Department of Family and Children Services if children are frequently picked up late.

If there are 3 or more violations within 1 calendar month, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents, Director and Senior Pastor of the church to discuss the continuation of care in our center. All late fees MUST be paid within 5 business days.

RETURNED CHECKS/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

All returned checks or direct debit payments rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a ***\$40.00 fee*** (\$25 returned check fee plus late fee of \$15). Returned check and fee **MUST** be paid in cash within one day of notification. After two incidents of returned checks, **ALL** future payments must be cash or money order. Repeated incidents of returned checks or insufficient funds notices could result in termination of childcare services.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Missed payments and late fees must be paid within 2 weeks. A payment plan should be discussed with the Director if a family is having trouble making tuition payments. Families that are more than 2 weeks behind in payments may have their childcare services terminated. A payment plan must be agreed upon between family and Center before an account will be considered “in good standing” and no longer eligible for termination.

Enrollment/Admission Procedures

REQUIRED FORMS/INFORMATION

There are several forms that must be completed and returned before your child may be admitted to the program. There are **NO** exceptions. This is to ensure compliance with state regulations and to make sure we are providing the best possible care for all children. All forms must be updated annually, or immediately upon any changes.

For each child, a signed copy of the following should be on file:

- ✓ Application for Admission
- ✓ Medical and Liability Release Form
- ✓ Parental Agreement for Care
- ✓ State of Georgia Immunization Record (Form 3231) *
- ✓ Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- ✓ Authorization to Dispense External Preparation
- ✓ Photo Consent
- ✓ If your child requires any special treatment or services, these requirements should be clearly defined in writing before your child's first day.

On the Application for Admission, complete address and phone numbers are required. It is extremely important to keep this information updated and current since this is our only means of contacting you. Georgia law requires that these forms be complete and be updated by the parents if any changes of information occur.

ITEMS SUPPLIED BY PARENTS

Parents are required to provide the following items for each child enrolled:

- ✓ Diapers and wipes, if needed;
- ✓ Extra change of clothing, including underwear and socks, in a gallon Ziploc type bag with all clothing labeled with child's name;
- ✓ Other items may be requested on an as-needed basis
- ✓ If it is necessary to borrow diapers or a change of clothes for your child, there will be a charge of \$2 per incident charged to your account.
- ✓ Diaper cream, sunscreen, or any other necessary topical ointments must be supplied by parents and accompanied by a consent form that will be placed in the child's file. Please label each item with your child's name.

Parents are encouraged to dress their children in seasonally suitable play clothes and shoes that are appropriate for inside and outside play. Please realize that the hands-on way in which children learn can result in messy clothes! Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum. Make sure your child is wearing shoes that can get dirty. No open toe shoes or rain boots should be worn to school. Tennis shoes are best for playground play

Each child should have a complete change of clothes at the center at all times, including underwear and socks. Parents should check every day for soiled clothing to be taken home, and periodically to make sure that the clothes still fit and are appropriate for the season.

No outside toys, stuffed animals, or other items are allowed in the center unless it is Show and Tell. When Show and Tell items are brought, they will remain in your child's cubby or bookbag until Show and Tell. All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name. It is recommended that items of value be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Ebenezer UMC Preschool is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

Any personal belongings that cannot be identified will be placed in a Lost and Found box. If no one claims any of the items at the end of each school year, they will be discarded or donated to Goodwill or Salvation Army.

CHILD RECORDS

Ebenezer UMC Preschool maintains files on each child enrolled. The following items are included in these files:

- ✓ Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Ebenezer UMC Preschool. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records and physicals may be sent electronically to Ebenezer UMC Preschool directly from your healthcare provider. If any follow-up is required for abnormal results, evidence should be provided that this was completed.
- ✓ Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency.
- ✓ Current emergency contact information for each child. This information must be updated annually or more frequently if needed.
- ✓ Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child.
- ✓ Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness.

If a child is overdue for any health services, as the parent/guardian, you must provide evidence that an appointment has been made in order for your child to remain in the program. If you have chosen not to have your child vaccinated for medical or religious reasons, a form stating this must be on file. If your child is under-immunized or not immunized at all for any reason, your child may be excluded from the facility if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program. **Children without a current immunization form (or medical/religious exemption on file) will not be allowed to remain in the program after the 30-day grace period. This is Georgia state law.**

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are expected to provide the center staff with any and all contact numbers we might need in order to reach you. This includes home, work, and cell phone numbers as well as e-mail addresses. We also require the names, complete addresses, and phone numbers of at least two people from different households who could pick up your child in an emergency. Please be advised that center staff is authorized to call your emergency contacts to pick up your child if we are unable to reach you in a reasonable amount of time depending on your child's condition. **Parents must notify the center immediately upon any changes in name, address, phone number, place of employment or any other pertinent information.**

AUTHORIZED PERSONS

In the event of a need to evacuate the center (in a weather emergency, for instance), our evacuation location will be the large parking lot behind our building.

The safety of your children is a priority to our staff. Children shall **ONLY** be released from Ebenezer UMC to those individuals whose names are on file with our office. If a teacher is not familiar with the person picking up a child, he/she will ask the individual to show identification before the child can be released. Please let anyone that might pick up your child know that they will be asked to show a picture ID so they are prepared and not offended. Please note that children will not be released to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

We recognize that there may be a situation when someone not on the authorized pick-up list needs to pick up the child. In this situation, the Director/Co-Director must be notified about who will be picking up a child. A child will only be released to that person with proper picture identification. The staff is required to photocopy the ID each time a child is picked up by someone not on the authorized list.

This policy is strictly enforced for the safety of your child and our staff. Although you may list additional authorized persons to pick up your child on the Application for Admission, we would appreciate knowing if someone other than the parents will be picking up your child.

CUSTODY ISSUES AND AFFIDAVIT POLICY

In a case of separated or divorced parents where visitation rights are denied to one parent, we cannot deny releasing the child to such parent unless a court decree or separation document is in your child's file with us. The document must clearly forbid such parent (and any other individuals connected to the parent/guardian) from picking up the child from our program. The court decree must also be specific to the rights of visitation and if the parent is allowed, on certain occasions, to pick up the child from the center.

When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a staff member of Ebenezer UMC Preschool to provide such a statement. Our program's priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. **Ebenezer UMC Preschool staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.**

TERMINATION

The agreement for childcare may be terminated by either the parent/guardian or the center by giving a two-week **written** notice in advance of the ending date. Payment by parent/guardian is due for the notice period, whether or not the child is present.

The center may terminate the agreement without giving any notice if the parent/guardian fails to comply with the terms of this agreement, including but not limited to timely payment of fees, or if the care of the child poses a direct threat to the health and safety of the teachers and/or other children enrolled. The staff will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse by children or parents.

Every effort will be made to prevent the termination of a child in our program. Ebenezer UMC Preschool, however, reserves the right to give notice of termination of enrollment under these conditions:

- ✓ Tuition payments are 2 weeks behind and no payment plan has been arranged.
- ✓ Lack of follow through on special arrangements for payment.
- ✓ Failure to adhere to policies and procedures as communicated in the parent handbook.
- ✓ The program is unable to meet the developmental needs of the child.
- ✓ Consistent behavioral problems that result from failure to obtain requested child guidance evaluation(s).
- ✓ The child's behavior threatens the health and safety of himself or herself, the other children, or staff of the center.
- ✓ The parent or guardian exhibits behavior which is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children and staff in a classroom or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom.
- ✓ Parental disputes between divorced parents/guardians that become administratively disruptive to the center.

Arrival, Departure and Attendance

ARRIVAL

All children must be escorted in and out of Ebenezer UMC Preschool by their parents or guardians. If there is something your child's teacher needs to be aware of, i.e., a change in eating or sleeping patterns or changes to the home environment, you may talk to them when you drop off your child if they are not engaged with others or you may write them a note and place in their backpack. ***We cannot accept a child brought to the center by Uber or other transport company without a parent or guardian.***

Parents should make sure that their children are under the direct supervision of an adult before leaving the premises. It is important that parents adhere to the procedures for bringing children to school and picking them up as it ensures their health and safety. **Upon arrival at the center, parents should accompany their child into the building and sign-in your child with the time you arrived as well as sign out when you depart for the day as per Bright from the Start state law.**

To support your child's growing sense of daily, predictable, and secure routines and the learning experiences that are planned, please arrive on time. Breakfast is served at 8:30 am and class activities begin at 9:00 a.m.

DEPARTURE

Ebenezer UMC Preschool closes at 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. Please note that there is a late fee for arriving after 6:00 pm. If you arrive prior to 6:00 pm but your child remains in our care until after 6:00 pm, a late fee will still apply. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, you must inform the center as soon as possible in advance of pick up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, they may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met them. ***We cannot release a child to an Uber driver or driver from any transport company.***

Be sure to communicate with the appropriate staff to let them know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Ebenezer UMC Preschool is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, we will try to contact everyone on the emergency contact list. If we are unable to get in touch with anyone or the child is not picked up within 30 minutes of the center's closing, our administrative staff will notify the Department of Family and Children Services and/or the Rockdale County Police Department. At the discretion of our administrative staff, we may contact the Department of Family and Children Services if children are frequently picked up late.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as for the classroom as a whole. If your child will be absent, please **message or call the center before 9:00 am** so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan. There will be no drop-offs after 9:00 am without a doctor's note and only until 10:00 am. **Please notify the center before 9:00 am if your child will not be attending for the day.** We ask that you be considerate of the other students and refrain from picking up children between quiet hours of 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than 2-3 days), the center must be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of 2 weeks or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS FOR CHILD PICK-UPS

Each family will document in the enrollment forms the people authorized to pick up their child. We recognize that there may be a situation when someone not on the authorized pick-up list needs to pick up the child. In this situation, the Director/Co-Director must be notified about who will be picking up a child. A child will only be released to that person with proper picture identification. The staff is required to photocopy the ID each time a child is picked up by someone not on the authorized list.

Programming

CURRICULUM

Curriculum at Ebenezer UMC Preschool includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Ebenezer UMC Preschool uses the GELDS (Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards) as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans may be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, reading, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

The classroom teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines will be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

SUPERVISION

Teaching staff at Ebenezer UMC Preschool are assigned to a specific group of children for whom they have primary responsibility.

Teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible. Toddlers/Twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Teachers are positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible. For preschoolers and older children, the teachers supervise primarily by sight and may supervise by sound for short intervals as long as the teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (for example while a preschooler is toileting).

Classrooms and outdoor space must be designed so that there are no areas where children can hide or be out of sight. Teachers should take extra precautions, and ask for assistance if needed, when supervising children during high-risk activities or when near equipment where injury could occur.

FREE PLAY

All employees are expected to use developmentally appropriate guidance and supervision skills. These guidance and supervision skills include awareness, positioning, scanning, redirection, and close supervision.

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. Our directors and teachers continually monitor the weather to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors. It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, hats, boots, gloves, etc.). **Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name.** If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to remain inside. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

NAP/REST TIME

Bright from the Start requires that all children must be provided a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home such as a small blanket to use during nap/rest time. These items will be stored in your child's cubby or on his/her cot or mat; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding what to bring. All items will be sent home each Friday to be laundered.

ANTI-BIAS POLICY

We encourage and support cultural diversity, gender equality, non-violence, and peaceful conflict resolution throughout every aspect of our program. Our goal is to teach children to resist the bias that is seen in much of today's popular culture. We believe that children can be empowered to reject negative stereotypes of race, gender, religion, and physical capabilities with the help of their parents and teachers. We ask for your support and your feedback to help us ensure that we are living up to our highest standards.

MULTIMEDIA

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select a movie, television and/or computer game titles based upon weekly themes. Children are not required to view part or all of a video or television show, or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several centers. All multimedia must have a rating of "PG" or "E" and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time per week they may use or view multimedia:

2-year-olds	Maximum 20 minutes/week
3-year-olds	Maximum 30 minutes/week
4-year-olds	Maximum 30 minutes/week

WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Ebenezer UMC Preschool. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a play weapon to Ebenezer UMC Preschool, the play weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. **Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.**

PETS & VISITING ANIMALS

Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Ebenezer UMC Preschool without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director. Once approved by the Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

Assessments

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Teachers at Ebenezer UMC Preschool are continually watching, observing, and documenting each child's development. The same tool is used for all ages, to allow a more complete picture of your child's development. By tracking a child's development, our teachers are able to plan activities that are appropriate for each child's developmental abilities. We use CDC Developmental Milestones as recommended by Bright from the Start.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to talk about their child's progress with the teacher on a regular basis in order to keep the lines of communication open. Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held at least twice per year or each time your child transitions to a different classroom. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development, both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

To best ensure that their needs are met, when children with special needs are enrolled, there will be consultations with the parents and as needed, the child's medical advisor, the staff who will be involved, and any other appropriate individuals. Additionally, an assessment to determine the full scope of needs and appropriate services may be required. Assessments may be made on a periodic basis after a child with special needs is enrolled to ensure that the child is continuing to have his/her needs adequately met.

Nutrition

MEALS AND SNACKS

One of the most important ways that we can help a child improve their academic ability is to provide a well-balanced meal plan. Each meal that we prepare meets or exceeds the USDA requirements for a nutritious meal or snack.

At Ebenezer UMC Preschool, children are provided a nutritious breakfast (8:30 am), lunch (11:30 am), and afternoon snack (2:30 pm). Ebenezer UMC Preschool follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus will be emailed and posted on the bulletin board outside the office each week.

Children will be encouraged to sample all the foods that are offered but will never be forced to eat. Food will never be used as a method of discipline. Any dietary restrictions or allergies need a doctor's note.

Occasionally, if a child has a very limited range of tolerated foods, special arrangements may be made with the Director for meals to be provided from home. The Center must have a physician's note on file to accommodate any special arrangements.

Meals provided from home must meet the USDA guidelines for nutritionally sound and well-balanced meals. If the food is provided from home, it must be provided consistently every day and must be labeled with the child's name and date. As the center promotes healthy eating practices, please do not send chips, snack food, sweet desserts or carbonated beverages to school with your children. Food brought from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. All unused portions of food will either be discarded or returned to the parents (depending on the arrangements made).

Except in these special cases, food should not be brought into the center.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Our facility is a nut free facility. No food containing, or processed in a facility with nuts, is allowed in the center.

Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and Bright from the Start is available upon request.

FOOD ALLERGY ACTION PLAN

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form, available in the office. This form will be posted in your child's room, as well as in food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is provided, please have your physician sign the Food Allergy Action Plan as well. The medicine will be kept in the school office.

Health and Safety Policies

HAND WASHING

Our center is dedicated to providing a healthy and safe environment for the children, families, and employees that enter our program every day. Your support is needed to prevent the spread of germs. Adults should assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task. If you decide to remain at the center after you have signed your child in, we ask that you wash your hands in accordance with the guidelines listed below.

Children and adults must wash their hands at the following times:

- ✓ Upon arrival for the day.
- ✓ After diapering or using the toilet.
- ✓ After handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or touching any mucus, blood, or vomit).
- ✓ Before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, or after handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry).
- ✓ After playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
- ✓ After playing in the sand.
- ✓ After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.
- ✓ When moving from one group to another (e.g., visiting) that involves contact with toddler/twos.
- ✓ After re-entering from outside play.
- ✓ After contamination by any other means.

Adults must also wash their hands:

- ✓ Before and after preparing a bottle and/or feeding a child.
- ✓ Before and after administering medication.
- ✓ After assisting a child with toileting.
- ✓ After handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand washing procedure must always be followed. Adults and children shall wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails. Hands should be rinsed well and then hands should be dried with a single-use paper towel. The paper towel should be used to turn the water off and should then be discarded.

Our efforts to minimize the spread of germs include daily cleaning of all toys, certain equipment and classroom areas, kitchen areas and bathrooms. Children's cots are also kept separate and marked for use by one child only. Sheets are washed at least once a week or when visibly soiled.

MEDICATION

We can administer any topical ointments and creams to any child, as long as we have the form, ***“Authorization to Dispense External Preparations”*** completed and on file along with the medications or creams to be used such as bug repellent, diaper rash cream, sunscreen, lip balm, Vaseline, Neosporin, etc. (all provided by you) which will be stored in the school office in your child’s bag with a copy of the form. For us to dispense prescription medications such as an asthma inhaler, EpiPen, ADHD medication, or antibiotic, the parent/guardian must fill out an ***“Authorization for Prescription Medication”*** form. **We WILL NOT give children over-the-counter fever or pain reducers, allergy, cough, or cold medications.**

Please provide verbally and in writing any procedures to be followed in caring for children with special needs. We love caring for all children but will discuss other options with families if we feel that we cannot provide the proper care for your child.

All medication will be stored in a locked medicine cabinet or container and not be accessible to the children. It will be stored separately from cleaning chemicals and supplies. Medications requiring refrigeration must be provided in a leak-proof container and will be placed in the refrigerator and not be accessible to the children. Any unused medication will be returned to the child's parents immediately.

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but it is our responsibility to make every effort to keep children safe by maintaining close supervision and a safe environment. All the employees at Ebenezer UMC Preschool are trained in CPR and First Aid. Minor injuries will be treated with the appropriate first aid following universal precautions. If an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, the child will be transported by ambulance to Piedmont Rockdale at 1412 Milstead Avenue in Conyers GA where you will be asked to meet us. An employee will be assigned to stay with your child until a parent arrives, or longer if necessary. If your child has a dental emergency, you will be asked to pick your child up to seek appropriate care.

If your child is injured at the center, we use Brightwheel for Boo-boo reports. If the injury is serious, appropriate emergency care will be administered, emergency personnel called, if needed, and you will be contacted by phone for further instructions. The child’s parent/guardian shall assume responsibility for any fees incurred in seeking medical treatment. All injuries will be documented on an injury report form. A copy of this documentation will be filed, and a copy will be provided to you. If required, the Director will make a report to Bright from the Start.

ILLNESS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

This program is operated as a “well-child” facility. We are not equipped to provide care for sick children. The following illness policies are mandated by our licensing agency and will be strictly enforced for the health, well-being, and safety of all concerned.

SICK CHILD POLICY

Every course of action is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices. Under no circumstance may a parent bring a sick child to the center. If a child shows any signs of illness or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular activities, the child should be kept at home. Sick children expose other children, as well as the center staff, to the spread of germs and require additional care and attention that is not available in a group care setting. Because illness can be a great disruption for all involved, your cooperation in preventing the spread of germs/illness is extremely important.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to pick the child up.

In accordance with state regulations and best practices, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after the condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24-48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic, or as otherwise indicated by a doctor's note. If you aren't sure about whether to bring your child to the center, please call the center to discuss it. Confirmed allergy related symptoms and non-communicable illnesses typically will not require exclusion.

SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CARE

NOTE: A fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher. Before returning to care, a child must be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours *WITHOUT* the aid of Tylenol or other fever reducing medication.

- ✓ Fever of 100.4 or higher.
- ✓ Sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- ✓ COVID-19 symptoms or positive test.
- ✓ Diarrhea: runny, water, bloody stools, or two or more loose stools within last four hours.
- ✓ Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- ✓ Persistent abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/ symptoms of illness.
- ✓ Breathing trouble: sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- ✓ Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours.
- ✓ Runny nose (other than clean), draining eyes or ears.
- ✓ Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm, scabies and impetigo.
- ✓ Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- ✓ Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- ✓ Child is irritable, continuously crying, requires more attention than I can provide without risking the health, safety or well-being of the other children in care.

In accordance with BFTS rules, the current communicable disease chart of recommendations for exclusion of sick children from care and their readmission will be followed. Any cases or suspected cases of notifiable communicable diseases listed on the disease chart will be reported to the local county health department. Sick children may return to care 24 hours AFTER symptoms of the illness end, which means if the child is sent home with a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting they cannot return until they have been symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medications.

Parent Notification - Parents of any child who becomes ill or is injured while in our care will be notified immediately of any illness or injury requiring professional medical attention, or any illness which may not require professional medical attention but which produces symptoms causing moderate discomfort to the child such as, but not limited to, any of the following: elevated temperature, vomiting, or diarrhea. Special problems or significant developments will be communicated to the parents as soon as they arise.

Our center reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted in the Brightwheel app or on the door to your child's classroom. Additionally, families who have provided an email address will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

As childcare professionals who interact with children daily, each staff member of Ebenezer UMC Preschool is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

The Council on Ministries of the United Methodist Church requires our church and preschool to have a Safe Sanctuary Policy. All our staff have completed Safe Sanctuary Training. Each staff member has been cleared through background checks, and character references are checked as well. It is our duty to do all that we can to prevent harm to any child in our care.

Ebenezer UMC Preschool is a smoke-free, drug-free, and alcohol-free facility. Smoking, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited on the grounds and within the Preschool premises. We encourage families to remove students' clothing and items that will be sent to the Preschool from spaces in the home where heavy smoking (cigarettes or marijuana) and drinking may occur so that the odor does not seep into those items. Students who arrive with a strong odor on their clothing will not be permitted in the building. Any of the student's items that arrive with a strong smell will not be permitted in the building, and Conyers Police may be called to investigate if there is a concern that an illegal substance is the cause of the odor. If a parent/guardian or emergency contact person appears to be altered or intoxicated upon arrival at the Preschool to pick up a child, the preschool staff will not release the child.

Guiding Children's Behavior

POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND REDIRECTION

Positive guidance techniques will be used as a first measure in redirecting a child's improper behavior. They are always consistent and based on the child's specific needs and development. We have found that these methods are most effective when coupled with the cooperation of the parents. Although children under three usually cannot remember problems that may have occurred earlier in the day, we ask that you discuss with your child the proper way to act. Children strive to receive approval and praise.

Conferences may be necessary for a child who does not respond to these guidance techniques. If you have concerns about your child's behavior or development, you may schedule an appointment with the Director to arrange a conference.

Staff members are trained to praise and encourage children while setting limits for behavior. They modify their classroom environment to prevent problems before they occur. Children are treated as individual people, and we try to respect their needs, desires, and feelings. Every attempt is made to make their early learning experiences as positive as possible. If certain behaviors cannot be corrected using the center's redirection policy (including repeated biting issues), parents/guardians will be called to pick up their child and someone MUST pick up the child within one hour. In the event a child remains unresponsive to continued attempts at positive disciplinary methods and becomes aggressive towards other students, classmates, teachers or administrative staff, Ebenezer UMC Preschool reserves the right to dismiss the child immediately from our program.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Ebenezer UMC Preschool will make every effort to include children with special needs. Staff will assess each child on a case-by-case basis in cooperation with the parents/guardians and other professionals, as appropriate. Every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations and adaptations that are reasonably achievable.

BITING

With young children biting is, unfortunately, common. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Though our teachers use best practices to prevent biting, children occasionally do bite each other. When it happens, appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. The bite area is immediately washed with antiseptic soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary. The biting child will be removed from the situation and the teacher will assess the reason for the biting. An accident/incident form is filled out on Brightwheel. The parents/guardian of the child who was bitten is given a copy without the name of the biting child who did the biting. The lead teacher will work with the parents/guardians to help them form a plan to reduce any future occurrences. If intervention by the lead teachers in cooperation with the parents/guardians does not bring resolution and the problem continues, the Director will help plan additional interventions. If a child bites and breaks skin causing the other child to bleed or bruise 3 or more times within a 7 day period, the child will be sent home with a 3-day suspension. Only after all options have been exhausted will a child who bites be asked to withdraw from the program.

Home and School Partnership

DAILY UPDATES

Daily updates about your child's day are made on the Brightwheel app. Since teaching your child is our main priority, teachers will not respond to non-emergency messages until naptime. We do not expect our staff to read or answer non-emergency messages after hours. We ask that you do the same by respecting their personal and after hours' time.

ROOM TRANSITIONS

Your child will transition to a new classroom at the beginning of the new school year, typically in August. Both your child's current and future teacher are available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

OPEN-DOOR POLICY AND CHILD ACCESS

Ebenezer UMC Preschool understands the value of the parent and child relationship as the family serves as the child's first teacher, and the bonds of a child and their family is crucial to healthy development. It is for this reason that we maintain an open-door policy for all the families of the children served.

Parents and family members (those listed as authorized persons) will have open access at all times to their children who are enrolled in the program. The only exception is if there is legal documentation on file in the center that forbids access. Parents of children enrolled in our programs are not required to call prior to arriving or entering the program and may visit unannounced at any time during center operating hours. We do ask that you not come during nap/quiet time, 11:30 to 2:00 pm. Because it can sometimes be very upsetting for young children to see their parents and then have them leave, our one request is that you come at a time when you can take your child with you when you leave.

On-going communication is essential between parents and the program to ensure optimal outcomes for children. This communication can take place through face-to-face conversations, e-mails, or telephone calls. Other forms of communication and access include but are not limited to parent-teacher notes, parent conferences, etc. Conferences can be initiated by the parents/guardians or by staff of the program.

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Ebenezer UMC Preschool asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent's point-of-view is different from a teacher's point-of-view.

PHOTO RELEASE

Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

The staff at Ebenezer UMC Preschool regularly take pictures to document the experiences of the children. By signing the enrollment application, you give permission for your child's photograph to be used for marketing purposes and on Ebenezer UMC Preschool's official internet website at www.ebenezerconyers.com/preschool and all social media accounts.

BULLETIN BOARD

Information will be posted on the Parent Board in the main hallway to inform all parents of the license, copy of the rules, review of the evaluation report, communicable disease chart, statement of parent of parental access, names of persons in charge, current weekly menu, emergency plans, and statement for visitors. Please check the board frequently to stay in tune with the happenings in your child's center.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Although the center makes every attempt to offer the highest quality care to all children and families, there may be occasions when parents have concerns about certain events, situations, or staff. If this occurs, parents are encouraged to talk to their child's direct caregiver as a first point of contact. If they have tried this without satisfactory results, or if the concern is serious enough to warrant immediate administrative review, parents are encouraged to contact the Center Director. The Director will then schedule meetings as necessary with appropriate parties to gather relevant information before deciding on a course of action. Parents will be informed, as appropriate within confidentiality requirements, as to the result of the Director's inquiry and action taken.

Again, our goal is quality childcare, and we encourage parents to bring their concerns to us so that we can work together to ensure that quality.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILY AND CENTER

Good communication between families and the center is essential to maintain the level of service that it is our intention to offer. There are many avenues for maintaining this connection:

- ✓ Telephone conversations with teachers/Director at mutually convenient times.
- ✓ Our staff schedules regular conference appointments twice a year; however, if there are matters of interest or concern that you need to speak with the teacher or Director about, conference appointments can be made at mutually convenient times with teachers/Director to ensure plenty of time to talk.
- ✓ E-mail conversations when time constraints limit direct conversations.
- ✓ Written notes/letters
- ✓ Brightwheel messages

General Operating Policies

OFFICIAL NOTICES

Changes in policies and procedures and official notices will be communicated in writing and placed in your child's folder in their backpack or emailed to you.

TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED

Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on Ebenezer UMC Preschool premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

FIREARMS PROHIBITED

Absolutely no firearms are allowed on Ebenezer UMC Preschool's premises. If we find that anyone has a firearm of any type, that person will be asked to immediately leave the premises. The only exception to this policy is for active law enforcement officers required to carry a firearm.

PETS

From time to time our center may include animals as part of the curriculum. If your child has any allergies to pets, please indicate those on your enrollment/admission materials and talk with the Director and your child's teacher.

CLASS PARTIES AND BIRTHDAYS

If a parent wishes to send birthday refreshments or snacks on their child's birthday, please notify the teacher in advance of the child's birthday. We encourage birthday celebrations for students with parent participation. Please provide healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, mini bottles of water along with the party treat (NUT-FREE mini cookies or mini cupcakes). We will only pass out private birthday invitations if the entire class is invited.

We will have celebrations throughout the year. If you would like to be a room parent for your child's classroom, please talk with your child's teacher. All parties must be held on the Ebenezer campus. If you decide to join us for a celebration, please plan to take your child with you when you leave as it is very upsetting to those children whose parents leave without them.

CONFLICTED OF INTEREST/CONTRACTING WITH EMPLOYEES

The teachers in our center are professionals. As such, we expect them to abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct as set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This principle reads "We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain or enter into relationship with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children".

We ask for your cooperation and support by refraining from asking any of our teaching staff working in the center to provide care for your children at any time other than when they are in the center. We understand the level of comfort that you feel with the teaching staff and how hard it is sometimes to find quality after hours care, but we also know that you expect excellence and high quality from our Center, and we expect it of ourselves. Your support helps us achieve those goals.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

While visiting the center, it is important that you never leave your personal property accessible to children. You are asked to leave all belongings in your vehicle OR ask the Director to place your items in a secure location inaccessible to the children.

UNSAFE OR UNHEALTHY CONDITIONS

If you become aware of an unsafe or unhealthy situation or condition in any portion of the facility (indoors or outdoors), you are asked to immediately make the Director aware.

AIR POLLUTION

Ebenezer UMC Preschool will refer to the GA Environmental Protection Division website to determine if conditions warrant limited outside exposure. If weather conditions create a situation where outside activity must be limited or avoided, teachers will have other gross-motor activities that can be implemented in the classroom or in the large receiving room planned for the children.

CENTER SECURITY

Ebenezer UMC Preschool doors will remain locked at all times. There is a camera at the front door with multiple monitors in the center so that we can see who is at our door. Visitors are asked to ring the doorbell, and the staff will come to the door to let you in. Please do not ring the bell during nap/quiet time (11:30 am to 2:00pm).

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of emergency, we will make every effort to contact you as soon as possible. Keeping your child's forms updated will eliminate delays in reaching you. In emergency situations, it is important that parents pick up their children within one hour of initial contact.

In the event of a medical emergency with your child, Ebenezer UMC Preschool will administer First Aid or seek emergency medical attention if it is deemed necessary.

If the center must be evacuated for any reason, the children will be taken to one of three locations, whichever is deemed safest. These locations are across the parking lot to Ebenezer's Chapel or to the Activity Center on the upper portion of Ebenezer's property on Stanton Road or to Edwards Middle School. Once the children are situated, phone calls will be made to all parents.

Emergency conditions, such as severe weather, power outages, water loss or fire, can disrupt operations and interfere with our operating schedule, as well as endanger our families and employees. These extreme circumstances may require the closing of the facility. When the facility is closed due to an emergency, tuition will not be pro-rated. In the event of an emergency or severe weather, you will be notified of any schedule changes or closures.

Emergency plans for fire, tornado, and lockdown are posted by each exit door in each classroom and on the Parent Board in the hallway. Drills are practiced throughout the year so that your child is familiar with the procedures and not alarmed in case of a real emergency. Please talk with your child and assure him/her that these drills are "pretend or make-believe" and not real. We want all children and staff to be prepared for any emergencies that may arise.

Physical plant problems will be communicated to the parents by text, our Facebook Private Parent Page, email or phone. If there is a power failure or no running water, for example, each parent will be notified and will need to pick up their child until all issues are addressed and fixed.

In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the Rockdale County School System for inclement weather closings. If Rockdale County Schools are closed, we will be closed. The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. We will send a message via the Brightwheel app, post our closing on our Facebook page (public and private) as well as our website at www.ebenezerconyers.com/preschool. We will also send an email and/or text about the closing.

Bright from the Start/DECAL will be notified within 24 hours if there is a fire, severe weather, lock down, physical plant issues, serious injury, death or loss of a child.



FAMILY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

Please acknowledge each line by initialing:

_____ We love our families at Ebenezer UMC Preschool and expect that families must be respectful to teachers and staff members at all times. For students to be successful, a strong relationship between families, teachers and the child must be maintained. We ask that cell phones not be used when dropping off or picking up your child to allow for better teacher-family interactions. Any concerns may be expressed directly to the teacher and if not resolved, through a meeting with the Director.

_____ All children must be escorted in and out of the building by authorized persons.

_____ "Authorization to Administer Medicine Medication Form" must be completed and signed on a weekly basis by the child's family. We do not administer ongoing treatment unless we have a letter on file from your doctor. All medications must be in the original container with the child's name on it.

_____ Form 3231 (state immunization form) must be turned in within 10 days of acceptance or your student will be withdrawn.

_____ All families must fill out an Income Eligibility Form and update it annually. This form allows our program to apply for reimbursement through Child and Adult Care Food Program for some food costs.

_____ Parents must update enrollment records with any changes to information that we have on file.

_____ Each child must keep a complete change of clothes at the school in the event of accidents (shirts, pants, underwear and socks).

_____ A \$2.00 charge per diaper will be added to account balances when diapers and/or clothing are borrowed from the center or another child.

_____ I understand that I am responsible for any special diet required by my child.

_____ Ebenezer UMC Preschool will provide children on a regular diet with a nutritious breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Menus are prepared weekly and posted on the information bulletin board. Outside food is not permitted unless your child(ren) are on a strict diet.

_____ I understand that if my child is absent or needs to be picked up during quiet time, I **MUST** contact the Center Director. We do ask that you make every effort not to come during nap/quiet time, 11:30 to 2:00 pm.

_____ Should my child become ill or suffer an accident while at Ebenezer Preschool UMC, the school shall contact me at the number(s) I have provided. I authorize Ebenezer UMC Preschool to seek emergency medical treatment if deemed necessary for my child. The guardians will assume responsibility for payment for any services rendered.

_____ Tuition is due on Friday for the upcoming week. A \$30 late fee will be due on Monday and an additional \$15 late fee will be charged on Tuesday.

_____ **Ebenezer UMC Preschool requires two weeks written notice prior to withdrawal or change in tuition fee.**
You are responsible for tuition during the two weeks' notice even if your child does not attend.

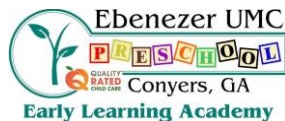
I have read the Ebenezer UMC Preschool Parent Handbook and agree to abide by all policies set forth. I will work with Ebenezer UMC Preschool to ensure the very best Early Childhood Education for my child. Comments and volunteers are always welcome. Additional information is available online at www.ebenezerconyers.com/preschool.

Guardian Signature_____

Date_____

Director Signature_____

Date_____



School Policies - Please initial each line for acknowledgement:

_____ Ebenezer UMC Preschool is open year-round M- F from 6:30 am - 6:00 p.m. Children can only be in attendance for no more than 10 hours/day per Bright from the Start.

_____ Ebenezer UMC Preschool will be closed on the following days: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, 4th of July, Labor Day, Election days for Presidential and Gubernatorial races (1st Tuesday of November), Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas, New Year's Eve at 3 pm and Professional Learning Day.

_____ Tuition includes educational activities, a hot lunch, and a nutritious snack. Outside food is not permitted.

_____ Please call Ebenezer UMC Preschool by 9:00 a.m. if your child will not attend school that day.

_____ Please do not send in outside food, toys, candy or other unnecessary items from home.

_____ Tuition is due weekly on Friday for the upcoming week.

_____ Tuition is due on Friday for the following week. A \$30 late fee will be assessed on Monday. Suspension of care may result on Tuesday for any unpaid balance unless arrangements have been made with the Director. Late fees are assessed on all accounts with a balance.

_____ I give my permission for my child's photograph to be used for newsletter and advertising purposes.

_____ Children with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will be sent home. Children will not be admitted until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

_____ I give permission for Ebenezer UMC Preschool to conduct a Developmental Screening for my child throughout the school year and notate any learning successes and / or concerns that may require additional services.

_____ Please notify the office staff in advance if your child will be absent for an entire week, Monday through Friday.

_____ **A two-week written notice must be given for withdrawal of a student; otherwise, full tuition will be due for two weeks after the last date of attendance.**

_____ The annual registration fee of \$100 is non-refundable and good for one full year.

_____ There are no discounts given if your child does not attend for the week. Your tuition is pro-rated for the year and due no matter the amount of time they have attended for the week.

_____ CAPS parents are responsible for the week's tuition if their child is out for the week. CAPS does not pay when your child does not attend.

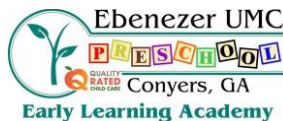
_____ Ebenezer UMC Preschool reserves the right to deny care for your child if they smell of any illegal substance, (e.g., marijuana)

Guardian Signature_____

Date_____

Guardian Signature_____

Date_____



Thank you for enrolling your child in the Early Learning Academy at Ebenezer UMC Preschool. We are very happy to have your child join our growing educational community! This enrollment packet includes several forms that will need to be completed for each prospective student enrolled at our school. Please complete each form and return them to the Ebenezer UMC Preschool administrative staff before your child's first day of school along with this form and an initial next to each item turned in.

All prospective students will need the following forms and documents on file:

_____ Medical and Liability Release Form

_____ Child Profile

_____ Sunscreen Permission Form

_____ State of Georgia Immunization Record (Form 3231)

_____ Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form

_____ Change of clothes in a gallon Ziploc bag **with child's name on all items**. Children may bring a blanket to sleep with during their nap. The blanket will be sent home on Friday to be laundered. 18-month-old children may bring a sippy cup to drink out of that will remain at school.

_____ **I understand that payments are due each Friday prior to the week of school and late fees apply on Monday.**

Guardian Signature_____

Date_____

Director Signature_____

Date_____



PARENTAL AGREEMENT WITH EBENEZER UMC PRESCHOOL

Ebenezer UMC Preschool agrees to provide childcare for _____
(Name of Child)

on (circle days attending) **Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday**

beginning at _____ AM to _____ PM

and extending from _____ to _____, 20____.
(Month) (Month)

My child will participate in the following meal plan (circle applicable meals and snacks):

Breakfast Lunch Afternoon Snack

- Before any medication is dispensed to my child, I will provide a written authorization, which includes: Date, Name of Child, Name of Medication, Prescription Number (if any), Dosages, and Date and Time of Day to be given to the child. The medicine will be in the original container with my child's name marked on it.
- My child will not be allowed to enter or leave the facility without being escorted by the parent(s), person(s) authorized by parent(s), or facility personnel.
- I acknowledge it is my responsibility to keep my child's records current to reflect any significant changes as they occur, e.g., telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child's physician, child's health status, infant feeding plans, and immunization records, etc.
- The facility agrees to keep me informed of any incidents, including illnesses, injuries, adverse reactions to medications, etc., which include my child.
- **Ebenezer UMC Preschool** agrees to obtain written authorization from me before my child participates in routine transportation, field trips, special activities away from the facility, and water-related activities occurring in water that is more than two (2) feet deep.
- I authorize the **Ebenezer UMC Preschool** to obtain emergency medical care for my child if I am unavailable.
- I have received a copy and agree to abide by the policies and procedures for the above-named facility.

Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Director Signature _____

Date _____