

Luray United Methodist Preschool

Student Handbook



Operating Plan

Luray United Methodist Preschool is a not-for-profit religious exempt preschool program, located in Luray United Methodist Church in Luray VA. Luray United Methodist Preschool (LUMP) is a preschool for 3 and 4 year olds. **Preschool hours of operation: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7:45 until 11:30. Children can arrive anytime between 7:45 am-8:25 am in the morning.** The staff ratio will be no more than one teacher to 10 preschool children. This is within compliance of the Code of Virginia preschool regulations (regulations permit one teacher to 10 three/four year olds). The preschool will operate from September until May.

Luray United Methodist Preschool Philosophy

Luray United Methodist Church has established Luray United Methodist Preschool as part of the church's outreach ministry to the community. Luray United Methodist Preschool (LUMP) offers a nurturing, Christian based preschool program for children who will be three or four by the end of September. We believe that each child is a unique and special individual who has the right to safe, stimulating, educational, child care regardless of race, gender, color, religion, ability, economic background, national origin, culture, or ancestry. Learning experiences will be diverse, creative and carefully planned based on sound principles of child development. **We recognize the importance of play and develop our curriculum around it.** Our goal is to provide a high quality preschool by creating a safe, healthy, and caring environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive development of your child.

Luray United Methodist Preschool Goals

The goals for the children enrolled in this preschool are:

1. To encourage spiritual formation by sharing Bible stories and prayer with the children daily.
2. To encourage positive self-esteem and positive self- concept.
3. To promote positive social skills.
4. To promote developmentally appropriate fine /gross motor skills.
5. To promote cognitive and creative skills in the areas of literacy, language development and math.
6. To equip preschoolers with the social and academic readiness skills needed to succeed in preschool and kindergarten.

Code of Compliance Statements

Religiously Exempt from Licensure

Luray United Methodist Preschool (LUMP) operates under the rules and regulations established for Religiously Exempt Child Day Care Centers, required by the Virginia Department of Social Service Division of Licensing Services.

Staff Qualifications

Luray United Methodist Preschool has 3 teachers who have multiple degrees in education in grades Pre-K through 5th grade in the public school setting. We have 4 assistants with experience teaching in the local school system and carry college degrees. Any other staff we might hire would be at least 16 years old. Any staff under 18 will be supervised by an adult. Adult staff will not supervise more than 2 staff under 18 at any given time. The teachers and substitutes will comply with the Church's Safe Sanctuary guidelines and have annual Background checks.

Physical Facilities

The preschool will share existing space with four of the children's Sunday school rooms at Luray United Methodist Church. These rooms are located in our addition which was built in 2008. Preschool equipment was purchased to convert these rooms into creative, hands-on learning areas. The double door entrance across from the post office will provide access to the preschool. Doors are locked during Preschool hours.

Enrollment Capacity

Our preschool capacity is 50 persons (total students + teachers) using the existing Sunday school facility. However, we have opted to limit enrollment to maintain a quality program.

Food Service

Each child will bring his/her own mid-morning snack.

Health Requirements for Staff Religious exemption law requires that our staff be certified annually by a practicing physician or nurse practitioner to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Public Liability Insurance

Luray United Methodist Preschool has liability insurance with Church Mutual Insurance Company.

Field Trips

If field trips are planned, parents or approved parent chaperones will drive and accompany children on the trip. **Open Door Policy.** Parents are welcome in our preschool at any time.

Health & Safety Procedures

Handwashing by staff and children

Teachers and the students will follow hand washing procedures to thoroughly wash hands before eating, after toileting and other times when needed.

Supervision of children

Children attending Luray United Methodist Preschool will always have proper supervision by trained staff. Safety comes first in all that we do. Religiously Exempt Child Day Centers requires 1 staff for every 10 children for the ages 2-6 years. We will adhere to this policy.

Drop off/ Dismissal Procedures

It is required that all children be signed in and out each day by the adult bringing or picking up the child. This is a written record of attendance, hours, and tracking of the child and the responsible adult each day. Parents are required to utilize proper child restraint devices in their vehicles as ruled by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Each child will only be released to his/her parent or someone the parents designates (in writing) to pick up the child. The staff needs notification prior to pick-up. Verbal notification is sufficient only if the person is already authorized on the child's application. Please notify all persons designated to pick up your child that if the staff does not recognize them, photo identification will be required. Appropriate paperwork must be on file when the custodial parent requests the center not to release the child to the other parent. Without appropriate paperwork denying rights to the child, parental rights are assumed for both parents.

Infectious Control Policy

If your child develops a fever, diarrhea, vomiting or other symptom of sickness please keep him/her at home. Your child should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child becomes sick at school, you will receive a courtesy call. We ask that you or a designated person pick up your child within a half hour of the phone call.

Medication

Please do not send medication of any kind to school with your child. Teachers are not allowed to give medicine to children.

Teachers trained in CPR and First Aid

At least two teachers working at the preschool are trained in First Aid and CPR. They are required to renew their training every two years.

Enrollment Requirements

- **All children must be toilet trained.**

- Child must be 3 for the Three-Year-Old Program or 4 for the Four-Year-Old Program, by the end of September.

- Enrollment Forms require information concerning the child's previous child care and school attendance and to present proof of the child's identity and age. Proof of the child's age may include: a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, notification of birth with a physician's or midwife's signature birth registration form, passport, copy of placement agreement or other proof of the child's identity. · Only children who are current on immunizations shall be admitted to our preschool. Medical records and immunizations must be kept up to date and be documented on the MCH-213G form prior to enrollment and kept in the children's files.

A current physical examination dated within a year of the first day of school. Must be supplied by the parent to the preschool.

Premises free of obvious injury hazards

Teachers will check the preschool premises daily to ensure a safe learning/playing environment. The preschool is in compliance with state regulations which ensure that all areas of the premises accessible to children area free from obvious injury hazards.

Staff recognizes signs of child abuse and neglect

Virginia state law and licensing requirements state that child care facilities are required to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services, if they have any reason to suspect child abuse, neglect or exploitation. They are not obligated to inform parents/guardians of this report.

Fire Drills

Fire drills will be conducted once a month and recorded on a documentation sheet for the state fire marshal. Evacuation routes will be practiced during the fire drill and are posted on the classroom doors.

Discipline

The goal of discipline is to help the child learn self-control, to problem solve and to make good choices which lead to good habits. The teachers will help children learn self-control by role modeling and using techniques to guide individual behavior.

Teachers will set behavioral limits that are clear, fair and understandable to the children. There will be NO physical punishment administered and children will NOT be shaken at any time. A time-out chair will be used if a child needs time to think about wrong choices made and/or needs time to "cool" down. **Disciplinary problems with your child that can't be resolved may be cause for dismissal.**

Toys

We ask that your child leave their toys at home. We have play stations that are available. We may ask your child to bring in specific items periodically and we will let you know about this.

Clothing

Please dress your child in play clothes and comfortable shoes. Each child should have a complete change of clothing (including socks and underwear). This extra set of clothes can be kept at preschool.

Tuition and Cancellations

Materials fee/Hold-a-spot deposit.....\$75 /year ***Due before preschool starts.***

Monthly tuition.....\$220 /month

Tuition is due by the 1st Thursday of each month.

Checks may be made out to Luray United Methodist Church or Luray United Methodist Preschool. You will be responsible for each month's tuition whether your child is present or not. A \$35.00 fee will be charged for all returned or bad checks. Repayment must be made in cash or by money order. Service will be suspended if payment is not made by 10th of the month.

Termination

Reasons for termination are as follows:

- Falsification of child's records
- Disciplinary problems with your child that can't be resolved easily
- Tuition not paid in a timely manner

Weather Delays and Closings

In circumstances of inclement weather if Page County Public Schools are closed, we are closed. **If Page County Public Schools are on a 2-hour delay, we will open at 9:00. You can drop your child off starting at 8:45am and preschool will still end at 11:30 am.**

If all teachers are sick the preschool will be closed and parents will be notified.

Readiness Program for Three Year Olds

The Luray United Methodist Preschool area is inspired by Creative Curriculum which emphasizes a child-sized, comfortable, safe, and orderly environment. Our program supports self-exploration, socialization, and decision making by the child and incorporates Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards into centers and curriculum.

Preschool activities alternate between teacher-directed, child-directed, and small group activities. A daily routine is followed to provide consistency and stability.

We believe that children grow through discovery, play and investigation of things in their world. We encourage children to use pretend play and creative thinking, and provide them with opportunities for decision making and choices within appropriate limits. Through this approach, we strive to instill a love of learning in the children, to prepare them with the social skills they need to be successful, and to help them progress through developmental stages. Above all, in our preschool environment children are treated as individuals with love and respect, and are encouraged to show love and respect for themselves and one another.

By creating an environment for inviting, hands-on activities that allow for exploration, children can spend as little or as much time at the centers they wish to go to. Because this is usually their first school experience, we want them to feel welcome, safe, and happy.

Learning Centers:

- Writing Center
- Art Center
- Gross Motor
- Dramatic Play
- Visual Arts
- Emerging Math
- Literacy and Language
- Fine Motor

Schedule for Three Year Olds

8:30 – 9:15 Checking in, and free choice activities

9:15 – 9:30 Bathroom Break

9:30 – 10:00 Large Motor Activity

10:00 – 10:15 Circle Time

10:15 – 10:30 Snack /Bathroom Break

10:30 – 10:45 Music & Movement

10:45 – 11:00 Small motor

11:00 – 11:30 Free Choice

11:30 Dismissal

Readiness Program for Four Year Olds

The Luray United Methodist Preschool curriculum is based on:

- Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning and their standards for four year olds (www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early_childhood/preschool_initiative/foundation)
- The belief that a child learns best when he/she is active and having fun
- Christian principles, with love being the most important.

Our goal is to prepare your child with the math and language arts readiness skills needed to successfully begin kindergarten. We will also share Christian values with your child through our daily interactions as well as by reading child adapted Bible stories to them. We will practice important social skills with the children such as sharing, getting along with others, listening, following directions and being responsible for belongings.

Oral Language skills

Children gain language and vocabulary skills by having frequent opportunities to talk and listen to adults and peers. As children learn more about the world around them, it is easier for them to learn how to express this new information and these new ideas and to communicate this knowledge through vocabulary. Children will participate in a wide variety of active, sensory experiences to build vocabulary.

Sample activities to stimulate the development of oral language skills:

- Listen to a variety of literary selections daily. Have discussions with others about the selections read.
- Re-enact stories through dramatic play, flannel board pieces, puppets etc,
- Participate in a variety of oral language activities including: choral and echo reading, recitation of short poems, rhymes, songs and stories with repeated word order patterns, sharing with one another
- Participate in creative dramatics.

Pre-Reading Skills

Letter knowledge is an essential component to beginning reading and writing. The letters will be taught in a random order throughout the school year. Children will engage in skills that will help them understand that spoken words consist of sounds. They will be involved in activities that promote an ability to hear and manipulate these sounds in words.

Pre-reading skills we will introduce:

- Identification of rhyming words/ Fill in a word that rhymes with ...
- All uppercase/lowercase letters
- Correct letter formation of uppercase letters. Correct letter formation of lower case letters in name
- All letter sounds
- Parts of a book
- What the job of an author is
- Listening skills

Sample activities to stimulate the development of alphabet skills:

- Children will make a variety of crafts, and be involved with hands on-activities as he/she learns a letter. Examples include, as the letter Aa is introduced they will sing songs which teach the Aa sound and possibly make applesauce. Another day they could make construction paper alligators and sing alligator songs and poems as well as make an Aa using playdough or pipe cleaners.
- Practice of correct letter formation using different substances such as: finger paints, pudding, sand-salt trays, chalk, yarn, dry erase markers, crayons, and pencils etc. to “write/make” the letters.
- Songs, poems and finger plays will be sung which will review the different letters and sounds.

Math Skills

When teaching math, we will build on the natural characteristics of young children, and challenge them to explore the concepts of number, pattern, measurement, shape, space, and classification.

Math skills we will introduce:

- Patterning (ABAB)
 - Sorting by attributes (color, shape, size etc)
 - Number sense which includes:
 - o Identification of numbers 1-10
 - o Writing numbers 1-10
 - o Counting objects
 - Counting skills (forward 1-20 and backwards 10-1)
 - Identification of 4 basic shapes (circle, triangle, square, rectangle)
 - Gathering information from graphs
 - Identify 8 basic colors (red, orange, yellow, blue, green, purple, black and brown)
- Increase cognitive skills by putting puzzles together

We will do periodic, informal assessments throughout the year on letters and numbers to see how your child is progressing and we will relay this information back to you.

We believe a child learns best when he/she has the involvement of the teacher and parent or caregiver. Please spend a little time each week reviewing with your child what he/she has learned in preschool. This shouldn't take more than 10 minutes a day and should be fun. We will give ideas throughout the year to help with this.

We are excited to be involved with both you and your child in this adventure of learning! Thanks for choosing our preschool!

Schedule for Four Year Olds

7:45-8:25 Drop Off Small play, books, puzzles, coloring, playdough

8:30- 9:10 Language Arts

9:15-9:45 Power Up Prayer, calendar, story, songs, share, dance

9:45-10:15 Bathroom / Prayer/Snack / Bible Story

10:15-10:45 Math

10:45-11:20 Big Play Free play

11:20-11:30 Clean up

11:30 Dismissal