**FIRST METHODIST CHURCH WASHINGTON PRESCHOOL**

**PRESCHOOL**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2025 – 2026**

First Methodist Church Washington Preschool

304 West Second Street

Washington, NC 27889

252-946-3311, ext. 216

The primary function of the FMCW Preschool is to serve children and families in the community by offering a nurturing Christian environment where each child feels secure, loved and special. We do this by presenting a program designed to promote the total growth of a child, mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Parents and teachers must work together for the maximum benefit of the children. We believe only as we work together cooperatively can your child receive the spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional guidance that he or she needs.

This handbook has been prepared to familiarize you with our program. Please keep it on hand for quick reference throughout the year. Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Web site: fmcwashington.com/childrens-programs/preschool

Email Preschool Director: fmcwpreschool@gmail.com

Preschool Phone Number: 252-946-3311 ext. 216

Director Cell Number: 252-532-7604

Find us on Facebook –

Closed Group: FMCWashington Preschool 2025-26

Tuition Schedule Page

**Registration Fee: $150**

Tuition

**Pre-K classes** $220

 Monday through Thursday

 \*Afternoon classes may be added based on enrollment\*

**3 year old class** $220

Monday through Thursday

**Two year old class** $175

 Monday & Wednesday

 Tuesday & Thursday

**Little Bits class** $175

 Monday & Wednesday

 Tuesday & Thursday

Tuition is $220 or $175 per month with a sibling discount. Any family with two or more children attending the preschool at the same time will pay tuition for their oldest child, then a 10% discount will be given for the younger sibling. Registration fee remains $150 per child.

Snacks are included in the tuition. A non-refundable registration fee must accompany the application.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

If Beaufort County schools are operating on a one (1) hour delay for students and/or teachers, morning preschool will still open at 9 am. If the county is operating on a two (2) hour or more delay for students and or teachers, the preschool will be closed. We are closed if county schools are closed or have a delay greater than two (2) hours. We do not make up full days lost due to inclement weather. This policy may be adjusted on an emergency basis due to unforeseen factors. Such changes would be authorized by the Preschool Board in consultation with the Director and relayed to parents/guardians as soon as possible.

**OUR RULES AND REGULATIONS**

# Policy on Admissions

FMCW Preschool begins enrolling children at age 1 (by August 31st of the current school year) and continues through age 4 (by August 31st of the current school year.) Children eligible for Kindergarten (age 5) may choose to enroll in our Pre-K program as well if parents wish to hold them out an additional year and we have the space.

The Preschool reserves the right to decline or discontinue the enrollment of any child whose needs are determined to be greater than the preschool’s capabilities to serve.

Full or Partial Scholarships are available each year as long as funding is available. Please see the Director for an application or download from www.fmcwashington.com

**Business Transactions**

1. Tuition is due on the first day of each month in the form of cash or check. Tuition is past due after the 10th of each month. Tuition payments made on or later than the 11th of the month must include a **late fee of $10.00.**
2. Beginning September 2025, tuition payment envelopes will go home monthly in each child’s Daily Folder. Please put tuition in this envelope and return in the folder. Payments may also be mailed to FMCW Preschool, 304 W 2nd St., Washington, NC 27889.
3. Receipts will be provided when requested. Financial statements will be distributed twice a year and upon request.
4. There is a fee of **$25.00** for each check returned for non-sufficient funds and all future payments must be made with cash or money order.
5. Pick-up time is between 11:25am and 11:35am. There is a fee of **$5** for every 10 minutes a child is left past pick-up time. Please have cash and pay the teacher directly.
6. A 30-day written notice is required for withdrawal from the preschool. If this requirement is unable to be met, you are responsible for one month’s tuition after withdrawal.
7. If a child is kept out of school for an extended period of time, the full tuition is still required.
8. Registration fee must be paid at the time of registration.

\*\*If there are special circumstances in which you are unable to pay tuition on time, please contact the director by phone or email. \*\*

**Health**

Any child showing any of the following symptoms must be kept at home until symptoms disappear or until otherwise instructed by a physician:

* Diarrhea during the last 24 hours
* Severe coughing
* Pink eye, red eyes or crusting on the lashes.
* Thick mucus runny nose
* Upset stomach or vomiting within the last 24 hours
* Fever (unmedicated) in the last 24 hours of 100.4 or above.
* Rash (if not common to a preexisting medical condition such as eczema)
* Open, draining sores or blisters
* Sore throat
* Any unusual or lethargic behavior.

The status of any child’s health regarding attendance at preschool is left to the discretion of the director following communication with the child’s teachers and parents. In some cases, your doctor may say a child is not contagious, but if the child is distressed because of an illness, contagious or not, he/she will not be able to attend. The preschool does not have the proper accommodations to care for sick children (enough help, room space, etc.). Please come to pick-up your child promptly when called due to an illness or injury.

If your child is found to have a communicable disease, please notify the school immediately so that other parents can be alerted to their child’s exposure. If your child becomes ill during school, we will contact a parent or designated person to pick the child up immediately.

Teachers are not permitted to administer over-the-counter or prescription medicine to a child without a doctor’s order and written parental permission. If necessary, parents will be asked to return to the school to administer any medicine needed.

When a child has a minor injury during school hours, first-aid will be administered appropriately. First aid will consist of cleaning the affected area with mild soap and water, applying ice if necessary, and using a band aid when appropriate. When medical care is needed, the preschool will do everything possible to contact the parent. The decision to call your emergency contact person, call a doctor, or dial 911 will be determined by the director based on the seriousness of the injury or illness. In the event of an accident or medical emergency occurring at the school, an accident report will be completed, a parent/guardian will be asked to sign the form, and a copy will be kept on file as well as sent home with the parent/guardian.

**Immunization Policy:** It is expected that an updated immunization record be on file for any student enrolled in the Preschool program. Records should include the appropriate immunizations per age of the child enrolled. The preschool is willing to review and consider any official waiver stating exemption from immunizations. A final decision on acceptance will be made by the Preschool Board after review of the waiver.

**Church Buildings and Security**

First Methodist Church Washington has two main buildings bordered by four streets. The main entrance for the church office and main Sanctuary is on 2nd Street. Wesley Hall worship center can be seen on 3rd Street. The Church parking lot, Fellowship Hall and covered drop-off area to Wesley Hall are on Van Norden Street. This is our car drop-off and pick-up area. The public parking lot on Gladden Street is next to our Preschool entrance and playground and may be used for preschool parking.

All exterior doors to the Church must be kept locked. Please follow your classroom rules on when and where to drop-off and pick-up your child.

**Shelter in Place Policies**

**Lockdown:** In the case of an armed gunman or otherwise dangerous intruder on campus or inside the building, the following steps will take place in order to ensure the safety of students and staff at the preschool.

1. Classroom teachers will gather all of their students in the bathrooms or closets of their classrooms, ensuring that outside classroom doors as well as doors to the bathrooms or closets are locked.
2. As safety permits, the director will check the hallway to ensure hallway classroom doors are locked and proceed to secure the doors of the director’s office as well.
3. Cell phones will be used to communicate the safety of individuals inside the classroom and such communication will the between the director and classroom teachers and/or assistants.

**Tornado:** In the case of a Tornado Warning the following steps will be taken to ensure the safety of students and staff at the preschool.

1. The director will determine the severity of the warning based on weather reports and news recommendations.
2. All students and teachers will make their way to the lobby of Wesley Hall (by the couches). Once there they will duck and cover their heads as close to the walls as possible.
3. They will stay like that until the warning or danger of the potential tornado passes.

**Field Trips**

Signed permission slips for upcoming field trips are required in advance for each child. When children are to be transported by vehicle, they must ride with their own parents or have written permission to ride with another adult. Teachers may not transport children other than their own. All children must use their own car seats, properly installed. All adult riders must use a seat belt.

Teachers carry the Field Trip Emergency Cards and a small first aid kit with them on any field trip. Any field trip that requires keeping a class together while walking (such as to the Brown Library) must use the ‘buddy system’ or hold an adult’s hand for safety. One teacher will walk at the front of the line, while another is at the back in order to keep all children together. Younger children may use strollers or wagons instead.

Each field trip must have an adequate number of parents or other adult chaperones along to help. It is up to the teacher to determine the needs of each class and to make sure each helper takes responsibility for watching particular children. The teacher is expected to plan this in advance and make sure each child is accounted for and supervised by an assigned adult. If there are not enough adult volunteers available, the field trip must be canceled.

Transportation/ Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

1. The parent/guardian is responsible for arranging transportation to and from school.
2. Drop-off begins at 8:25. All classes are allowed to drop-off by coming in the East Entrance of the building and walking their child to their classroom door. Pre-K and Three’s may opt to drop-off under the portico at the main entrance of Wesley Hall. Staff members will escort the children down to their classrooms upon drop-off. Car line should NOT begin prior to 8:20. If you arrive earlier, you may find a parking spot until time to line up.
3. Drop-off ends at 8:45. If you are late dropping off your child, please come to the playground side of the building and use the double doors. You can ring the doorbell and someone will come to let you in.
4. Children will be released only to the parent or persons designated and on file as an alternate. If anyone else is to pick-up the child, we must have written confirmation from the parent.
5. Children are to be picked up promptly at dismissal time (11:25-11:35). Three-year-old and PreK classes will line-up in the lobby of Wesley Hall entrance and will be escorted to their cars by the teachers. Car line should begin no earlier than 11:20 to respect others trying to get in and out of the parking lot. Each student being picked up in the car line will be assigned a number and given two car tags at the beginning of the year. This tag must be displayed visibly at pick-up. If additional tags are needed, please let the preschool director know.
6. Two-year-olds and Little Bits will be picked up from the classroom in the same manor that they were dropped off.
7. If you come early to pick-up your child, please come to the playground side of the building and use the double doors. You can ring the doorbell and someone will come to let you in.

\*\*These policies are subject to change at any time due to unforeseen circumstances. Should a procedure change, you will be notified by your child’s teacher or the preschool director.

**Communication:**

1. Please keep your child’s teacher and the director informed if any of your communication information changes (telephone, address, or email).
2. If you need to send a message to the teacher, please do so in writing. This can be a written note or text. Do not send a verbal-only message by your child or another adult.
3. You will be notified of parent meetings and special events during the school year.
4. If a teacher has a concern about a child, she will ask for a conference or speak by phone to the parent. Likewise, any questions or concerns you have about your child should be discussed with your child’s teacher. Please make an appointment to speak with the teacher after school hours. If, after speaking with the teacher, you still have concerns, please bring those concerns to the director in writing. If still concerned, please contact the preschool board chair.

**Web Site and Social Media**

Please visit our web site at www.fmcwashington.com and click on the link to "Preschool" for current information. The online registration link can be found there, as well as other forms and policies related to our preschool. There is an active Online Calendar as well as the annual list of preschool holidays and closings.

If you do not wish to have your child’s image used in our newsletter, web site, Facebook group, newspaper, etc., please submit a request to exclude your child.

If you are on Facebook, you are invited to join our closed group, FMCWashington PreSchool 2025-26. Please send a request to join and answer all membership questions. Other family members are welcome to join as well, but must answer all membership questions to be approved. Pictures and videos are posted in this closed group.

**Policy Regarding Toileting**

1. Our Little Bits and Two-year-old classrooms are equipped with a diaper changing table as well as child sized toilets in order to accommodate the needs of each student. Teachers will work with families if and when a child is ready to start potty training.
2. Our three-year-old room is not equipped with a diaper changing table, so, by the time students reach our three-year-old room, it is expected that parents or guardians are working with them consistently at home on potty training, however, it is not required that they are fully independent at this time.
3. In our three-year-old room, if a child is still having accidents on a daily basis, a pull-up may be worn while at school. Teachers will give students frequent bathroom breaks to reenforce what is being worked on at home.
4. Diapers or pull-ups and wipes must be provided by the parents and have children’s names on them. Diaper creams may be administered by teachers ONLY with a signed consent form from parents. Parents must provide the diaper cream if needed and the cream MUST be in date AND in its original container.
5. Any special concerns regarding toileting in any classroom should be addressed between parents, teachers, and the preschool director.

Policy Regarding Identification of Special Needs and Facilitating Special Needs Education

If your child is identified as having a special need, or you suspect that your child has some special need(s), it is our wish to be involved in the process(es) of identification of needs, sharing in evaluations that are completed, and openly speaking with you (as parents or guardians) and service providers who work with your child.

**Discipline Policy**

Discipline is giving each child guidance to live in cooperation with others and learning to be respectful of themselves and others. Positive reinforcement of good behaviors should be the primary tool to shape behavior. Children (and adults!) should be noticed and appreciated for their good behavior. We at First Methodist Church Washington Preschool strive to:

* Compliment children for positive behavior
* Give clear rules and expectations. Set and enforce limits
* Be fair and firm.
* Be consistent.
* Act promptly.
* Give lots of positive feedback and praise.
* Encourage children to verbalize feelings and frustrations.
* Pay attention and listen to the children when they have something to say.
* Be affectionate (hug, cuddle, love in appropriate ways)

Consequences for misbehavior should be considered before implementation is needed. Thoughtful consequences can impact a child’s response to discipline. Whenever possible, we use natural consequences to make an impression on a child’s behavior.

We deal with misbehaviors immediately. Once done, we do not remind the child of the misbehavior. Any consequence should be directly related to the behavior.

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition this most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age but it can continue past the age of two. Safety of all of our students is our primary concern. Our staff will address each occurrence of biting and redirect the child appropriately. The bitten child will be comforted and proper first-aid will be used on the bitten area. Both parents will be notified and confidentiality will be maintained for all children. If biting becomes excessive the parent will be called in for a conference and a plan will be discussed on how we will work together to modify the behavior.

It is never acceptable or appropriate to yell at a child, spank or shake a child, tease, shame or make fun of a child, or deliberately embarrass a child. We are aware of conversations that children might overhear and do not discuss any child’s misconduct with another person while any child is in the vicinity.

**Snack Policy**

FMCW Preschool has a list of approved foods for our healthy snacks. Junk food, candy, gum and sweets are not permitted with one exception. Parents may bring in ONE sweet item such as cupcakes for parties. Parents may opt to provide the snack from the approved food list or the school will provide the snack before the party food is served.

**Preschool Approved Snack List**

Each classroom teacher selects two items for each snack from this list. Water is always available.

Fresh fruit OR 100% juice

Animal Crackers

Cheezits

Goldfish

Mini Pretzels

Graham Crackers

Ritz Crackers

Vanilla Wafers

Raisins (age appropriate)

Chex-mix

Veggie Straws

Cheese cubes

Yogurt

Children are NOT permitted to bring breakfast or snacks from home into the classroom in the mornings. This can cause a disruption in learning time for your child and others. Please allow your child to finish any food being eaten during this time at home or in the car before entering the preschool.

*\*\*\*If your child has any food related allergies or are on a special diet (ex. Gluten free, no red dye, etc.), please alert your child’s teacher and the director.*

**Other important information**

1. All children should have a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothes at school. Please bring clothes, including socks, in a bag clearly labeled with your child’s full name. When soiled clothes are sent home, please replace them the next school day. Please replace clothes at change of season.
2. Children need to be dressed comfortably in play clothes that do not call for being careful. Children tend to make messes while they learn and will be painting, gluing, etc. We take measures to try to keep clothing clean but do not always succeed 100%. We also go outside daily, so be sure to dress your child appropriately for the weather.
3. Please mark all of your child’s hats, coats, gloves, etc. with your child’s name.
4. Personal items, toys, food, juice, etc. will not be allowed at school unless a designated share day is planned by the teacher.
5. Do not send any toy weapons, war toys, money, gum, candy, tiny jewelry or anything valuable to school with your child.
6. Birthdays call for special celebration. Please let us know if you would like to send a special treat on your child’s birthday. Summer birthdays may be scheduled for celebration any time during the school year. We limit celebrations to a special treat. You may provide birthday hats, napkins, and cups if you wish. Birthday gifts are not to be exchanged at preschool. If you are having a party away from school, you may distribute invitations at school only if everyone in the class is invited.

**Child Protection Plan**

FMCW has a Child Protection Plan that all staff members are familiar with.  In addition, the preschool adds extra precautions to ensure the safety of children and adults.

If at any time any adult observes behavior on or off campus that makes them uncomfortable, that issue should be reported immediately to a teacher or the director.  If they are not available, the board chair should be notified, then a Pastor if warranted.  Strict confidentiality is required.

**First Methodist Church Washington Childcare Program**

FMCW Preschool is pleased to cooperate with FMCW Childcare. The Childcare program is located in the Education Hall adjacent to the Wesley Hall building. Full day childcare is offered 7:00am – 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Both childcare and preschool are independent programs with their own tuition schedule, administrative board, and regulations. Children may register for both programs independently. Preschool staff provides an escort between programs with appropriate permission forms. For more information, please contact the childcare director.