

Parent Handbook 20223-2024

Old Capitol Preschool





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General Information

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Preschool Board Members

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Mary Jean Mathes
Staff-Parish Committee Chair, Old Capitol Church

Skip Piotroski
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Michael Walker
Lay Leader of Old Capitol Chur

General Philosophy

Old Capitol Preschool is an outreach ministry of the Old Capitol United Methodist Church. While no specific religious doctrine is taught, the school incorporates Christian principles, such as, teaching children to love one another in loving, Christ-like ways. Each class will have Chapel time once per week. The school also uses prayer, Bible verses, and religious music throughout the year.

Old Capitol Preschool provides a program of experiences that is targeted towards each child's individual spiritual, mental, physical, emotional and social development.

Goal

Our goal is to provide quality care and education to prepare children for the future.

Non-Discrimination & Inclusion Policy

No child will be barred from enrollment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

A child with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible if the facility can safely accommodate the child. Parents of a special needs child should meet with the director prior to enrollment so that a determination can be made.

Age Requirements

To attend Old Capitol Preschool, your child must be 3-years-old by August 1st. Age requirements for classes for 4's and 5's; a child should be 4 by August 1st. Any request for exceptions should be addressed to the director.

Potty Training

To attend OCP, children must be self-sufficient when using the restroom. This includes fastening and unfastening clothing and personal hygiene. No pull-ups please.

If a potty accident occurs, parents will be notified each time. After notice of the second accident, parents are encouraged to call or meet with the Director to discuss any extenuating circumstances. After three potty accidents, your child may be expelled from the preschool.

Tuition and Fees

Age	Days of the Week	# of Days	Cost Yearly and Monthly Payments	Daily Schedule
4+5s	MTWRF	5	\$3,750/ Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$405	8:30-1:30
4+5s	MWF	3	\$2,250/ Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$245	8:30-1:30
4+5s	TR	2	\$1,500/Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$165	8:30-1:30
3s	MWF-AM	3	\$1,500/Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$150	8:30-11:00
3s	MW-PM	2	\$1,050/Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$105	12:00-12:30
3s	TR- AM and PM	2	\$1,500/Yearly or 10 monthly payments of \$105	8:30-11:00 or 12:00-2:30

Registration/Supply Fee: \$50.00 (non-refundable) once per school year The Registration Fee and the First Month's Tuition are required to hold your child's spot when you apply and they are non-refundable.

Tuition is an annual amount, divided into 10 installments for easy payment. Any absences or vacations occurring when preschool is in session will not result in a reduction of fees. A LATE FEE of \$5.00 will be added to tuition if not paid by the 7th of the month. There is a \$25.00 fee for any returned check.

Days and Hours of Operation

Please refer to the table above for days of the week and times. Children must be dropped off in our car rider line by an adult. We discourage idling vehicles in the parking area, except in extreme heat or cold. Children should be picked up in a timely manner. Late fees of \$1 per minute for late pick-up will be assessed.

PLEASE NOTE: All classes being offered are contingent upon enrollment. Parent schedules and preferences will also be considered.

Pandemic Policy

Tuition is based on the number of days “guaranteed” in our school calendar. Each Tuesday/Thursday child is guaranteed at least 60 instructional days, but 64 days are scheduled. Each MWF child is guaranteed at least 90 instructional days, but 94 are scheduled. Each M-F child is guaranteed 150 instructional days, but 158 days are scheduled.

If we should be unable to provide the number of guaranteed days during this preschool year due to the pandemic and/or weather closings, the preschool board will make a decision on whether to adjust the OCP tuition for the year.

Fundraisers

In order to keep tuition prices down and maintain the high quality of our preschool, we may have fundraisers throughout the school year. These fundraisers are chosen by the Director of Old Capitol Preschool. However, it is our policy not to participate in any fundraisers for companies represented by local independent consultants. This includes all home-based sales companies.

Child/Teacher Ratio

Old Capitol Preschool serves children ages 3, 4, and 5. The 3-year-old class will have a ratio of 1 adult to not more than 8 children. The 4 and 5-year-old classes will have a ratio of 1 adult to not more than 10 children. The after-school care will have a ratio of 1 adult to not more than 12 children.

Substitution Policy

Substitutes in the preschool classroom: Should one of your child’s regular teachers be absent, a qualified substitute teacher will be placed in the classroom. Every employee has gone through a thorough background check and training process. The preschool director will make families aware of any scheduled teacher absences lasting one week or more.



Alternate Care

Alternate care is the responsibility of the parents, when the preschool is closed for holidays, breaks, weather-related or other emergency closings, and if your child is unable to attend due to quarantine protocols. Regarding the Pandemic, we will close preschool for COVID-19 if advised to do so by the Health Department or if we do not have sufficient staff to safely open.

It is important to have alternate care plans before they are needed. In the event of an unexpected emergency closing, we will notify parents through Brightwheel, and our Facebook page. Likewise, we will use them to notify parents of our re-opening.

NAEYC Accreditation

In 1998, Old Capitol Preschool became the only preschool in Harrison County to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is the largest accreditation system for all types of early childhood schools and centers.

What is accreditation? Early childhood programs undergo a comprehensive self-study, an external review of paperwork, and a validation visit by an NAEYC professional. Our program offers age and developmentally appropriate education for your child. In addition, we must be reevaluated every five years to keep our National Accreditation.

What is Developmentally Appropriate Practice? Research shows that children in the preschool years “learn by doing” not just by listening! They learn surprising amounts through play and exploration. Our classrooms are very active. We do many crafts and activities that are hands-on, fun, and will spark the children’s imagination.

We use The Creative Curriculum for Preschool which is approved by NAEYC.

If you would like to learn more about NAEYC and age appropriate education, please visit their website at <http://www.naeyc.org/>.



Assessments & Observations

Children will be assessed in the fall and spring. A face-to-face parent/teacher conference will be scheduled before enrollment for the next school year begins. Written progress reports will be sent home in the fall and at the end of the year. The staff makes routine daily observations and will document any significant changes that need to be discussed with parents during pick-up or through written or communication through Brightwheel. Feedback from parents is welcome at any time. The school's assessment plan, as well as training provided to teaching staff, is available from the director.

Program Evaluations

At the end of each preschool year, the director will request program evaluations from both parents and the staff for the purpose of continually improving our preschool program.

Discipline Policy

Students at Old Capitol Preschool participate in a wide variety of constructive activities. They are frequently given positive reinforcement for proper behavior. Therefore, behavior problems do not often occur. However, when misbehavior does occur, the teacher or teacher's assistant will:

1. redirect child to more positive activity.
2. speak to the child about his/her behavior.
3. remove child from group (but keep in classroom).
4. withdraw privileges from child.
5. contact preschool director and parents.

It is our policy NOT TO USE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT, PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE, OR COERCION WHEN DISCIPLING A CHILD. FOR EXAMPLE, WE WILL NOT SPANK, SHOVE, OR SHAME

CHILDREN AS A FORM OF DISCIPLINE. If necessary, our staff will protect the child or others from harm with the use of physical restraint.

Procedure to Address Classroom Difficulties

In the unfortunate event a parent has a concern or complaint, the following is the chain of command:

1. Teacher
2. Director
3. OCP Preschool Board's Appeals Committee
4. Preschool Board (Old Capitol Preschool Board's decisions are final.)

Immunizations

Because we want our preschool environment to be as safe a place as possible for your child, we require children to be current on all immunizations prior to entering our program in the Fall as well as have a physical within the past 12 months. The immunizations are available through your child's doctor or at the Harrison County Health Department. If using the Health Department, please contact them for further information or an appointment. Documentation must be submitted before the first day of school or within 10 days of starting school throughout the school year.

Illness & Medical Emergency

When an accident or illness requires emergency medical treatment, Old Capitol Preschool will contact the family member or person designated on the registration form. If that person cannot be reached, the director or staff member will arrange to transport your child to the designated medical facility or to Harrison County Hospital if the parent provided consent on the enrollment form.



Health Guidelines

A child should not attend preschool if he/she is visibly ill, has a fever, considerable congestion, and drainage. A child with symptoms or a fever of 100 degrees or higher, will go home with the parent/adult dropping off. We will follow the Indiana State Department of Health's (ISDH) Parent Screening Guide for advice on the date children can return to preschool.

For conditions other than those with COVID-19 symptoms, please keep your child at home:

1. until chicken pox scabs are dried.
2. until hand, foot, and mouth sores are all dry (no open blisters) and fever free.
3. if a child has head lice, they cannot return to the classroom until nit free.
4. If the child has pink eye, once the child is on antibiotics for 24 hours and the pink eye has cleared.
5. the child is fever free for 24 hours.

If a child becomes ill during the preschool day, the Preschool Director and/or the teacher will decide whether a child will be permitted to remain at preschool for the day. The decision to send a child home is based on these factors: 1) whether the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff; 2) whether the ill child requires more care than the staff can give which may result in compromising care for other children; 3) whether the symptoms present a safety concern for other students in the class.

If the child must go home, the parent/designated person will be called to pick up the child. The child can be picked up from the classroom, unless any contagious symptoms are observed, or the teacher believes it would be best for the child to be separated from the class. If separated, the child will stay with the director until the parent or designated person can pick up the child. In certain situations, the child may have to have a doctor's statement to return to the classroom. The director will notify the parent if needed.

Please also know that we are required by our licensing bodies to follow the Health Department's policies and procedures regarding COVID. We will be sending home updated procedures as the year progresses and keep our families informed about our steps. Please be sure to read these handouts and let us know of any questions.

Medication & Sunscreen

We will administer medication ONLY if the parent or legal guardian has provided written instruction from a physician. The medication must be in an original container with the child's name and dosage. In addition to the physician's order, the parent/guardian should complete the preschool's authorization form. This applies to both prescription and non-prescription medications. Medications will be kept in a locked cabinet.

OCP has a policy that we do not apply sunscreen to children. Sunscreen may be applied before drop-off, or parents may visit the classroom if you wish to apply it during the day. Please arrange with your classroom teacher.

Safety Policy

Old Capitol Preschool takes the responsibility for each child's safety very seriously. As a result, the following policies are as follows:

1. The teacher or staff member in charge of each group will be responsible for the children's safety. The building is locked except during drop-off and pick-up times.
2. Children will not be left unattended.
3. Parents or designated adults are required to take the child to the designated area during drop-off.
4. Fire, weather emergency and lock-down drills will be held periodically.
5. The Preschool Director will immediately notify the Department of Family and Children when a staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected.

Fire & Other Hazard Evacuation Plan

If our building must be evacuated due to fire or other hazard, we will exit the building using the nearest accessible door and will meet at the church's shelter house. Everyone will remain outside at a safe distance from the building until the fire department has secured the building.

Teachers will count their children quickly as they exit and again once safely outside. Once all children we are cleared to re-enter, we will notify parents via Brightwheel.

If the building is damaged during operating hours, we will contact a parent, guardian, or emergency contact. If a family member cannot be reached, children will be moved to a safe location; if appropriate, the shelter house, or if not, a notice will be posted stating where your child may be picked up. We will remain closed until the building is deemed safe to re-enter, and everyone will be notified via Brightwheel as to our reopening plans.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of bad weather, Old Capitol Preschool will follow the decision of the South Harrison Community School Corporation regarding delays or cancellations.

Regarding delays:

- if the school corporation has a one hour delay, morning classes will be delayed one hour.
- if the school corporation has a two hour delay,
 - 4 and 5 year old classes will start 2 hours late.
 - 3 year old AM class will be canceled.
 - 3 year old PM class will start at normal time.

Each Tuesday/Thursday child is guaranteed at least 60 instructional days. Each Monday/Wednesday/Friday child is guaranteed at least 90 instructional days. Each Monday-Friday child is guaranteed 150 instructional days. We have scheduled extra days in case of snow closings. Therefore, we do not follow South Harrison's snow make-up day schedule. If the number of classes missed exceeds the number of extra scheduled days, the days may be made up at discretion of the preschool board; however, we will not extend the school year past May 31st.

Holidays and Vacations

Old Capitol Preschool observes the following vacations and holidays:

Labor Day

Spring Break (2 weeks)

Fall Break

Good Friday

Thanksgiving (Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday)

Christmas & New Years (approximately 2 weeks)

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Please check the preschool calendar for more information.

President's Day



Birthdays & Parties

Parents are encouraged to allow their children to celebrate birthdays with their friends at the preschool. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher concerning details for parties. Store-bought treats may be brought for birthdays.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that will allow him/her to participate in all types of activities. Dress-up clothes are not advised except on picture day and special occasions. A child who is afraid to get their clothes messy cannot fully enjoy and learn from many of the planned activities.

The children will go outside each day providing that weather permits and wind chill is above freezing. Proper coats, hats, mittens, etc. should be worn during inclement weather.

Lunch

Our four and five year olds will be eating lunch during their school day. Students should bring in a lunch box labeled with their name and containing a healthy lunch. All students will need to bring a water bottle daily, the preschool only allows during class time, please no extra flavors or dyes inside the classroom. Please be sure to keep in mind that students only have 30 minutes for their lunch, please take this into consideration when packing lunch items and consider the amount and the packaging.

The preschool does not have extra lunches available, therefore if a child does not bring a lunch to school, parents or guardians will be notified to pick up their child before their classes' scheduled lunch time.

A snack may be scheduled for special occasions, for example Birthdays and Holidays. For in class parties and celebrations check with your child's teacher for snack donations.

Parent Participation Policy

Old Capitol Preschool had a previous open door policy for parent visitation and participation; however, due to the Pandemic and the recommendation to have limited contact with the classroom, we are continuing to temporarily suspend this section of the Handbook. During this time, please watch your Brightwheel app for pictures and information about class activities. Any concerns should be discussed with the Director.

Parent/Teacher Communication

We strive to establish a strong system of communication with parents and families of our students. We will use the following ways to communicate with you: Brightwheel, Facebook and monthly preschool and classroom newsletters. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled yearly, but are available as needed. Please contact the Director or your teacher for more information.

Brightwheel

Our main means of communication will be the Brightwheel app. This communication tool allows us to share updates and announcements but also pictures of your students' day and alerts to a cell phone number registered. All alerts will be shared through Brightwheel including weather closings, COVID updates and other important notifications. It is required that every parent or guardian downloads the app, sets up an account for their child and checks it regularly. If you have any problems utilizing the Brightwheel app, please reach out to the preschool director.

Tuition Assistance

Old Capitol Preschool has limited tuition assistance available. Assistance is needed and income based. Proof of income, rent and utilities is required for consideration. All information and inquiries are kept strictly confidential, and are handled by the director. If you think you may qualify, please see the director for an application.

Transportation

Old Capitol Preschool does not provide transportation. Parents/designated adults must provide transportation to and from preschool; as well as, providing transportation for their child to our scheduled field trips. In the case of a special event or trip via bus or van, parents will be notified, consent will be obtained, and the Preschool would use only properly licensed and insured drivers and vehicles.

Withdrawals


If for any reason you must withdraw your child from the school, please notify the teacher or director as soon as possible. Old Capitol Preschool does not issue refunds.

Unenrollment Due to Non-Compliance with Handbook & Enrollment Procedures

A child may be terminated from the Old Capitol Preschool for failure to follow the Handbook policies and Enrollment procedures: for example, failure to provide proof of immunization within a reasonable time frame, failure to pay tuition timely; excessive potty accidents or failure to use appropriate communication systems. The Director will notify the child's family in person or by mail at least 10 days prior to the termination date.

Suspension & Expulsion for Behavior Issues

Old Capitol Preschool's policy is to promote social and emotional growth and includes age appropriate positive behavior supports. Using these, we expect to limit, or eliminate altogether, the use of expulsion, suspension, or other disciplinary practices that exclude children from our program. In the case of a child who demonstrates challenging behaviors and/or cannot adapt to OCP's program, we will take the following steps:



Teachers contact parents by phone or email to request a face-to-face meeting with parent(s). Teachers will assess the function and document the behaviors, the request date, and parent response.

At the meeting, teachers will describe to parents what specific behaviors have occurred and what action was taken by staff; and will solicit parents' input on solutions that have worked at home or in other settings. Develop an individualized plan and document.

If no improvement is observed by the teachers within 2 weeks of the face-to-face meeting (or, if meeting is declined, the date of the notice to parents), the teacher will make a referral to the Harrison County Exceptional Learner or your child's physician for an evaluation.

If consent is provided, OCP will provide our observations of the child.

If consent is not provided, the director will meet with the parents to discuss other community resources and determine if the parents are willing to accept any referrals.

Within 45 days after the initial contact with the parents, we will determine if efforts have been successful; or, if they are unsuccessful then exclusion from the program is necessary. Parents will be given 10 days to meet with the director.