



DUE WEST UMC PRESCHOOL MINISTRY
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the mission of the Due West UMC Preschool Ministry? Our mission is to provide a safe early learning experience in a Christian environment. Our objectives are to help your child grow spiritually, socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally while providing an educational readiness foundation.

How long has the preschool been in operation? This is the 15th year for the preschool at Due West. Mrs. Coffeen started the program in 1995 with 50 students and we have grown to 152 students and moved to this building.

Is the school certified? Yes! The preschool has been certified as “A Program of Excellence for Young Children” by the N. GA Conference Directors Association since 2001 with recertification in 2004, 2007, and 2010. A rigorous self study and proof of meeting the guidelines plus an on-site visit are required for certification.

How do I know which class my child should attend? Your child must be the age of the class on or before Sept. 1st of the year he/she is enrolling. For example, children in the three year old class must be three years old by Sept. 1st. The exceptions to that rule are the following classes: infants must be 4 months by Sept. 1, older twos must turn three by Dec. 31st and young fives must turn five by Dec. 31st.

How many children will be in my child’s classroom? Class size is limited to 4 infants or young ones, 6 ones, 8 young twos, 10 older twos, 12 threes, 14 fours, and 16 young fives. Each room has a teacher and assistant in it.

How many days a week can my child attend? Infant through older twos attend two days a week. Threes can attend two, three or four days a week. Fours can attend either four or five days a week. Young fives attend five days a week.

What are the hours of operation? The infants through older twos are here from 9:00-12:00 with an optional extra hour (Lunch Bunch) from 12:00-1:00 for an additional \$4 fee. The three through five year olds are here from 9:00-1:00. Any child who stays until 1:00 must bring a lunch.

What are the months of operation? The preschool begins the week after Cobb County Schools start and ends the week before they end. During that time we follow the Cobb County Schools calendar for holidays and weather days.

What does a typical day look like? Every class has a schedule for the day that helps the children know the routine and what to expect during the day. The schedule includes individual activities, small group activities, and whole class activities. They all have a snack time during the morning with one child as “snack person” for the week. Parents provide the same snack for everyone when it’s their turn. They all have playground time if the weather is nice or indoor large muscle activities if they have to stay inside. Classes that have children in diapers have set diaper changing times, unless it’s needed at another time. Classes that have potty trained children have two restroom times when everyone has a turn. Individual children are taken to the restroom as needed. The restroom for the threes and under has child size potties and low sinks.

What is the curriculum? We are theme based, so we start with a Bible story, Bible verse, and theme for each month. Sample themes are “I am Special” in September, “We give thanks” in November, and “New life and spring” in April. We have a list of skills to be introduced throughout the year for each age level and the teachers use the themes to present those skills. There are many hands-on and art activities as well as games and manipulatives that teach the skills. We use the Zoo-phonics program to teach phonics to the threes and older classes. All of the activities are designed to be fun and develop a love of learning.

What other activities are included in a month? Children in the infants (starting Jan.) ones & twos participate in Tumble Time, a toddler gymnastic class once or twice a month. The ones and twos also go to Story Time with a professional story teller once a month. The three through five year olds go to Story Time four times during the year. Children in the infants (starting Jan.) and one through young fives classes have a music class with a music teacher once a month. Chapel is held once a month for the two through five year old classes. Spanish classes are given to the three through fives year olds twice a month. We also bring in themed programs for ages three through fives. These include a magician who talks about “Traditional Values”, a former preschool teacher who does programs on themes that we choose, a children’s entertainer/educator who performs his “Super Fun Show”, a woman comes to the school with animals when we talk about Noah’s Ark, a police officer and patrol car and a fire fighter and fire truck come to talk to the children when we talk about community helpers, and the fours and young fives have a School Bus Safety program with a bus driver and a ride around the parking lot.

Are there field trips? Yes! The four and young fives have four field trips during the year--to the downtown Marietta fire station, Publix, Bethlehem Walk, and Due West Elementary school for a tour and lunch in the cafeteria. The three year olds have a tour of Brusters in May.

Do children have to be potty trained to attend? Yes, in the threes through young fives classes.

How are the children disciplined? First of all we keep the children busy and having fun which prevents most discipline issues. Every class also has a set of classroom rules that every child knows about. When a child chooses to not follow the rule the teachers take the following steps in this order: 1. The child is reminded of the acceptable behavior. 2. The child is redirected to another toy, activity, or area of the room. 3. The child is removed from the situation or the group within the classroom. This time out lasts as many minutes as the child’s age. 4. The child will be taken to the director’s office for short time. 5. If the child has to be removed from the room for more than a short time or for repeated incidents of the same behavior, the parents will be called to come and pick up their child for the day. A parent conference will be arranged to develop a plan for behavior modification if the behavior continues.

How are the teachers trained? The staff at Due West attends 10 hours of continuing education classes every year. These classes include CPR and First Aid, child abuse prevention training, and 6 hours of classes designed for preschool teachers.

Can parents volunteer? Yes, we need your help! Parents can sign up to help with holiday special snacks, be a classroom reader, help with art activities, be a field trip driver or chaperone, and anything else that the teacher needs or the parents would like to offer.

When do parents come to school? Besides the opportunities mentioned above, parents are invited to attend our Open House in October for the older twos through young fives, Doughnuts with Dads before school one morning in January, the Thanksgiving Feast, Mother’s Tea, and the end of the year family picnics on the last day of school.

Do the children participate in programs for the parents? Yes, we do two programs a year. The first one is the week before Thanksgiving. We start with a program in the sanctuary with the three through five year olds. Then each child and two adults go to the Family Life Center for a Thanksgiving Feast. The second program is in April for the Mother's Tea. Again we do a program in the sanctuary, this time with the one through five year olds. Each child and his/her mom go to the Family Life Center for a brunch and art show.

How are the children dropped off and picked up? The children in the infant and ones classes are always walked to and picked up from their classroom. They (and any parent who is walking their child to class) enter through the blue doors with the cross and flame on the back of our building near the playground. Children in the twos through young fives classes are encouraged to go through car line. Parents drop off their children in the front of our building under the overhang where we unload two cars at a time. All of the teachers are in the classrooms and the assistants are out in the hall to be sure that every child gets to their classroom. Parents pick up their children in the same place. Parents have a carline tag that has their child's number on it. The teachers sit with their class in the Narthex and the assistants get the children in line based on the order of the cars. We can easily accommodate carpools for multiple families with a separate carline tag.

How do you keep our children safe? 1. Of the four doors that come into our hallway, only one is unlocked between 9:30 and 12:45. During that time everyone must enter through Admin. 2 where they sign in, get a visitor's sticker, and then enter our hall. 2. The carline tag ensures that only the parent or someone that they've designated can pick up their child. We require a note or phone call if someone different will be picking the child up and then we will check that person's ID.

How do you communicate with the parents? Parents who are new to the school receive a printed parent handbook at the beginning of school that explains our policies and has the year's calendar. Returning parents get a link to the website that has the parent handbook on it. Parents also receive a monthly preschool newsletter as well as a monthly calendar from the teacher. The teachers and preschool office will also send home notes, emails, or make phone calls as needed.

Every child has a Due West tote bag with a folder inside. We send home information in that folder and we check it every day for anything that the parents send in to us.

How will I know how my child is doing in school? Parents in the infants through two year old classes receive a daily report for their child.

The teachers of the three through young five year olds will fill out a progress report in the fall and again in March. They will offer an individual parent conference to each family in March.

The teachers will also communicate with notes, emails, and phone calls for issues and updates throughout the year.

How can I find answers to other questions that I might have? Look in the brochure or parent handbook or ask a teacher or the director or her assistant. We are always happy to answer your questions—please ask us! We want every child and family to have a positive experience here at Due West UMC Preschool Ministry.

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