

Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church Preschool  
2023-24  
Parent Handbook

*Since 1977, nurturing the seeds of knowledge, one student at a time.*



**Email:** [preschool@kittyhawkumc.net](mailto:preschool@kittyhawkumc.net)

**Office Phone:** 252-715-1398

Administrative Team:  
Melanie Long and Becky Strickland

## **Pastor's Message**

Welcome to the Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church Preschool. We are excited that you have chosen to share your children with us for the coming year. Our preschool has a great history and reputation here on the Outer Banks, and we look forward to an even brighter future. We believe the Church is called to extend grace and care for the children of our community, and I pray that you feel welcomed and at home at KHUMC. If there is anything the KHUMC staff can do to be of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out. Blessings to you and your family, and I look forward to a grace-filled year.

Peace,

Rev. Colin Snider

## **Introduction**

KHUMC Preschool is a non-profit, educational ministry sponsored by Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church. It is under the supervision of the Preschool Director, the Pastor, and the Preschool Advisory Board. KHUMC Preschool has been in continuous operation since 1977. For the 2023-24 school year, our program consists of two, three and four year old classes, each with small class sizes.

## **Mission Statement**

We will use all available resources to educate every child. We will create a learning environment that is fun, loving, developmentally appropriate, and based upon Christian principles.

## **Curriculum Overview**

Our emphasis is on educating the whole child – the entire emotional, social, physical, creative, and intellectual being. We value and respect each child as an individual and as an important part of our school and church family. Social development is a central focus of our program, which builds the foundation for successful learning. Children are given many opportunities to make their own choices and participate in decision-making. Conflict resolution skills are taught and practiced.

Our Curriculum is child-centered, play-centered, and based on developmentally appropriate practice. We believe in providing interesting and fulfilling learning experiences for children to guide their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. Encouragement, love, understanding, and a sense of comfort are the spirit of our success.

Each class is taught by teachers trained in child development and appropriate practices. Our teachers bring a wealth of experience to the classroom. We offer creative expression in music, movement, and arts and crafts within the classroom curriculum. Creative learning integrates other parts of the curriculum to support preschool concepts such as color, shape, sequencing, patterning, and math. Gross motor skills are developed during outdoor play and indoor movement lessons.

We believe that the learning patterns and attitudes a child develops the first six years of life are the ones that guide future learning and behaviors.

Please take a few minutes to view our Virtual Tour for more information about our preschool curriculum and pedagogy:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O\\_SBtFYqzVaiYurhcK1CWTf8HbfoqDK\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O_SBtFYqzVaiYurhcK1CWTf8HbfoqDK_/view?usp=sharing)

## **Administrative Team**

Melanie Long, Director, oversees and manages day-to-day operations, including enrollment, communication with families and teachers, student matters, preschool curriculum, staff development, and record-keeping. Becky Strickland, Preschool Advisor, oversees the preschool as an educational body and provides leadership in fiscal matters and program growth. The Administrative Team works with the counsel of the Preschool Advisory Board, chaired by Roberta Evans.

## **Enrollment**

Admission is open to all children without regard to race, color, or religious affiliation. Since we are a United Methodist Church supported preschool, all children participate in chapel lessons. We also celebrate religious holidays during the year.

Students will be placed in classes based on their age as of August 31 of the current school year. Students are accepted into KHUMC Preschool according to the following priority:

- 1) Current enrolled students/siblings
- 2) Children of church members

### 3) Children of community members

A waiting list will be established and maintained throughout the year. A fee is not required to be on the waiting list. As soon as a space is open, you will be notified. If you are still interested, you will be required to return a registration form, a non-refundable \$76 registration fee, and the supply fee for your child's designated class at that time. The registration form serves as a contract between the Preschool and the parents/guardians, to be honored for the term of the school year. If there are extenuating circumstances which make it imperative for the parent to dissolve the contract, a **two-week** notice must be given to the preschool. Full monthly tuition obligations would be required to be met for the month the student is withdrawn.

## **Financial Obligations**

During the enrollment process in August, families will receive a Parent Financial Agreement. This agreement must be signed by all persons responsible for financial payments for the student enrolled. On this agreement, tuition is divided by the following:

### **Tuition**

Tuition is due on the FIRST calendar day of each month, and tuition invoices will be emailed on that day. As a convenience for our parents, the yearly tuition rate has been equally divided into NINE installments, although the number of days a student attends preschool per month may vary. Tuition will be collected in **monthly installments. Tuition payments are made through electronic payments via Brightwheel.** We are a non-profit organization, and the amount we charge each month is the amount needed to meet all of our financial obligations. We appreciate your promptness in paying tuition.

<b>Seal Pups</b>	<b>\$175 per month</b> <b>Attend 2 days a week from 9:00 - 12:00 (M/Tu or W/Th)</b>
<b>Sea Turtles</b>	<b>\$325 per month</b> <b>Attend 4 days a week from 9:00-12:00</b>
<b>3 year olds</b>	<b>\$325 per month</b> <b>4 days a week from 9:00-12:30</b>
<b>4 year olds</b> <b>(Sea Horses)</b>	<b>\$325 per month</b> <b>4 days a week from 9:00-12:30</b>
<b>4 year olds</b> <b>(Starfish)</b>	<b>\$400 per month</b> <b>5 days a week from 9:00-12:30</b>

***\*As with most online payment providers, there is a processing fee to maintain the high level of security needed to process funds. ACH (bank account payments) has a small flat rate fee per transaction and credit and debit cards have a small % fee per transaction. Processing fees will be listed as a line item on your bill. You can see your processing fees in your app when selecting a payment method.***

**Please Note:** A \$10.00 per day late fee will accrue beginning on the 6th day of the month. If families have not paid by the 8th day of the month including late fees, preschool administration will make contact regarding enrollment status. Calling the Preschool Office prior to late payment is important if you have a financial hardship to discuss. In the case of insufficient funds or a returned payment, a \$20 fee will be charged.

*Because staff salaries and daily operational costs remain the same each month, we are unable to grant tuition refunds for absences.*

### **Supply Fee**

An annual (nonrefundable) supply fee will be invoiced in August. Our supply fees assist the school financially with security, technology, photocopying/printing, and updating student materials for the school year.

**Students who attend 5 days per week:** \$145 due August 31

**Students who attend 4 days per week:** \$120 due August 31

**Students who attend 2 days per week:** \$75 due August 31

### **Annual Fundraisers**

Each fall, our preschool holds a fundraiser to offset costs of large projects such as playground equipment, classroom furniture, and other items necessary for an age-appropriate preschool learning environment. Families are expected to participate by selling tickets or making financial donations. Additional details may be found on the Financial Agreement.

Throughout the year, teachers spend a great deal of time taking photos of students and creating individualized Memory Books that parents can order each spring. Preschool families can attest to the fact that these are special treasures! Memory Book orders also serve as a fundraiser for our preschool.

## **Closings and Inclement Weather**

All parents are provided with a detailed Preschool Calendar. The 2023-24 KHUMCP Student Calendar may be accessed here:

[W KHUMCP Student Calendar 2023-24.docx](#)

For the most part, we follow Dare County Schools' holidays and closings. If Dare County Schools close due to inclement weather, the Preschool will also close. *We do not make up lost school days due to inclement weather.*

- If Dare County Schools have a **one-hour or two hour delay**, an **EMAIL and message via the Brightwheel app** will be sent out regarding the schedule for our day.
- If Dare County Schools have a **three-hour delay**, the Preschool will close.
- If an Early Dismissal is called for DCS, the Preschool will also close early.

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE SIGNED UP FOR Brightwheel. You will receive an invitation to join via email.**

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

At arrival time, please park in your class' designated area and walk your child to the designated doorway to check in with the teacher. You will check-in your child using the Brightwheel QR Code posted at the doorway or provided by your child's teacher.

At dismissal, the class will meet parents at the same doorway. Please wait on the sidewalk until the teacher has released your child individually to you. You will also check-out your child using the Brightwheel QR code. At this point, our staff is no longer responsible for your child, so please make sure children get to your vehicle quickly and safely.

The purpose of the check-in and check-out is to maintain records of attendance and names of individuals to whom we release your children. Only those adults to whom you have given permission will be allowed to pick-up. In the event your child's pick-up person needs to be changed, parents will be

able to make the change in the Brightwheel app.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Attendance Times</b>	<b>Arrival/Dismissal</b>
Seal Pups (2's who attend 2 days per week)	9:00-12:00	Paved parking lot by sanctuary; walk your child up the ramp and meet teacher at double glass doors
Sea Turtles (2's who attend 4 days per week)	9:00-12:00	Paved parking lot by sanctuary; walk your child up the ramp and meet teacher at double glass doors
3-year old Program	9:00-12:30	3 designated areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paved parking lot by basketball court; line up on basketball court and meet teacher at Fellowship Hall end door</li> <li>● Paved parking lot by basketball court; line up on sidewalk and meet teacher at Fellowship Hall side door</li> <li>● Gravel parking lot; line up on sidewalk, enter playground area, and meet teacher at double glass doors by the playground</li> </ul>
4-year old Program	9:00-12:30	2 designated areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paved parking lot by sanctuary; line up on sidewalk and meet teacher at single glass door by the sanctuary.</li> <li>● Gravel parking lot; line up on sidewalk and meet teacher at single glass door by the sanctuary</li> </ul>

Once class assignments have been made, the preschool will notify parents of their designated parking area and student entrance.

If parents are late and cannot meet the times of arrival as stated for their child, please wait to bring the child at **9:15 am** and call the Director for entrance to the building (252-715-1398).

Due to their responsibility to supervise students, teachers will not be able to communicate with parents during the arrival or departure process. We will make time for communication via emails, Brightwheel messaging and/or phone calls. Teachers will provide weekly updates via the Brightwheel app with adorable pictures!

Please be prompt in picking up your child. Teachers are preparing lessons and sanitizing classrooms for the next school day. Their time is valuable and should be respected.

## **Medical Requirements**

**Each student must have a current vaccination record and a recent physical exam to enroll in KHUMC Preschool.** Please discuss the importance of a flu and/or Covid vaccine with your health provider. An emergency medical authorization form must be completed and filed for each student. In case of an emergency, the parents will be notified and medical care will be obtained if necessary.

For a list of required vaccinations, right click on the link to open:  
[NC DPH, WCH: Immunization: Schools and Childcare Facilities](#)

## **Illness**

We salute our families who partner with us in keeping preschool children healthy. When parents are diligent in keeping children home when they are sick, we are better able to prevent the spread of viruses. Thank you for your support and continuation of these practices.

If your child has a contagious disease, he or she should be kept home, and the preschool must be notified. A child should not be brought to Preschool with any of the following symptoms:

**-COVID-19 Symptoms-** Fever, chills, shortness of breath, cough, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, headache, nausea, or stomach pain.

**-Fever-** after a fever, a child's temperature must be less than 100 degrees without fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours before returning to school.

**-Diarrhea and vomiting-** after diarrhea or vomiting, a child must be free of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.

**-Strep-** If your child has a positive strep test, he/she may return after 24 hours



of being on an antibiotic.

**-Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)** - Children with pink eye may return after a 24 hour treatment with antibiotic eye drops and the child is free of all symptoms.

**-Ringworm-** a child may return to preschool following 24 hours of treatment with fungicides. Oral antibiotics are required if in the scalp.

-Other highly contagious conditions include: **measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, lice, scabies, pinworms, roseola, or viral infections.**

**The Preschool Staff is not permitted to administer medications.**

## **Medical/First Aid Policy**

Parents are immediately called in the event of a significant accident or health concern. Parents are also called if a child appears to be feeling or behaving differently than usual. If your child becomes ill while at school, he or she will be isolated from the other children, and you will be called to take him/her home. **Please cooperate by picking up your child promptly.**

For minor incidents (i.e. a fall on the playground, a bump with a friend, a scrape or scratch), parents will be notified via Brightwheel messaging. If an incident is major and it is determined to require immediate medical assistance, **911** will be called. Parents should be sure that all emergency telephone numbers are current in the event the parent cannot be reached.

## **Outdoor Play**

We will have daily outdoor play on all but rainy or extremely hot or cold days. The Director will practice caution on cold/hot days and inform staff of outdoor play procedures, following the pediatric suggestions for childcare in determining wind chill factor. All children should be dressed appropriately for the weather, dressing in layers in cold weather is recommended. Children who are too ill to participate in outdoor play should remain at home.

## **Clothing**

Please think of your child's comfort and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Dress your child in play clothes so the many learning experiences provided can be enjoyed, such as creative art projects and outdoor play. For chilly days, layering is great.

Please send your child to school in **tennis shoes or rubber-sole shoes** and refrain from

- Open toed sandals
- Flip Flops
- CROCS

- Dress shoes with slippery soles

If appropriate footwear or outerwear is not provided, parents will be called to bring appropriate shoes so children will be able to play on the playground. All outer garments must be labeled with your child's name.

Please provide the preschool with an extra set of clothing and undergarments for your child. Place in a ziplock bag with your child's name written on the outside.

## **Snack Time**

- Students will be required to bring their own snacks each day.
- Snacks should be brought in a **lunch box or disposable bag**.
- Please label the snack container with your child's name.
- Preschool will provide water for each child in the classroom and on warm days outside. If you feel necessary, students may bring PERSONAL WATER BOTTLES, labeled with name, and will go home daily for washing. Water bottle should fit inside the child's lunch box. NO GLASS please.
- We love to celebrate birthdays during snack time! For safety purposes, only packaged, store-bought treats can be shared with classmates. Your child's teacher will inform you of the classroom birthday procedures.
- Please inform the teacher of any food allergies that your child may have.
- As a school, we advise our families to limit the sweet and sugary snacks to birthdays and holidays.
- If an enrolled child has a nut allergy, you will be notified and we will resume a NUT-FREE SNACK policy. In this case, below is a link to a nut-free healthy snack list for your convenience:

 [Healthy NUT FREE Snack List](#)

## **Discipline and Guidance**

The staff will provide guidance through **speech**. They will:

- Give positive directions and suggestions.
- Use short, clear, meaningful sentences.
- Give choices only when children have a choice.
- Avoid shaming and blaming children.

- Avoid making comparisons between children.
- Redirect to more constructive activities or actions.
- Give approval when deserved.
- Avoid favoritism.

The staff will provide guidance by their **actions**. They will:

- Give children help when needed.
- Prevent problems by organizing and planning appropriate activities.
- Create a developmentally appropriate learning environment with toddler-friendly equipment, furniture, and classroom layout.
- Set clear limits and help children understand the limits.
- Help children understand the consequences of their actions if limits are tested.
- Locate themselves in strategic and effective positions such as floor level, when interacting with and supervising children.
- Be alert to all children's needs.
- Give absolute attention to the health, safety, and well-being of the children at all times.

The following **guidance** techniques will be used:

★ **Indirect Guidance:**

- Arranging the environment, schedules, or group composition to be proactive and prevent problems.

★ **Direct Guidance:**

- Stating the desired behavior in a positive way.
- Reinforcing appropriate behavior.
- Using a "safe space" immediately for physical aggression, such as hitting, kicking, or biting.
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors to acceptable behaviors.

The growth, development, and well-being of your child is our main focus. It is our philosophy to develop children and provide positive discipline strategies.

Discipline will be administered in a fair, consistent, and professional manner. Conferences can be beneficial to staff members, parents, and children. Please feel free to request a conference at any time. When we have difficulty resolving a discipline issue, the parents will be contacted. If severe discipline problems, such as consistently disrupting the class, excessively aggressive behavior towards peers and staff, showing signs of not being able to adjust to the preschool, etc. cannot be resolved, KHUMCP has the right to dismiss the child from school.

## **Biting Policy**

Our biting policy is for the protection of all of our students. Biting is probably one of the most worrisome types of aggression we see in children. It is usually just a temporary behavior, expressed when young preschoolers are in a social situation they find stressful and cannot communicate their needs. We have specific procedural steps in place for handling the rare incident of biting. The Director and teachers will work with the family to support/reinforce behavioral techniques to eliminate the behavior at school. Teachers will use praise towards the biter when he/she is displaying appropriate behavior. The parents of the victim **and** the parents of the biter will be informed of the incident immediately. The victim will be treated properly and the health department will be notified if the skin has been broken.

1. The biter's parents will be asked to pick up their child and discuss suspected causes of the behavior and steps to be taken to resolve the biting behavior.
2. After a second biting incident, the child will be removed from preschool for one week.
3. After the third biting incident, the child will be removed from preschool for two weeks.
4. If a child bites a fourth time, he/she will be dismissed from KHUMCP.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Caregivers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect according to the North Carolina Law on Child Abuse and Neglect. If such a case is observed or suspected, it will be immediately reported to the Director, who in turn will notify the Dare County Department of Social Services.

## **Parent Involvement**

There is real value in a partnership between parents and teachers in the education of the child. Communication between the Preschool and the home is extremely important. KHUMC Preschool is committed to encouraging and supporting this partnership. Teachers will communicate through the Brightwheel app on a regular basis and are willing to communicate with parents via phone call or in person upon request.

## **Adjustment to School**

Children are unique individuals who react to new situations differently. The length of the adjustment period for each child varies and depends on his/her

personality and his/her past experiences. Preschool is a new journey and every student will require some time and special attention to make the adjustment. This might mean that your child will cry in the morning on the way to school, when you leave him/her at school, or when parents start to pick up their children at the end of the school day. Please know that the staff at KHUMC Preschool has experience in making these transitions with children. In most cases, the anxiety your child may feel is temporary, but if it persists, the staff will work with parents to help meet the child's needs. A behavior that requires a teacher's time away from other students will need to be addressed with parents. As with any separation, a firm, brief, and loving good-bye works best, and the first day blues soon disappear! We are here to help!

The outside arrival and dismissal procedures have worked beautifully the past few years, and we look forward to continuing these processes.

### **Dismissal from our program:**

Only in the most extreme circumstances would a child ever be dismissed from KHUMC Preschool. The following are examples that may result in dismissal from our program:

- Consistent violent, threatening, or extremely disruptive behavior causing an excessive amount of time spent on one student.
- Any circumstance in which the preschool cannot meet the needs of a student, or the student is not adjusting to the preschool environment.
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations.
- Failure to meet financial obligations to the preschool.
- Biting incident on 4 or more occasions.
- Inappropriate parental behavior displayed on campus, verbally or through electronic communication.
- Falsifying information/records provided to the preschool.

### **Conclusion**

We thank you for the opportunity to serve the children of KHUMC Preschool. Our school provides knowledgeable and experienced teachers who are dedicated to providing your child with spiritual, academic, emotional, and social growth through qualified instruction and sincere nurturing and love. It is our pleasure to welcome your family to our family.