

# **UCP PARENT HANDBOOK**

**United Church Preschool  
1321 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
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# **PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION**

UCP is a high quality early childhood program for children ages 2 to 5. We are a small, non-profit preschool with low child/adult ratios. UCP strives to be a fun, safe, and happy place for children to explore and create. Children are given opportunities to participate in structured and unstructured activities, in groups and individually, within a warm and nurturing atmosphere. This preschool experience can help your child develop independence and a positive self-concept, while encouraging sharing and respect for others.

UCP is a program of the Board of Children's Ministry of the Church of Chapel Hill (UCCH). UCP is designed to provide an affordable, part-time, quality learning experience for the children of UCCH members as well as children of all faiths in the greater Chapel Hill community. As a program of the church, UCP follows UCCH's guiding principle of inclusion of all families regardless of "race, marital status, sexual orientation, means ability and spiritual tradition". UCP aims to enroll all children regardless of financial need. Upon demonstrated need, scholarships are provided. The UCP Board consists predominately of UCCH members.

## **ADMISSION GUIDELINES**

Children must be 2 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> for the youngest classes; 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> for the middle class and 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> for the 5-day class to be considered for enrollment. Members of the United Church of Chapel Hill are given priority for enrollment. (Once a child is admitted to UCP, he/she can not be "bumped" from a spot by church members.) Siblings of children currently enrolled in the program are given next priority. Alumni siblings are given 3<sup>rd</sup> priority and then spots are filled from our waiting list. There are 2 teachers with 9 children in the youngest classes; 2 teachers with 13 children in the middle classes and 2 with 16 in the oldest class.

Applications for enrollment by church members must be made by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the preceding school year to receive priority. Current families claim spaces in January and then children are taken from the waiting list starting February 1<sup>st</sup>. All enrollment decisions are made by the UCP Director, including balancing the classes by age and gender.

Scholarship funds may be available. Applications can be obtained from the Director.

# WAITING LIST & ENROLLMENT

You must submit a completed application form and a non-refundable application fee of \$30 to be placed on the waiting list. Applications are accepted year-round and roll over each year. When a space becomes available, an appointment is made for the child and his/her parents to visit the school to observe the class and meet the teachers. After the school visit, the space can only be held for 24 hours. If you accept the space, you submit the Emergency Medical Form and the non-refundable supply fee.

A check for May's tuition must be submitted by April 30<sup>th</sup> (the spring BEFORE school starts), in order to secure your child's space in the class. Failure to submit this payment by April 30<sup>th</sup> releases your child from the class roll.

# TUITION POLICIES

Monthly tuition is paid by automatic draft on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. If a family chooses not to use automatic draft, then the full year's tuition is due by September 10<sup>th</sup>.

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from school, it is required to give the Director 30 days notice prior to the date of withdrawal. If 30 days notice is given AND the position can be filled during that time, the prepaid May tuition will be refunded. The supply fee and monthly tuition rates for the 2009-2010 school year are as follows:

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>SUPPLY FEE</u>	<u>TUITION</u>
M-W, T-Th	\$75.00	\$160.00
M-W-F, T-Th-F	\$125.00	\$220.00
5 day M-F	\$200.00	\$325.00

UCP tax ID number is 56-089-2821

# CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Each child must have a spare change of clothes appropriate to the season that can be left at school. Children who are not potty trained must have a supply of disposable diapers and a container of wipes. The teachers of the younger kids work to help children with potty training, but we ask that they do not come to school in regular underwear until accidents are fairly uncommon. Although it is not required that the kids

entering the middle class be totally potty trained, they need to be close to accomplishing this skill before school begins. Teachers will not be able to change diapers in the older classes after November 1.

If children have a “security” blanket, doll or stuffed animal, this may be brought to school. Otherwise, **all toys should be left at home.** Personal toys are difficult to share and can be lost or broken. Children may bring books to school that the teacher can read at story time. Please send your child to school in washable play clothes. We spend our day looking for ways to get messy! Children should wear clothes that they can handle themselves when going to the bathroom. Appropriate shoes for running and climbing are also important. In cold weather, please send mittens, a hat and a warm coat on your child.

## **ADJUSTMENT TO PRESCHOOL**

The very first day of school for each class will be one hour shorter than our usual day, from 9:30 - 11:30. On this first day, parents of older kids are welcome to stay as long as they feel is necessary for their child to feel comfortable. Once the child is happily engaged in play, it is best for everyone if you leave, even if it’s just for a short time. For parents of younger kids, we ask that you stay in the building during this first day. There will be an extra teacher in each of the classes for the first week to help with the adjustment process. On the second school day, teachers will help you decide the best separation routine for your child.

UCP will make every effort to meet the needs of your child physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially within our abilities based on our staffing, ratio and facility resources. We will work with families in making necessary plans to accommodate your child in our program. However, if the Director determines that UCP cannot meet your child’s needs, she reserves the right to withdraw your child’s position from the school.

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

At United Church Preschool, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for children. This year we are especially aware of the threat of the H1N1 virus in our community.

The Emergency Medical form must be completed and be on file in the Director’s Office before any child shall be allowed to attend class. Parents must update these forms annually. Please notify the Director of any changes to these forms during the school year.

Children must be free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, unexplained rashes, runny noses, excessive coughing sore throat, headache, chills, earache, and red eyes for 24 hours before coming to school. Please DO NOT bring your child to school with any of these symptoms unless you provide the school with a doctor's signed verification that your child is not contagious to others. Children may not attend school with head lice or nits. ***The preschool reserves the right to refuse attendance to any child displaying the above symptoms and appreciates your cooperation in this matter.***

Please notify the Director prior to the start of class when a child will not be attending his or her class due to sickness or otherwise. In addition, please notify the Director of any communicable disease or any serious illness or health problem.

If a child becomes sick at school during the day, one or both parents will be notified. In the event that parents cannot be contacted, the additional emergency contacts listed on the child's Emergency Medical Form will be called. ***Arrangements to pick up a sick child must be made immediately.*** Parents will also be called to pick up a child who is not able to function in a group. Teachers cannot administer any medication to a child.

## **PARKING**

Parents may park in any church parking space while they bring their child into the classroom, but please do not park in the drive through circle. At pick-up time, starting at 11:55, we bring the classes up the elevator to the church foyer. Parents should use the "new" front doors and must come into the foyer to pick up their child. We cannot release a child to go out of the foyer without his/her adult. Once the teachers have given your child(ren) to you, it is your responsibility to keep a close eye on the child. Please use extreme caution in the parking lot.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

UCP begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 12:00 PM. Although teachers are in the classroom before 9:00 AM, please do not enter the classroom before 9:00. The teachers need this time to get ready for the day. Each child needs to first wash their hands in the hallway bathrooms and then be personally delivered to the classroom by their parent or other authorized (in writing) adult. Please be prompt, as it is important for your child to begin the day with his/her classmates. Children should never be left alone, either outside or inside the building. Please call the school by 9:30 if your child will not be coming that

morning.

UCP closes promptly at 12:00. Late fees are imposed per child when children are picked up late. The late charge will be due even when parents call with an excuse. This fee goes into our Scholarship Fund. The fees must be paid when you pick up the child and are as follows:

12:05-12:10	\$3.00/child	12:21-12:30	\$12
12:11-12:15	\$6.00/child	12:31-12:45	\$15
12:16-12:20	\$9.00/child	12:46-1:00	\$20

This is actually more lenient than most child-care programs, which charge \$1.00 per minute late fees. The teachers will take any children back down to the classroom at 12:05. After 12:05 you must come down to the classroom, pay the late fee to the teacher and pick up your child. Thank you for respecting the teacher's time enough to adhere to this policy. The late fee policy is also in effect on lunch bunch days, starting at 1:05.

## **SNACKS**

Snack is served each morning somewhere between 10:30-10:45. All children are assigned a week on a monthly snack calendar that is sent home and also posted on the Bulletin Board. If your child will be out of school on his/her snack day, please arrange to switch with another child in the class. Parents are asked to provide a nutritious snacks, exceptions are made for birthdays. The program provides napkins and the kid's bring their own water bottle to school each day. We may occasionally ask to have you send in cooking ingredients so the kids can make their own snack. We do keep some emergency snacks on hand if you should forget to bring the snack on your assigned day, but you must replenish that snack the following school day. We can use the refrigerator, freezer, microwave and oven in the church kitchen. Examples of snacks follow:

bagels and cream cheese	fresh fruit, cut up
breads (banana, pumpkin, etc.)	fresh vegetables and dip
cheese	yogurt
"Pirate Booty"	granola
Rice cake	pretzels
Goldfish	raisins

PLEASE LET YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS KNOW ABOUT ANY FOOD ALLERGIES. Please do not send nuts or popcorn for the younger classes.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are always welcome in the UCP classroom during school hours. We love to have family members come in to read, cook or share a special interest with the kids. However, it is best for the kids to keep your visits to a minimum during the first two months of school, just while everyone is getting adjusted. Parents are encouraged to communicate any pertinent information about the child's life at home to the teachers. Please let us know if there has been a change of address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, new sibling, divorce, new medical development, or other major family event.

The teachers will keep the parents informed of their child's activities and behaviors at school as much as possible. We do not have parent conferences scheduled on a regular basis, but a parent may request a conference at any time. A conference can be arranged, either after school or via telephone. Please do not hesitate to talk to your child's teacher and/or the director about any concern.

A newsletter will be sent home on an as needed basis (usually every 6 weeks). You will also receive a monthly class update from your child's teacher. Newsletters are sent by e-mail, but extra copies are also available on the Parent Board. Please check your child's envelope daily for artwork, teacher notes, etc. Also check the white board next to the classroom door for daily news and reminders. A class list with all phone numbers and e-mail addresses will be sent home the first week of school. We also have a Parent Library in the UCP office. Books about various child development issues are available for parent's to check out.

Parents are required to complete 3 hours of volunteer work per child per school year or pay a \$25 fee per hour. There are many different opportunities, including playground workdays, substitute teaching, fundraising projects and serving on the UCP Board. Details are explained at the Parent Orientation Meeting in September, the night before school starts. A school calendar will be sent to you in May and a back-to-school newsletter is sent in early August.

## **MORNING SCHEDULE**

The classes do follow a schedule. However, we always remain flexible so we adjust to variables such as the weather or children's needs and interests. Our older class's routine is as follows:

- 9:00-10:15 Free play using both the room and back porch (weather permitting)
- 10:15-10:25 Clean up time
- 10:25-10:35 Bathroom and wash up for snack
- 10:35-10:50 Snack
- 10:50-11:20 Outside play
- 11:20-11:40 Art and clean-up

- 11:40-11:55 Story time. Informal circle time (sharing, calendar, weather, musical instruments, dancing, finger plays, etc.)  
11:55-12:00 Jackets on and dismissal

The younger class routine is similar except that they go outside toward the end of the morning and they will often do art during free play.

## **ART**

Children love to express themselves through art and at UCP we hope to encourage that love by giving the children lots of opportunities to experiment with different media every day. Our art is not teacher made. The end product is not important; it's the process that is fun for children. We always use washable paint, markers, and glue and wear art smocks if needed.

## **MUSIC**

Although music and creative movement are already included in our daily schedule, each child will also attend a music class once a week. Every Tuesday and Wednesday, the youngest kids have a 30-minute class and the two older classes have a 45-minute class with Kris, our music teacher. Kris brings a variety of instruments for the kids to use when they meet with her in the music room. The older kids put on a music program in December and there is a Family Music Night for everyone in the spring.

## **HOLIDAYS AND CLOSINGS**

UCP loosely follows the Chapel Hill/Carrboro City Schools schedule. A UCP calendar will be given to everyone in May. We do follow the public schools lead concerning closings for inclement weather days. Parents can go to [www.wral.com](http://www.wral.com) for information about school closings. If the city schools are on a one or two hour delay, we still open at 9:00 AM.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

You may want to send a special treat for your child's class to help celebrate his/her birthday. If your child's birthday is during the summer break, you may celebrate his/her half-birthday if desired. Please do not bring party favors or distribute birthday presents to other children at school. Do not hand out birthday party invitations at school unless all

the children in the class are invited.

## **FUND-RAISING**

Fund-raising is necessary to help maintain our reasonable tuition with our low teacher/child ratios. Proceeds also help to keep our classrooms well stocked and help us to save for big-ticket items. A fund-raising committee of parents is established each fall to decide on and implement all fund-raising projects for the year. They may include school photos, UCP t-shirts, and Spaghetti Dinners. UCP does participate in the Harris Teeter Together-In-Education program. If you add our school number (#3168) to your Harris Teeter VIC card, we receive a % back from all your store brand purchases.

## **SCHOLASTIC BOOKS**

One great way we stock our school library is through the Scholastic Book Club. Each month a new book order is sent home with each child. If you wish to receive any books, bring the order form back to school by the designated date, with a check made out to SCHOLASTIC BOOKS or order online at [www.scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://www.scholastic.com/bookclubs). There is never any obligation to buy, of course; but this is a nice source of inexpensive children's books. The school earns points for each book ordered, which we then use to receive free books and classroom supplies.

## **LUNCH BUNCH PROGRAM**

The optional lunchtime program begins in September and runs every day from noon until 1:00 PM. Lunch Bunch (LB) is open to all kids who are at least 3 years old and fully potty trained. The cost is \$6.00 each time your child stays for Lunch Bunch. Lunch Bunch is a fund-raiser for our program. Parents purchase "punch cards" which have their child's name on it and the number of prepaid LBs. To cut down on paperwork, there is a \$60 minimum purchase. These cards stay at school and the teacher will punch one LB each time your child stays. A reminder note will be sent home when your child has just one LB punch left. You may pay by check made out to UCP or with cash for the exact amount, as we cannot make change.

Children must be signed up in advance for each lunch that you are interested in having him/her attend. The sign up sheets are posted each month on the Bulletin Boards. As we have a limited number of openings for Lunch Bunch you must cross your child's name off the list 2 days prior if your plans change or you will be charged the \$6 fee.

Your child will need to bring his/her own labeled lunch and drink. Due to limited space,

we cannot store the lunches in the refrigerator.

# UCP ENROLLMENT APPLICATION

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of United Church of Chapel Hill? Yes No

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M F

Preferred name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date & current age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (if different than above) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (if different than above) \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

If Child is not living with parents:

Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all siblings and their ages:

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UCP Enrollment Application, page 2

Has your child had previous childcare experiences? Please describe:

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What do you hope that UCP can provide for your child?

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UCP is a very creative, messy school. We encourage the children to learn and grow through active participation and exploration. We take walks in the woods and love to play in the mud. We go outside almost every day, regardless of the heat or cold. We paint frequently and have a great time with water play. Does this appeal or appall?

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Are there any restrictions (religious, philosophical, dietary, etc.)? You wish to be observed at school?

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Please give any additional information concerning your child, which will be helpful in his/her experience in this group (favorite games/toys, likes/dislikes, fears, techniques for comforting, etc.)

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# **EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL INFORMATION**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Who to contact in case of an emergency, if neither parent can be reached:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address \_\_\_\_\_

Child's known allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital preference \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Dentist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address \_\_\_\_\_

## **PARENTAL AGREEMENT**

I agree that the UCP teachers may authorize the physician of his/her choice to provide emergency care in the event that neither the family physician nor I can be contacted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

My child has received all recommended immunizations prior to the start of school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please list below everyone who has permission to pick up your child:

\_\_\_\_\_