

# **Parent Handbook 2022-2023**

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

The Forest Hills United Methodist Church Day School is a ministry of the church to children (six weeks through Pre-k) and parents of the church and community. It is a place where self-esteem is enhanced through positive relationships and mutual respect. Our mission is to provide each child a safe and secure, loving and nurturing environment, in which children learn through developmentally appropriate play. Each child is loved and celebrated for his/her unique gifts.

In partnership with parents, church and staff, we foster an interest in learning by serving the developmental needs of the whole child: social, emotional, spiritual, physical and academic to their greatest potential, so that they may be prepared for their next school environment. Through the teaching of Christian values, children are educated and affirmed toward responsible behavior and positive character development by means of diverse programs, administered with the love of Christ.

## **ADMISSION/REGISTRATION**

Registration occurs in January for the upcoming school year. Children are given priority in this order:

1. Currently enrolled students
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students
3. Active church members
4. Alumni families
5. Community applicants

Upon confirmation of an available spot and acceptance by the parent, a non-refundable registration fee of \$85 is due. If there is not space for a child who has applied, they can be placed on the waiting list for \$25. If the child is later enrolled, the \$25 fee will be applied toward their registration fee.

August tuition and the annual supply fee are due June 1 to hold a child's place for the following August. This payment is non-refundable.

## **BRIGHTWHEEL**

Brightwheel is the primary means of communication the Day School will use for everything from important announcements to daily notes about your child. Please ensure that you have done the following prior to the first day of school:

1. Downloaded the Brightwheel app and created a login and PIN

2. Updated your child's profile, including: a recent picture, details about food or other allergies, people who are authorized to pick up your child, phone numbers for both parents and an emergency phone number
3. Enrolled in AutoPay and set up your bank account information
4. Turned notifications ON for Brightwheel in your phone's settings

### **PAPERWORK**

You will be given a folder with a set of forms which must be signed and returned on the first day of school. The forms will also be available on our website. These include:

-Safety Curriculum Notice (only for Bluebirds, Canaries, Cardinals, Falcons, Owls, and Eagles)

-Class Parent Agreement Form

-Influenza Notification Form

-Tennessee Kindergarten Law Acknowledgement (Eagles, Falcons, Owls only)

-Medical Information/Release Form

\*We also require an updated TN Certificate of Immunization form from your doctor which can be emailed or faxed to the Day School or you can bring in a copy of it with you the first week of school.

### **ANNUAL FEES AND TUITION INSTALLMENTS**

Forest Hills UMC Day School is a non-profit ministry to the community. Fees and tuition are charged to cover the costs of the program.

<b>Forest Hills UMC Day School 2022-2023 Tuition Rates</b>					
<b>Days Attending</b>	<b>1 day</b>	<b>2 days</b>	<b>3 days</b>	<b>4 days</b>	<b>5 days</b>
<b>Doves</b>	\$175	\$320	\$460	\$585	\$720
<b>Chickadees</b>	x	\$320	\$460	\$585	\$720
<b>Toucans/Parakeets</b>	x	\$300	\$425	x	\$670
<b>Bluebirds/Cardinals</b>	x	\$285	\$390	x	\$600
<b>Falcons/Owls</b>	x	x	\$390	x	\$600
<b>Eagles</b>	x	x	\$390	x	\$600
Supply Fee*	\$100	\$100	\$125	\$125	\$125
Registration Fee**	\$85	\$85	\$85	\$85	\$85

Drop-in fee: \$40/day (for ages 2 and under only) Please message the office for more information

Although tuition is accepted as a monthly payment, it is important to note that these monthly fees are based on an annual budget and divided evenly over 10 payments. Tuition is consistent regardless of absences, vacations, holidays or inclement weather days. The 10 tuition payments must be paid without any gaps, or the child's spot in the school will be forfeited. Tuition will be auto drafted during the first 3 days of the month through the Brightwheel app, unless arranged to pay in advance. A \$25 late fee will apply to any outstanding tuition past the tenth day of the month.

Any family in our program who is experiencing a financial need in paying their child's preschool tuition should see the Day School Director, Assistant Director, or the Pastor of Forest Hills UMC. We are here to help if you need help. All conversations are held in strict confidence.

### **THE DAILY SCHEDULE**

Forest Hills United Methodist Church Day School hours are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Extended care is offered 8:00-9:00 a.m. and 2:00-2:55 p.m.

Because of safety concerns, we ask that you **DO NOT** use your cell phone while dropping off your child or picking them up.

### **ARRIVAL PLAN**

All children will be dropped off through the drop off line in the morning with the exception of the Doves parents. Those parents will take their child in every day. For Doves parents, please park in a parking spot to walk your child in. Do not park under the canopy or along the sidewalk.

For Chickadees, Toucans, Parakeets, Cardinals and Bluebirds, parents/guardians dropping off will form two lines and pull up as far as possible - one line under the canopy and a second one just outside the canopy columns. Once you have pulled up, please turn off your engine. A staff member will come to your car and have you sign your child in. At that time the parent/guardian dropping the child off will unbuckle them, get them out of the car and will either pass them off to the teacher that helped check them in or will walk them to their child's teacher who will be waiting for them at their

designated spot. Please be aware of other children being dropped off around you and drive slowly and carefully.

For Owls, Canaries, Falcons and Eagles, parents/guardians dropping off will drive to the upstairs parking lot. Please pull all the way forward along the sidewalk and stop at the designated cone. A staff member will come to your car and have you sign your child in. At that time the parent/guardian dropping the child off will unbuckle them, get them out of the car and will pass them off to the teacher that helped check them in or the child will be directed to walk to the sidewalk where another staff member will walk them to their classes designated spot. We ask that you stay in line while that group of children are dropped off. Then as the first person pulls away it is fine for you to then follow along the sidewalk through the drop off line as you leave. Please be aware of other children being dropped off around you and drive slowly and carefully.

On the last day of the week that your child attends (so Thursday or Friday) you are allowed to walk them into their classroom. If you choose to do this, we ask that parents park in a parking space. The parent may then walk their child to their room and sign their child in. The drop off lines are still an option if you choose to drop them off.

All children **must** be signed in using the check in code that you have selected. Others who may drop off your child will also need to have a code set up. Children are not permitted to walk to their classrooms without a parent or guardian. Doors unlock at 9:00 am and lock at 9:15. If you arrive after that time please ring the bell. Please stand in front of the door so that we can identify you and/or speak to you.

### **DISMISSAL PLAN**

Dismissal is between 1:45 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Children will be released only to those individuals authorized by the parent (or legal guardian). In instances where another person is designated to pick up the child, we must be authorized by you, as parent or guardian. To release your child, authorized persons must have photo identification reflecting the name you have provided and are listed as an approved pick up person in your child's Brightwheel profile.

Chickadees, Toucans, Parakeets, Cardinals, and Bluebirds, will be loaded near the canopy. Parents will make two lines and pull up as far as possible - one line under the canopy and a second line just outside the canopy columns. Once you've pulled up, please turn off your engine. A teacher will walk your child to your car. All children must be securely fastened in an age appropriate car seat by their designated guardian before

leaving the day school parking lot. Please be aware of other children being loaded in the cars around you and drive very slowly and carefully. If you need to discuss something with your child's teacher, please do not do so in the car line. You may pull up past the canopy to prevent blocking traffic or schedule another time to continue the conversation.

For Owls, Canaries, Falcons and Eagles please drive to the upstairs parking lot and proceed through the pick up line just like you did for the drop off line. Once you've pulled up, please turn off your engine. A teacher will walk your child to your car. All children must be securely fastened in an age appropriate car seat by their designated guardian before leaving the day school parking lot. Please be aware of other children being loaded in the cars around you and drive very slowly and carefully. If you need to discuss something with your child's teacher, please do not do so in the car line. You may pull into a parking spot to prevent blocking traffic or schedule another time to continue the conversation.

### **Late Policy:**

Children not picked up by 2:00 p.m. will be taken to the school office to wait. Children will NOT be taken to Stay and Play due to state mandated teacher/child ratios. After a one-time grace opportunity is used, there will be a charge of \$1 per minute for the second offense, and \$2 per minute for the third offense, and \$3 per minute for any following offenses, with a max of \$25 per day.

Late policy applies to extended care program as well. Children not picked up before 2:55pm will be taken to school office. After a one-time grace opportunity is used, there will be a charge of \$1 per minute for the second offense, and \$2 per minute for the third offense, and \$3 per minute for any following offenses, with a max of \$25 per day.

### **TOILETING**

Children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. For some this may occur at 24 months and for other children it may occur at 36 months. We are committed to working with you so that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities, and your family's commitment. Children entering Bluebirds, Canaries, and Cardinals must be toilet trained (no pull-ups allowed). The teachers will still assist and will begin directing for independence. Children in Owls, Falcons and Eagles should be independent in bathroom use and buttoning as well as zipping.

Please do not use belts. These teachers will verbally direct your child as needed. If you feel that your child is not ready and his/her placement does not meet your child's needs, please see the director.

## **HEALTH**

Children will be observed for any signs of communicable disease each morning and throughout the day. These signs include:

1. Fever
2. Vomiting or diarrhea
3. A bronchial or deep chest cough
4. Swollen glands
5. Unexplained rash or skin eruptions
6. Any sign that something is wrong
7. Pink eye

Should any of the symptoms be observed, the parents will be contacted, and the child should be picked up immediately. If any of these symptoms exist before school, please keep your child at home. Medications will not be given to your child or sunscreen applied by a Day School staff member. Topical applications of diaper cream or lotion can be administered by a teacher if we have a permission form on file along with the cream in its original container, which should be left at school. If a child suffers from a severe condition such as asthma, severe allergies, diabetes, etc., a note must be provided from the child's doctor and the child's parents must see the director for an emergency care plan. Please see the attached wellness policy for further details.

Forest Hills United Methodist Church Day School is part of the Gold Sneaker Initiative which was developed to enhance policy related to health and wellness within licensed child care facilities across Tennessee. More information can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/health/goldsneaker.html>

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

We use a positive approach to discipline by directing children toward age-appropriate behavior. Teachers help the children to develop self-discipline by:

- Using positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior choices

- Modeling appropriate language
- Redirecting the child
- Using patience, love and understanding
- Setting clearly defined limits
- Talking about acceptable ways of handling situations as they arise
- Understanding their feelings and expressing how they feel

We aim to help children develop a sense of self-regulation, independence, confidence, and competence in their own abilities to negotiate with peers.

There are instances when a child may need to be removed from the group to ensure the safety and/or comfort of themselves and others. This is not a “time out” or punishment but rather a short time alone and is viewed positively as a time of renewal and calming oneself.

We work to find a solution to problems, grow compassion, help others and build respect for nature and our materials. We encourage the children to look for solutions to problems, helping them recognize how their behavior affects others and discover appropriate alternatives. In guiding children’s behavior, we emphasize positive reinforcement, to name and verbalize feelings and actions. We feel these help young children to develop and internalize control of their behavior.

The Day School staff will contact the parents in the case that the approaches above are not helping to guide an improvement in behavior or if we see an opportunity to partner with the parents on reinforcing positive behavior at home.

### **BITING POLICY**

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

However, we are here to protect all children, and the safety of our children is our primary concern. Therefore, when biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to remove the child who was biting from the situation.

From there, we will follow these steps to handle the child who was biting:

1. The teacher will have the child that bit get the ice pack or wet paper towel to help the child that was bitten. The teacher will have the child use an appropriate apology (example: hug if non-verbal or say sorry if the child can talk)
2. The parent will be notified of the biting incident and will be expected to begin their own research on how to help their child and assist them in how to use appropriate behavior.
3. If biting occurs (or the child is stopped from biting) 3 or more times in one day, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the biting child. The child may return the following day.
4. If the behavior continues and the child continues to be sent home, the parent will pay for a sub to come in and watch their child since someone will have to shadow that child all day to keep him/her from biting another child.
5. If nothing changes and the biting can not be stopped, the Day School Director will have the right to ask the child to stay home until they have outgrown their biting stage in order to protect the other children.

### **SHARING**

Please do not bring toys to school. Only Lovies if your child needs one for napping. A child may bring a book, nature project, or something of interest to share at certain times, but only as designated by his or her teacher.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at school, we ask that you keep it simple. Please consult with your child's teacher. She can provide birthday directions suited for their age group, class schedule and diet/allergy restrictions.

### **HOLIDAYS & CLASS PARTIES**

We celebrate many Christian and secular holidays throughout the year. They are handled differently in each classroom. Each teacher determines what will work in their classroom, keeping in mind the developmental and special needs of their class.

### **CHILDREN'S WORK**

Children's creative art or craft work usually represents a serious effort on the child's part, and it is important to treat it as such. The child will experience many materials and media through activities. We encourage, but do not stress, the finished product. Emphasis is placed on the process rather than the product. Part of the educational experience is the child's satisfaction and pride he/she shares with the family.



## **PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND HOLIDAYS**

Our program runs August through May. We generally follow school closings for holidays and breaks listed by Williamson County School System. Any other closings will be announced in the monthly newsletters, by emails, text and/or the Brightwheel notification. The full year schedule will be provided in August.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS**

Forest Hills United Methodist Day School will be closed for inclement weather and other unexpected events according to the Williamson County School System. This includes closings, early departures and late starts. For example, if Williamson County schools open two hours late, the day school will open two hours late. If Williamson County Schools close two hours early, the day school will close at 12:00 p.m.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

If a child is receiving services for cognitive, emotional and physical abilities (such as speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavioral intervention, etc.) a meeting with the parents and specialists is required at the beginning of the school year. Ongoing communication between the specialist and the child's teacher will be required, so that we can assure that best practices are in place to meet the child's individual needs.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

Each child age two and older will be developmentally assessed twice each year by his/her teacher. The assessments are based on the age appropriate curriculum based on the TN-ELDS (Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards). The standards assist in recognizing the developmental level and milestones for each child. The focus standards for the month will accompany the monthly calendar. Conferences will take place in the fall and spring, but you are welcome to meet with your child's teachers at any time during the year.

## **ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

The parent will be notified immediately in case of an accident. If the parent cannot be reached, a decision will be made based on the circumstances and the seriousness of the situation which may include any of the following:

1. Contact the person listed as the emergency contact.
2. Call the doctor listed on the emergency information form.
3. Take the child to the hospital/call 911 for an ambulance.

Parents will accept full financial responsibility for any services needed. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the emergency information on file current with updated names, phone numbers and addresses.

## **FIRST AID**

Supplies are kept in first aid kits for simple cuts, scrapes and abrasions. In the event of an accident that does not require a phone call, an incident report will be completed in Brightwheel explaining how the accident happened and what action was taken.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We do our best to communicate through a variety of communication methods such as email and Brightwheel. The school monthly newsletter will keep you informed of upcoming events, announcements and special reminders. Each individual class also sends a monthly newsletter, a monthly calendar that references the skills and activities based on the state standards known as the TN-ELDS (Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards).

## **CLOTHING**

Your child will need an extra set of clothing. These can be kept at school in cubby or child's backpack. Put in a gallon baggie and clearly label it with the child's name. Each teacher has a plan in effect and will share with you. Your child's name should be printed on each article of clothing that is brought to school each day. This includes hats, coats, gloves, etc. Outdoor play is an important part of our program. Please see that your child is suitably dressed to play outside.

## **NAP TIME**

For children ages 3 and up: Nap time is at the teacher's discretion. If the children do not nap, they will have a "quiet time" where they will have quiet activities in a designated area.

For Doves, Chickadees, Parakeets, and Toucans: Nap time will take place daily. A nap mat (over 12 months) or crib (under 12 months) with age-appropriate bedding will be provided by the school. Safe Sleep practices are used in our Doves class. Therefore, blankets, stuffed animals, bumpers etc. are not permitted in the cribs. One-piece footed sleepers or sleep sacks are acceptable.

## **FOOD**

One snack is provided for your child daily if they stay for Stay and Play. Your child needs to bring a nutritious lunch that includes protein, bread, fruit and a vegetable. All food should be in ready to eat form: apple slices, quartered grapes, etc. Lunch boxes, cups, bottles, pacifiers, etc. should be labeled with your child's name. Please do not

send glass containers, flip top metal cans or soda in any type of container. Soda, nuts, popcorn, and any type of candy will be discarded. We recommend you use a multi-compartment lunch container instead of several small containers.

#### **A NOTE OF THANKS**

**Thank you for allowing us to participate in the early development of your child. It is an honor to share in this precious time of your child's life and we look forward to the coming school year!**

## **Policy Agreement 2022-2023**

Forest Hills United Methodist Church Day School, 1250 Old Hickory Blvd, Brentwood, TN 37027, Phone 615-373-1728 hereafter referred to as the school, is a child care facility operated by Forest Hills United Methodist Church. The school is licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services, pursuant to the Section 8 of Chapter 370 of the Public Acts of 1975.

### **A. Basic Services**

The school shall provide the following basic services:

1. Childcare between 9am-2pm. Children are not to be left at the school before 9am (unless attending Rise and Shine).
2. The child shall be given assistance with personal care as needed.
3. The child shall be placed in a group of peers based on age and/or special needs as determined by the director and staff.
4. The child shall be involved in a program of play and learning experiences which are appropriate for the ages of children enrolled in the school. A balance of active and quiet play is provided, with individual and group activities planned to provide for the young child's emotional, social, academic, physical, spiritual, and cognitive development.
5. Upon arrival in the classroom, the teacher will assess the child's wellness, and the school shall assume responsibility for the child after it is determined that the child is healthy enough to attend school. The teacher will be responsible until the child is released to a parent, guardian, or designated representative of the child's parents or guardians. Parents, guardians, or designated representatives must sign children in and out.
6. The school shall give appropriate first aid to a hurt child. The school shall use its best judgment in dealing with an emergency situation and shall not be liable. Parents will be notified if a child is hurt or injured. An accident report will be filled out in Brightwheel.
7. A sick child shall be isolated and given appropriate care until a parent, guardian, or representative can come get the child.
8. The school shall notify children's parents or guardians of a suspected exposure to a communicable disease.
9. The school shall make every effort to safeguard personal belongings brought by the child, but shall not be responsible for lost or broken items.

10. Discipline shall be dealt with by using redirection, conflict resolution, and time for the child(ren) to reflect on the choice he/she made. If aggressive and inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to biting and hitting, continues to be an issue, parents shall be notified and a conference will occur. If after two conferences, the problem cannot be resolved, it is the school director's discretion whether to dismiss the child from the program.
11. The director or any other staff members shall report to Child Protective Services or the Police Department, as required by the State Penal Code, any suspicion of child abuse, sexual or otherwise, neglect, or endangerment of which they become aware.
12. Services will be provided to all persons without regard to race, color, or national origin.

## **B. Payment Provisions**

1. In accordance with the statement of fees in the parents' handbook:
  - a. A non-refundable registration fee shall be paid upon enrollment.
  - b. Tuition shall be auto drafted through Brightwheel during the first 3 days of the month. A \$25 late fee will be added to any delinquent account beyond the tenth of the month.
  - c. The non-refundable August installment and supply fee are due June 1.
  - d. No credit shall be given for days the school is officially closed. Tuition is the same for each month.

## **C. Obligation of Parents or Guardian**

1. A parent or guardian shall furnish requested forms and records on the first day of school.
2. A parent or guardian, or designated representative shall drop off their child upon arrival through the drop off line. Children will be dismissed in the same line as they used for arrival. If you have more than one child at two different drop off lines you will need to go through each line.
3. The parents or guardians shall notify the office when someone other than those named on the emergency information sheet shall be picking up a child. This person must show a photo ID in order for the child's release.
4. Parents shall be responsible for signing the child into his/her classroom each morning upon arrival. Parents shall inform someone in the office if picking up a child early.
5. Parents or guardians shall provide the child a nutritious lunch, as described in the Handbook. Milk will be provided by the school with lunch. A snack will be provided by the school to all children staying for extended care (Stay & Play).

6. The Day School will provide a sheet and blanket for children to use for naptime. Parents may send a special blanket for a child if he/she needs it to sleep. If parents supply the blanket, we ask that it be laundered regularly.
7. Parents or guardians shall see that the child is dressed appropriately when brought to school.
8. Parents or guardians shall notify the school of a child's possible communicable disease.
9. Parents or guardians shall notify the school when a child is absent.
10. Parents or guardians shall give 30 days notice or forfeit 30 days tuition fees in case of withdrawal from the program. Attendance for any portion of the month will require payment of the full month's tuition.
11. Parents or guardians are responsible for additional fees for late pick up. If parents are late, children will NOT be taken to Stay and Play. After a one time grace opportunity is used, there will be a charge of \$1 per minute for the second offense, and \$2 per minute for the third offense, and \$3 per minute for any following offenses, with a max of \$25 per day.
12. Parents or guardians shall respect the Christian nature of our program.
13. Parents or guardians shall refrain from reprimanding children of other families while on the school's premises.
14. Parents or guardians shall see that the child is potty trained by the age of three.
15. Parents or guardians shall send the child to school only when healthy. Parents are obligated to communicate any health issues with teachers and/or staff. Please see attached wellness policy for details.

#### **D. Termination of Agreement**

1. This Agreement shall be terminated if any one or more of the following occur:
  - a. The school year comes to an end.
  - b. Serious illness or death of the child.
  - c. Parents or guardians allow account to become delinquent.
  - d. Failure of the parents or guardians to honor the obligations listed in this agreement or any rules, regulations, or manuals provided by the school.
  - e. The school determines that it is unable to meet the needs of the child.
  - f. The school determines that it is unable to meet the special requests of the parents.
  - g. The school determines that it is in the best interest of other children or the school to terminate this agreement.
2. Procedure
  - a. In exercising its discretion, the school may require the child and/or the child's parents or guardians to attend conferences with the director and

appropriate staff that potentially warrant termination of the agreement. The child's parents or guardians may request a conference with the school regarding matters that potentially warrant termination, but the school shall have no obligation to grant such a request. The school's director or staff shall have the sole right and responsibility to determine any disputed factual matters regarding termination of the agreement.

#### **E. Modification Clause**

This agreement may be modified whenever any of the circumstances covered by this agreement change. Such modifications may only be made in writing. Oral modifications are not binding under this agreement and shall not be enforceable under any condition.

#### **F. Other**

This provides that the parties to this agreement are aware of the State Department of Human Services right to interview the child and the school staff, and to inspect and audit all records maintained by the school, without securing prior consent of anyone. The parties are also aware of the licensing agency's right to observe the physical condition of the child, including conditions indicating abuse or neglect and to have a licensed medical doctor examine the child. The Department of Human Services requires that the school provide personal safety training to all students ages 3 and older. The Department of Human Services provides the curriculum for the teachers to incorporate into their lesson plans.

The school shall provide a copy of the State Department of Human Services Licensing Rules to the parents or guardian(s).