



UNIVERSITY
CHRISTIAN
WEEKDAY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2720 S. University Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

Direct School Phone: (817)926-3960

A Mission of Growth

University Christian Church, through the Weekday School, promotes a partnership of growth for students, parents and staff. Our mission is to help meet students' needs for individual and social growth amidst a nurturing learning environment.

Philosophy

Our educational philosophy is to help young children become lifelong, enthusiastic learners. This philosophy, based on the sound research principles that undergird the premium preschool programs in the nation, is guided by the criteria for optimum learning environments as established by NAEYC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Within a framework of knowledge of developmental stages of students ages 0-5 years, we provide activities in all major areas of learning. Lesson plans and activities are based on the importance of the whole child.

A Program of Excellence

- *Founded in 1967*
- *Serving Ages 8 weeks through Transitional Kindergarten*
- *Classes available Monday through Friday mornings from 9:00-12:00. Students may attend from 1 to 5 mornings per week, depending on age.*
- *School-year based program (August-May)*
- *Enrichment programs available before (Early Birds, 8:00-9:00) and after school (Discovery Time, 12:00-2:30) in select classrooms*
- *Highly trained professional staff with active CPR and First Aid certifications*
- *Outstanding Teacher/Student ratio*
- *Mayfield Resource Center: The Mayfield Resource Center is a point of pride and excellence at UCC Weekday School. It houses more than 3,000 children's books, as well as a wide selection (3,100) of teaching aids. This includes items for problem solving, math, science, dramatic play, puzzles, games, audio/visual aids, and large motor equipment.*
- *Experiential, developmentally appropriate Learning*
- *Extracurricular programs such as: Musikgarten, TCU Nutrition, Stretch and Grow, Weekday School Community Garden*
- *Environment of love, nurture, fun and happiness*

Curriculum

Curriculum at Weekday School follows developmentally appropriate practices for early childhood education. The HighScope Preschool Curriculum is research based and guides instruction. Supplemental instruction is provided by use of Handwriting Without Tears in the 3's, 4's and Kindergarten classrooms.

Individual teachers and teaching teams design their classrooms and lesson plans based on the framework established in these curricula guides. Our faculty combines activities and ideas from these sources to create the best of programs for their classes; programs that instill confidence while presenting daily opportunities for learning and discovery.

Our Goals

Social/Emotional

- To develop a sense of self-esteem
- To express feelings appropriately
- To exhibit a positive attitude toward learning
- To develop independence, express choices and solve problems
- To develop cooperative, pro-social behavior
- To learn to resolve social conflicts
- To develop responsibility and self-regulation

Intellectual

- To acquire concepts and information about the world
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To expand verbal communication skills
- To develop language arts concepts and skills
- To develop math and science concepts and skills
- To foster discovery, exploration and curiosity

Physical

- To enhance large motor skills
- To enhance fine motor skills
- To develop the use of all senses as modes of learning
- To promote healthy physical development and nutritional habits

Spiritual

- To establish a loving Christian atmosphere
- To present Christian holidays and events in developmentally appropriate ways
- To nurture respect for diversity, inclusion and acceptance
- To strengthen character development through example and guidance
- To provide support for the whole family in their spiritual journey

Important Information

Days and Hours of Operation

Weekday School operates on a school year schedule. The school year calendar is posted on the school website. All students should be brought to their classrooms by an adult at the beginning of the school day, signed in and picked up promptly at dismissal time. All students must be signed out each day with time of departure and authorized adult's initials. Students must be picked up by an adult and will not be allowed to go to the classrooms unattended. Please be prompt in your arrival and departure. Students not enrolled in Early Birds may not be dropped off until 9:00.

If, in an emergency, you will not be on time, please have an adult whose name is on file in the office, pick up your child from the school office. A late fee of \$5.00 per minute will be charged. Habitual lateness may result in additional fees or withdrawal from the program and/or Discovery Time.

Early Birds:	8:00-9:00
Classes:	9:00-12:00
Discovery Time:	12:00-2:30

Tuition

To secure enrollment, September tuition and each child's activity fee are due in the spring by the date set by the school. Tuition is nonrefundable and a 30-day written notice is required for withdrawal.

Tuition is due and payable on the first day of each month. After the 5th day of the month, a late fee of \$30 will be charged. If tuition has not been paid in full by the 15th day of the month, WDS reserves the right to drop the student from the rolls and replace them with another child. Any problems regarding payment of fees may be discussed with the WDS Director.

Tuition will be paid online via the school website.

Safety and Security

It is a primary goal of WDS to ensure the safety of students and staff. Exterior doors to the building are locked at all times. Key fobs or the intercom system must be used to access the building. All doors to the WDS will be locked at all times. Parents may use their fobs to access the school hallways at the following times: 7:45-9:05, 11:45-12:05, 2:15-2:35. Access to the area outside of those times will be given via the buzzer and intercom at the door and with confirmation of identity. All visitors and volunteers must check in at the WDS offices.

All students must be signed in and out of the school, and time recorded, by those authorized by the family. As with all child-care centers in Texas, the 1,000 feet surrounding the school is considered a gang-free zone. Children must be with an adult at all times and must not be allowed to run ahead of parents.

Attendance

It is important for enrolled students to attend regularly. Children are most successful at school when they are present on a regular basis. If your child will be absent, please notify their teacher via Kaymbu or call the school office.

Enrollment

In January, enrollment privileges for the next year will be given to:

- Children currently enrolled at Weekday School
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Children of UCC members
 - In the crib class only, church members receive enrollment priority over current students' siblings

Enrollment for existing students for the next school year is secured upon receipt of completed enrollment forms and payment of enrollment fee.

Families on the interested list will be contacted if openings are available at the child's age level. If an interested list is exhausted, enrollment will be open to families new to Weekday School.

In the event of lack of space, students will be accepted in the order listed above. During the registration process, church members have priority above the general waiting lists in all age levels.

In order to participate in enrollment, families must be current in their financial obligations to the school. Following the open registration period, classes will be filled from the interested list.

Students will be assigned to a class within their age group according to class days, age, and gender.

List of Interested Families

Families will be placed on the interested list, once requested, after touring the school. The school may use discretion when enrolling children from this list based upon date of birth, classroom dynamics and other factors.

In House Wait List

If a student currently enrolled in the program desires a different schedule, the parent may request to be placed on the in house waitlist in the case an opening occurs. The refusal to accept an opening will not forfeit the child's place on the list.

Assessment of Students

WDS uses a variety of assessment methods that are sensitive to and informed by family culture, experiences, children's abilities, and home language. Assessments obtain information on all areas of children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health and physical development (including self-help skills). An ongoing assessment portfolio based on the High Scope curriculum is completed for each child cribs through 4's, based on teacher observation. Kindergarten students will receive skill based report cards.

School Closings

University Christian Church and Weekday School leadership take the decision to cancel or delay classes seriously. A decision will be made as early as possible when inclement weather occurs and communicated via Kaymbu. There will be no tuition or schedule adjustments.

Cancellation of Enrollment

If, in the judgment of the leadership of the Weekday School, a child is not ready for the school setting, the school reserves the right to implement cancellation of enrollment. In this event, any unused tuition would be refunded.

If, for other reasons, a child is withdrawn by the parents, the school will require one month's written notice (given or emailed to the office) and full payment for that month.

Policy Changes

Any major change (hours of operation, numbers/ages of students in care, tuition increases) in WDS policies will be approved by the WDS Parent Advisory Board. Notification of changes will be communicated to families.

Questions or Concerns

Any questions or concerns related to the program or a specific child's experience at school can be discussed with their teacher. If further consultation is needed, please contact the director.

Active Play

All students at Weekday School will have the opportunity for a minimum of twenty minutes of outdoor play daily between 9:00 and 12:00. Children enrolled in Discovery Time will be scheduled for an additional twenty minutes between 12:00 and 2:30. Movement is also incorporated in MusicGarten, Stretch and Grow and Circle Time instruction. The three playgrounds at the school allow for running, pedaling, digging, pushing climbing, bouncing balls, jumping, etc. aimed to increase gross motor development. The school will use Child Care Weather Watch to guide decisions on outdoor play in case of inclement weather. Classes will move to designated indoor areas for active play if the weather warrants a change.

General Guidelines and Policies

Age/Ratio Requirements

UCC WDS serves children 8 weeks through kindergarten. To be eligible for enrollment in each class, the child must be the specified age on or before September 1st of the school year. Adjustments in the number of classes available per age group may occur due to demand.

Cribs	2 teachers/6 students
Ones	1 teacher/5 students
Twos	1 teacher/6 students
Threes	2 teachers/15 students or 1 teacher/7 students
Fours	2 teachers/16 students
K	2 teachers/18 students

Advertising/Use of Cubbies

Information concerning products, sales or events may be posted on the bulletin board by the WDS offices designated for Parent Information. "Parent-to-Parent" bulletin boards are located outside both WDS offices.

Birthdays

Please consult with your child's teacher regarding appropriate recognition of your child's birthday. Cribs and One's classes do not share edible treats due to their young age. Any food that is sent **must be store bought** (Fort Worth Health Department requirement) and will be shared by the class during lunch. Parents may use WDS cubbies to distribute party invitations only when every child in the class is being invited.

Clothing

Students should be dressed comfortably for messy, active play. Tennis shoes are recommended. All outdoor clothing must be clearly marked with the child's name. The school is not responsible for lost/damaged clothing. Please dress students who are not toilet trained in clothing that will easily accommodate diaper changing. Students who are using the restroom independently should be able to pull up/down clothing with little assistance. Families must provide extra clothes in case of an accident.

Conferences, Orientation and School Visits

Parents of all students will be asked to attend one or two scheduled parent conferences during the school year, depending on the age level of their child.

Conference days are included with the school calendar. Informal discussions of your student's progress may be requested at any time during the year that is convenient for both parent and teacher. *It is school policy not to discuss concerns about children at the classroom door in front of the students and/or other parents. Teachers may only speak to a parent regarding their own*

child. Teachers will send notes home and communicate via Kaymbu. Books, materials and guidance are available through the director.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. Volunteer opportunities are also available for parents.

Communication

Parents can expect the following regular communications:

- Monthly schoolwide newsletters via email
- Monthly classroom newsletter and calendar
- Weekly classroom lesson plan
- Daily note for Cribs-4's
- Phone calls from office due to illness, injury or other time sensitive matters

Discipline and Guidance

Discipline is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding and directed toward teaching the child positive behavior and self-control.

Teachers may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior
- Reminding a child of behavioral expectations daily by using clear, positive statements

WDS faculty and staff are trained in problem solving and have age-appropriate expectations and guidance techniques. There will be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishment and no child shall ever receive corporal punishment. If very difficult behavior occurs where the child does not respond to redirection, a brief, supervised separation from the group may be used either in or outside the classroom. Should further guidance be necessary, parents may be asked to pick up the child from school. On rare occasions, the director reserves the right to counsel with parents and possibly remove the child from WDS either temporarily or permanently. Weekday School staff want to partner with families to create a positive school experience for all children.

Early Birds/Discovery Time

The enrichment programs offered before and after school are optional programs available to students enrolled in WDS. They are available only on the days that the student attends school and in select classrooms. Enrollment in Early Birds and/or Discovery Time is noted on the child's enrollment form for the school year. A full description of this program, policies and fees are available in the WDS office.

Equal Opportunity

Weekday School admits students and hires staff of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin, and religious belief.

Emergency Procedures

Fire drills are practiced monthly in each classroom. Severe weather drills are practiced every 3 months. Escape routes are posted in the classrooms. School lockdown drills, named “Red Bird”, are practiced at least 4 times annually.

In the event of emergency sirens or tornado alert, children will be moved to a lower, more secure level of the church in the hallways on the east side of the school and the area leading to basement storage areas. Should an emergency requiring evacuation occur, children will be moved to Ed Landreth Auditorium at TCU or the UCC Children’s Closet Building.

Field Trips

UCC Weekday School will not transport children to take field trips. The Kindergarten classroom may arrange off campus activities, for which parents will be responsible for arranging and providing transportation for their own child.

Illness/Accidents

If, in the opinion of the director or assistant director, a child appears ill, and cannot fully participate in their regular routine, the child’s parents will be notified to take the child home. The child will be cared for in the office until their parent arrives. ***Any child with vomiting, diarrhea, an undiagnosed rash, or fever over 99.5 will be sent home.*** Children should be free of fever for at least 24 hours, without the aid of medication, before returning to school. In cases of a communicable disease being suspected, parents will be notified in writing. The school reserves the right to request a note from the child’s physician releasing them to return to school, in certain cases.

All communicable diseases, including COVID-19, chicken pox, measles, mumps, hepatitis, meningitis, etc., must be reported to the Director so the school can, in turn, make a report to other parents and the Health Department.

In case of a critical illness or injury while the child is at school, the physicians named by the parents on the “Emergency Medical Treatment” form will be called if the parents cannot be reached immediately. If necessary, the child shall be taken to the emergency room used by the specified doctor(s). Accident reports are on file in the office; and parents are notified of any serious injury, with signature required. Minor incidents will be reported via a teacher note, with no signature required.

Any child with a diagnosed food allergy must have a completed FARE (Food Allergy Research Education) form on file and all elements of allergy plan present at school to attend.

Each child must have a current Health Form and immunization record on file. This form must be on file for every child. Specific requests for non-compliance with this requirement must be obtained from the Director at her discretion. For the Health Form to be valid, it must:

- a. show the child has had a physical exam within the last year, and be signed by the child's physician
- b. show proof that children ages 4 years old and older have had vision and hearing screening (by a qualified examiner).

Lunch and Snacks

Children will bring from home a lunch and water bottle each day. Parents need to be responsible for seeing that foods needing refrigeration are properly bagged and placed in appropriate containers. A cold pack, marked with the child's name, needs to be put in each child's lunch box. Any lunch not eaten will be left in the lunch box to be taken home.

Lunchtime is an important part of our school day. We use this time with students to encourage self-sufficiency and social skills.

Guidelines for lunch items for specific age levels are provided within our licensing standards and will be provided by teachers before school begins.

A notification of any classroom food restrictions due to medically diagnosed allergies will be communicated in writing to the families in the applicable classroom.

Medication

If you have given your child any medication before coming to school, please inform the school office.

Any medication required to be administered during the school day must be approved by the office. Licensing requires:

- a. prescription medicine to be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, date, directions, and physician's name
- b. nonprescription medicine labeled with the child's name and date brought to school must be in the original container.
- c. under no circumstances, send medicine to school in student's backpack or lunch box
- d. record of medicine administration is kept in the office
- e. any medications to be current (not expired)

Sunscreen and insect repellent must be provided and applied by parents before sending their child to school, if desired.

Parents of infants must mark diaper bags and each item in the bag with the child's name. This is especially important since many children bring items that are identical. We must insist on this requirement being followed in order to avoid giving your baby the wrong food or bottle. Our license requires parents to fill out and keep up-to-date from month to month a "Feeding Instruction" sheet, until the child is able to eat table food. All families have the right to breastfeed. A comfortable space will be provided for breastfeeding at the school, upon request.

Naptime and Sleep

Infants through three years olds all are offered the opportunity to sleep around 12:15, if they stay for Discovery Time. A sanitized nap mat with a clean sheet is provided for children sleeping outside of a crib. Infants are able to sleep, as needed, during the 8:00-12:00 hours. Parents of infants must sign the Safe Sleep form required by licensing. Infants must be laid down on their backs without swaddles, blankets or other loose items on a firm mattress with a clean, fitted sheet. Infants may not sleep in restrictive devices such as a swing or car seat.

Parent Liaison and Volunteer Information

The UCC WDS has an active, strong Weekday School Parent Advisory Board. All board members' names and titles are listed on the website and posted in the school hallway. The board members are available to give information about volunteer opportunities and collect suggestions for school improvements.

The school has many jobs to be done. Please see the Parent Liaison to let us know how you would like to help.

Parent Resources

The WDS has several resources available to parents. Parenting workshops may be offered throughout the school year. The Weekday School director and ministerial staff of University Christian Church are available to help families with needs or concerns.

Pets, Books and Toys

Unless otherwise requested or approved by the teacher, toys and books from home are not allowed in the classroom. There may be opportunities for students to bring and share their favorite toys, but even at those times toy guns or weapons will not be allowed in any classroom. Parents are notified in advance of the presence of a classroom pet.

Pets from home are not allowed to visit WDS.

Prevention and Reporting of Suspected Abuse and/or Neglect

All Weekday School staff are trained annually in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children and creating awareness of warning and factors indicating a child may be at risk. All suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services. Any parent or family member who suspects abuse or neglect of a child should call the hotline listed at the end of this document.

Release Policies

Children may be released only to persons authorized in writing on the enrollment form filed in the WDS office. The Weekday School Office must be notified in writing of any change in individuals authorized to drop off or pick up a student. Persons who pick up children will be asked to show a picture I.D. to verify their identity. Any last minute change in pick-up arrangements done by telephone must be authorized by the WDS director or staff. Children must be signed in and out daily by an adult with time recorded. In the case of non-custodial parents, a copy of custody and visitation papers must be on file in the WDS office.

Referrals

Weekday School may, at the request of staff or parents, refer a child to other programs for evaluation for assistance in maintaining the child's current placement in WDS or enrollment eligibility for specialized programming.

When professional referrals appear to be needed in the judgement of the school staff, the child's teacher and/or the director will meet with parents for a conference. The director will provide appropriate resources for the family, as possible. Written consent will be required from the family before any information is shared with providers, agencies or other programs. The school reserves the right to require families seek outside support for their child to be enrolled if assistance is needed for the child to be successful at school.

If special needs are identified, the school will work alongside the family to create a support plan for the child if they are to remain at Weekday School. That plan will only be shared with individuals who directly work with that child and will remain in a confidential file.

If it is appropriate for services to be provided in the school setting, Weekday School will make every attempt to facilitate in that process.

Release of School Records and Confidentiality

WDS will release records to other schools requesting information with the written authorization of the parent. WDS maintains complete confidentiality concerning students' school activities and records. The school will comply with requests from Child Protective Services. The school will consult our legal advisor in the case of a subpoena for student records.

Special Needs

As a non-profit, religious organization, University Christian Church Weekday School does not possess the resources, financial or otherwise, which would enable it to provide special education services. However, the school may attempt to work with individual families on special needs issues. If the school endeavors to accommodate a family with special needs, it must be understood that there are limits to both financial and logistical provisions that the school can offer. The school will examine any situation on a case-by-case basis.

Any attempt by the school to work with a family with special needs shall not be interpreted as a warranty that the assistance may continue indefinitely.

Student Teachers/Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome at WDS but must be approved by the director. Volunteers and student teachers must sign in and out in the WDS office and present proper identification. Any volunteers are required to follow WDS staff policies for classroom practices and must pass a background check. WDS reserves the right to dismiss student teachers and volunteers if practices are not followed. Volunteers are never left alone with children.

Toilet Training

All students 3 years and older are encouraged to be toilet trained. Children in 4's and Kindergarten classrooms should be completely independent in using the restroom at school. Children in 3's classrooms should be ready to use the restroom with little assistance when they begin the school year. If a 3 year old is not potty trained before school begins, parents must communicate this to the child's teacher in advance of the first day of school. If a child in a 4's classroom or Kindergarten has a restroom accident, their parent will be called to come to the school if they require assistance.

Transportation and Parking

Each family will provide transportation for their child(ren). The lots adjacent to the church building and Lot C are designated for families. Please do not park under the porte cochere.

Weekday School Board

The board of the WDS acts with limited administrative powers and advisory powers in order to aid in accomplishing the school's purpose, as stated in the bylaws. The bylaws guide all policies concerning the constituency of the board, terms, qualifications, voting members, etc. The bylaws shall serve as the policy guide for all board actions, and may be amended by the procedures found in said bylaws. Copies of the board bylaws are available in the WDS offices.

Parent Review of Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers

The Weekday School office has a copy of Minimum Standards and the school's most recent licensing and inspection reports available for parent inspection, upon request.

Parents may contact the local licensing office, the CPS child abuse hotline, and the Texas Health and Human Services website for information or questions concerning this program or for general licensing information.

Local licensing information: 817-321-8604

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Health and Human Services: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>