

UNITED FAITH

Christian Preschool



Parent Handbook

2023-2024

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for your interest in United Faith Christian Preschool.

My name is Christine LaFrancois, and I have the awesome privilege of directing this program. I am a children's religious instructor and early childhood educator with over 18 years of experience in weekly ministry and weekday preschool programs.

The 2023-2024 year is being planned for your preschooler, and we hope your child will be a part of it. Please take the time to read through this information handbook. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via email at Christine.LaFrancois@ufca.org or through the United Faith Christian Academy office at 704 541-1742 ext. 410. You can also read more about United Faith Christian Academy at www.ufca.org.

Thank you again for considering United Faith Christian Preschool as your choice for your child's preschool experience in preparation for elementary school. The preschool staff considers it both a privilege and blessing to love and nurture children through our weekday preschool program.

Welcome to ***United Faith Christian Preschool.***

Serving Him,

Christine LaFrancois

Christine LaFrancois
Preschool Director
704-541-1742 ext. 410
christine.lafrancois@ufca.org

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MISSION STATEMENT

United Faith Christian Academy and Preschool are committed to impact the world for Christ by developing and educating hearts, souls, minds and bodies through the passionate teaching of a Christ-centered curriculum in a Christ-centered environment.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

While children are in our care, they will experience a safe environment where God's goodness is freely shared and His world which surrounds us is explored. It is the hope of our staff that children will feel safe, loved and secure as opportunities are provided for them to grow spiritually, emotionally, socially and intellectually.

Our commitment to you is to equip our preschool with a staff that will not only teach your children, but love and nurture them at the same time. An age appropriate Christian curriculum, supplemented with other preschool resources, will be used at each age level with the goal of achieving kindergarten readiness in the 4-year-old program.

We consider children a sacred trust and will strive for excellence in every area of our preschool program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Preschool Address: 8617 Providence Rd, Charlotte, NC 28277

Phone Numbers: United Faith Christian Academy: 704-541-1742
Preschool office extension: 410

Academy Website: www.ufca.org

Facebook: United Faith Christian Academy (like us on FB)

Instagram: United Faith Christian

PROGRAMS, REGISTRATION, MONTHLY TUITION & FEES

Explorers Program: 2-3 years old

	<u>Half Day</u>	<u>Full Day</u>
2 Days (T &Th)	\$295	\$395
3 Days (M, W & F)	\$345	\$445
5 Days (M-F)	\$445	\$595

Adventurers Program: 3-4 years old

2 Days (T &Th)	NA	\$395
3 Days (M, W & F)	NA	\$445
5 Days (M-F)	NA	\$595

Navigators Program: 4-5 years old

5 Days (M-F)	NA	\$595
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PLEASE NOTE: Children entering the Adventurers, or Navigators programs MUST be completely potty trained before the first day of school.

Registration Process:

To secure a preschool position for your child, the following will need to be completed:

- Complete registration forms and pay enrollment fees through our website.
 - **New Families**
 1. Go to www.ufca.org
 2. Click on *Admissions*
 3. *Step 2 Click on Enrollment*
 - Click Apply to Academy or Preschool
 - Fill out online application
 - Step 2 Click here to pay [Enrollment Fee](#)
 - Preschool Enrollment Fee for new student
\$250 (Application fee \$190.00 + Supply fee \$60)
 - **Returning Families**

■ **Step 1: Sycamore**

Please update Re-enrollment information here: [Sycamore Portal](#)

Need assistance with Sycamore? Contact [Kim Eustaquio](#), Sycamore Administrator at kim.eustaquio@ufca.org or call 704-541-1742 x405.

■ **Step 2: Fee**

Please pay the re-enrollment fee by clicking here: [Preschool Re-enrollment Fee](#)

- ❖ Preschool Re-Enrollment Fee for returning students
\$225 (Application fee \$165.00 + Supply fee \$60)
- Registration fees are non-refundable.
- ❖ Once the online application is complete and fees are paid, you will receive an email from Preschool Admissions with the Application Contract to be signed and returned. Upon returning the signed document, you will receive an Acceptance Letter confirming a space has been reserved for the days and hours requested. Classroom assignments will be given two weeks before school starts.

Tuition Payments

- For your convenience, we offer an annual tuition payment plan broken into 10 equal payments. (Tuition rates listed on page 2 are the 10-month plan.)
- The 10-month payment plan starts with an August payment and ends with the May payment.
- The monthly tuition is a set amount each month regardless of the number of school days in that month.
- If you prefer to pay the entire annual tuition, a 3% discount will be applied, if paid by May 31.
- Monthly tuition is to be paid by automatic draft through a program called SMART.

Other Registration Information

- The United Faith Christian Preschool office handles registration and application fees.
- The United Faith Christian Academy business office handles tuition and late fees.
- Student placement is based on age requirements, balancing classes by gender, and creating the best possible classroom dynamics.
- Licensed and full-time clergy, full-time fire fighters, full-time police, full-time EMT and active military personnel receive a 10% discount.

Withdrawal Policy:

- If for any reason you need to withdraw your child from the preschool program, it is necessary to give written notice to the Director one month in advance. You will be responsible for this one-month tuition payment and \$150 withdrawal fee.
- A withdrawal fee of \$250 will be assessed for children withdrawn before August 1st.

Attendance

Our preschool days are planned in advance and each day builds on the day before. Therefore, regular attendance is important and highly encouraged. There are no tuition refunds for holidays, make-up days or absences.

- To ensure classes are staffed adequately and class sizes remain as per our staff to student ratio. We cannot accommodate children coming on days they are not scheduled. Children must come on assigned days of enrolled program.
- Switching programs is based on availability. If space is available and you would like to change program by adding days or reducing the amount of days, this must be done in writing to the Director.
- Tuition payments will be adjusted accordingly for days being added to program.
- If you choose to reduce the amount of days, you may do so at original program tuition rate. Please note this is to ensure proper staffing.

PRESCHOOL DAY / HOURS

Arrival

Each school day begins at 9:00 am. Carpool drop off begins promptly at 9:00 am and ends at 9:10 am. It is important to have your child to preschool on time. Arriving after class has begun will cause your child to miss opening activities and may cause him/her to feel uncomfortable coming in the classroom. Parents who arrive after 9:10 will have to park their cars, go up the large outside staircase and check in at the Academy office. After checking into the office, a preschool staff member will be called to come and take your child to class.

Dismissal Times

- Half day preschoolers:
 - 12:50-1:00 pm
 - At carpool line.
- Full day preschoolers:
 - 2:50-3:00 pm
 - At carpool line in front of school.

Please Note:

- All half day students must be picked up no later than 1:00 pm. Children picked up after 1:00 pm will be considered late and late fees will apply.
- All full day students must be picked up by 3:00 pm. Children picked up after 3:00 pm will be considered late and late fees will apply.

Late Pick-Up Policy

To encourage prompt child pick-up, a late fee will be assessed for any preschool child not picked up by their pick-up time. (1:00pm or 3:00 pm) The charge is \$1.00 per minute until 1:04/3:04 pm and then \$2.00 per minute starting at 1:05/3:05pm.

Late pickups are a problem on many levels. First and foremost, it is very difficult for children. Children become anxious and worried when they aren't picked up with their peers. They are afraid they have been forgotten. The purpose of this fee is not to gain additional income for the program, but to encourage promptness and to value the preschool staff's time. If you are unable to pick your child up on time, please call and let us know. Late fees will be reported once per month to the business office. These fees will then be billed to your account.

Before & After School Care:

Preschool children are not eligible to attend before or afterschool care.

Carpooling

If you are involved in a carpool, please include on your application and teacher/classroom reference card the names of people you approve to pick up your child.

** Occasionally you may need someone else who has not been previously approved to pick up your child. If this is the case, please send a written note to the teacher that day. This note should include the name and contact information of the person who will be picking up your child. For the safety of your child, a photo ID is required when they come to pick up the child. For emergencies and extenuating circumstances email your classroom teacher or call the Director.*

United Faith Preschool's Calendar

- We will follow United Faith Christian Academy's calendar regarding holidays and workdays.
- **Preschool Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, August 15, 2023.**
- **Our first day of preschool for the 2021-2022 preschool year will be Thursday, August 17, 2023.**
- School calendars will be distributed at the beginning of the preschool year.

Inclement Weather (closings and delays)

In the event of questionable weather, check the website at www.ufca.org, our Facebook page (United Faith Christian Academy) or on Instagram. (United Faith Christian). Do not assume that UFCA is closed/delayed because other schools are closed/delayed. You may also check one of the following: TV channel 9 WSOC, TV channel 3 WBTV, TV channel 36 WCNC and channel 46 Fox Charlotte. If UFCA is closed, the preschool is closed.

Health and Wellness Policy

Sick Policy

For the good health of our children, we cannot allow a sick child to attend class.

Sickness includes:

- Fever within 24 hours of attendance (greater than 100*)
- nausea and/or vomiting and/or diarrhea
- contagious illness/disease
- cold, cough and/or congestion
- thick mucus from the nose
- matted or runny eyes
- sore throat
- unidentified rash
- wounds that need care
- any other indication of illness
- head lice

Any of the above symptoms would be reason to keep your child home. If any of these are noted during the school day, you or your emergency contact will be notified to pick up your child.

Please keep your child home until he/she is free of symptoms/fever for 24 hours. All children placed on antibiotics should have 24 hours of treatment prior to returning to school. The preschool staff is not allowed to administer medications, ointments or lotions to your child.

If your child has a life-threatening allergy, please discuss this with the Preschool Director so that a Physician's directed emergency plan can be put in place before the preschool year begins.

Immunizations

United Faith Christian Academy and Preschool requires that all children be current on their immunizations, according to N.C. state law.

COVID-19

United Faith Christian Academy and Preschool follow the COVID guidelines and recommendations from the Department of Health.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

- A backpack (large enough for lunchbox, folder and a change of clothes)
- Lunchbox with a healthy lunch, beverage, napkin and utensils if needed.
- A reusable water bottle.
- A complete change of seasonally appropriate clothes. In addition, please include shoes, socks, underwear and a plastic bag to place dirty/wet clothes in.
- Communication Folder:
 - A Communication Folder will be provided on the first day of school
 - The Communication Folder will "live" in your child's backpack
 - Written communication between the parents and teachers will be sent in this folder
 - Please check your child's folder after every preschool day.

SEPARATION

Separation is a natural part of growing up. To make this transition to preschool as easy as possible, we suggest the following:

- Prepare your child by talking about school and what they will be doing ahead of time.
- Explain to your child that he/she is going to school to learn and play.
- Reassure your child that he/she will have fun and positive experiences.
- Attend our Open House before the first day of preschool.
- Most importantly: Leave quickly. This might be hard but is the best thing to do.

Note: Your child's teacher will be there to help you during this transition process. If your child has a blanket or "lovey" that would make this transition time easier, please discuss it with your child's teacher. This may be true, particularly for our youngest children, during the initial weeks of preschool.

Rest Time

If your child is in the full day program, there will be a rest time after lunch each day.

- Preschoolers get very tired after a morning full of fun and learning.
- Please send a rest mat, a fitted crib sheet and a cover. (blanket or sheet)
- Each weekend the washable items will be sent home to be laundered. Make sure to return them on the first preschool day of the next week.

FOOD AND SNACKS

Lunch

Please send your child's lunch in a lunchbox marked with his/her name. A healthy lunch is always encouraged. Lunch time is a very positive learning experience and prepares children for kindergarten.

Please pack everything that your child will need including drink, napkin and utensils. Disposable items are ideal for the preschool setting, but not mandatory. We are unable to refrigerate or warm food, so please plan accordingly.

For your convenience the Lunch Basket Café is available to our preschool children. You will find information regarding the Lunch Basket Café at www.ufca.org. Select the Parent Resources tab and then choose Lunch Menu.

Food Allergies

If there is a child in a classroom with a life-threatening allergy, special care will be taken. You will be notified if there are special restrictions in your child's classroom. (ie: nut free, etc.)

Snacks

Not all classrooms will have snack time. If your child does have a snack time, you will be notified. You will be required to send a small snack in your child's lunchbox or backpack.

Water Bottle

Please send a reusable water bottle each day. We encourage children to drink when thirsty throughout the day. We will refill the water bottle, if needed, during the day.

Birthday/Holiday Celebration Snacks

Your child's birthday is a special time in his/her life; therefore, we encourage you to celebrate your child's birthday with the preschool class. Please consider bringing a special snack on your child's birthday. If his/her birthday is in the summer, you might want to celebrate your child's ½ birthday with the class. Please notify your child's teacher a week in advance of your celebration intentions.

Holidays will be celebrated. Please consider volunteering to help with these special events. Look for "Volunteer Sign-Up Sheets" at Open House or at classroom doors.

***PLEASE NOTE:** For the safety of our kids, ALL celebration snacks should be pre-packaged.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

- ✓ Children should be dressed in clothing that is comfortable for playing on the classroom floor, in the gym or outside on the playground.
- ✓ Clothing should be easy for children to manage in the bathroom.
- ✓ During the preschool year, children will use glue, paint and other craft items that might spill on them. Children will get messy as they work and play. For these reasons please dress your child in play clothes and not good clothes.
- ✓ Children will go outside every day that weather permits. Please send children in appropriate outer wear for the temperature of the day.
- ✓ Tennis shoes are the preferred footwear. This is especially true for the playground and will prevent falls. Sandals and flip-flops collect playground mulch and are discouraged.
- ✓ Apply sunscreen to your child before coming to school on warm weather days to protect from sun damage. Staff will not be able to apply sunscreen.

SECURITY

- **Background Checks**
All employees and substitute staff are subjected to criminal background checks which include a search of the national sex offenders list.
- **Preschool Doors**
For security reasons, doors to the building remain locked during the day. If you need to enter the preschool, come through the main doors of United Faith Christian Academy. An Academy staff member will let you in. It is mandatory you report to the Academy office first. Office staff will let us know that you have arrived.

OUR DAY/SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Activities: Each day will be filled with fun and creative age-appropriate learning, along with recess and arts & crafts.

In addition, children will participate in a weekly music class, Spanish class, PE class, library and chapel time.

Field Trips: Because of North Carolina car seat laws for children under 5 years old, it is difficult to take children on field trips. In lieu of field trips, it is our desire to bring several “field trips” to the preschool campus during the school year.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

We will purposefully try to help you develop self-control and self-discipline in your child. We believe that positive guidance is better than negative reinforcement.

Corporal punishment, humiliations or yelling are not acceptable means of discipline in this program and will not be used.

In the case of inappropriate student behavior in the classroom, the teacher will follow these techniques of behavior management.

- ✓ Positive reinforcement
- ✓ Redirecting the child to a more appropriate behavior/activity
- ✓ Giving a verbal indication of the inappropriate behavior
- ✓ Withdrawal of privileges.
- ✓ A brief “time-out” in the classroom.
- ✓ Removal from the classroom for a brief time with the Director.
- ✓ Discussion with parents, if a problem becomes severe or is prolonged.
- ✓ Removal from the program, if serious misbehavior cannot be modified.

TOYS FROM HOME

- To avoid unnecessary classroom situations, toys should be left at home unless requested for “Show and Tell” days by the teacher. Children are possessive of their personal toys and sometimes it is difficult for them to share.
- On occasion books that enhance classroom learning may be requested from home.
- We ask that you talk with your child about leaving toys either in the car or at home before arriving at preschool. Please do not leave this to the teacher to enforce.

Classroom Visits and Conferences

Visits

During the preschool year there will be opportunities for you to visit. You may even be asked to come in to share, read or help with parties.

We ask that you **DO NOT** plan to visit your child’s classroom for the first 3-4 weeks of the school year. This will allow all our children time to settle in and adjust to their new routines and classroom situations.

Evaluations and Conferences

4-Year-Olds:

- All 4-year-olds will be evaluated for kindergarten readiness. The first evaluation will take place during the fall of the first semester. This is to get a baseline and see what areas need to be strengthened. If a conference is warranted, one will be set up.
- During the second semester of the preschool year, this same evaluation will be administered again. At this time, a brief conference will be scheduled to discuss the results.
- The evaluation includes:
 - Social and emotional development
 - Motor skills
 - Language arts
 - Recognition and comparison
 - Numbers
 - Self-expression
 - Spiritual concepts

3-Year-Olds:

- All 3-year-olds will be evaluated for their progress in the following areas during the second semester of the preschool year.
 - Social and emotional development
 - Personal skills
 - Motor skills
 - Readiness skills

2-Year-Olds:

• There will be no written evaluations in the 2-year-old classrooms. If you have any concerns about how your child is doing, please contact his/her teacher and set up a time to talk.

- After this evaluation is complete, the results will be sent home in the children's folders for your review. If a teacher feels a parent conference is needed, one will be requested. If you would like to have a conference and one is not requested, please speak with your child's teacher to arrange a meeting.

IN CLOSING

Each day will be filled with fun and creative activities for your child. Our Christian-based and supplemental curriculum will include:

- ✓ Stories and Lessons
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Arts and Crafts
- ✓ Bible Lesson
- ✓ Physical and Recreational Activities
- ✓ Kindergarten Readiness (age appropriate)

It is our desire to see your child grow physically, spiritually and emotionally. It will delight our hearts to see a happy, confident preschooler graduate from the preschool program ready and eager to learn in kindergarten. These are such formative years in your child's life, and we count it both a privilege and a pleasure to work together with you to help lay the foundation that you and your child will continue to build upon.

This parent handbook has one objective in mind...a fun, challenging, safe year for your child.

And finally, a Bible verse with your child in mind.

"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52

...may your child grow like Jesus.

Loving His Kids,

Christine LaFrancois

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Preschool Director
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