

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**

## **Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School**

**MD License #41817**

**246 Main Street**

**Reisterstown, Maryland 21136**

**443-546-0585**

**\*\*Please read this handbook in its entirety\*\***

### **Philosophy**

We are happy that you and your child have decided to be a part of our preschool program. We will help your child to develop a strong sense of self and positive feelings about school. Our goal is to help each child experience the joy of learning and the wonders of his or her world. Our program is a developmentally appropriate, language based integrated curriculum. We provide a loving, nurturing and child-centered environment. Since our preschool is set in a Christian environment, religious stories, songs, and prayers will be included in the curriculum.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Admissions to Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School are made without regard to race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, or gender.

### **School Hours**

Full Day 3's and 4's: 7:30am-5:30pm (Be sure to drop off by 8:15 am for breakfast)

Preschool: 9:00am-12:00pm. Doors open at 8:50am for half day drop off

Early Bird Dropoff: 7:30am

Stay and Play- afternoon drop in until 5:30 (\$50 per day) MUST have attended school in the morning

### **School Phone**

**443-546-0585**

### **School Personnel**

Ms. Kirstyn Hutchinson – Director/ 3's Teacher- [RUMNSDirector@hotmail.com](mailto:RUMNSDirector@hotmail.com)

Mrs. Lani Hoffmann – Registrar/ 4's Teacher- [RUMNS234@gmail.com](mailto:RUMNS234@gmail.com)

Mrs. Nicole Brennan-2's Teacher- [RUMNS2sTeacher@gmail.com](mailto:RUMNS2sTeacher@gmail.com)

Assistant teacher- Mrs. Jennifer Mangum

Classroom Aides- Mrs. Liliya Loginova, Mrs. Anna Cook, Mrs. Samantha Davis

### **Arrival/Departure**

**Please note that there is 1 drop-off and 1 pick-up permitted per day. You may not pick your child up and return later as this can change staffing requirements and put us out of compliance.**

**Children may not be dropped off for the day after 11:00am. After that, we are winding down for the school portion of the day and preparing for morning dismissal. Keep in mind we are a school with extended care. We are not daycare. Your child must come to school (9am-12pm) to take advantage of the afternoon portion of the day or the Stay and Play program.**

#### **ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

Families will wait in line at the playground door for drop off. Keep your child with you and do not allow them to run around. Line up on the driveway side of the shed. We have drop off at the door where you will sign your child in for the day. A teacher will be waiting to escort your child to the classroom. Door drop-off is much less stressful on the child and allows for a quicker adjustment time once inside.

Doors will be open from 8:50-9:00 am for drop off. CLASS STARTS AT 9AM and teachers will be in classrooms. Leaving the room to answer the door puts us out of compliance with childcare ratios. If your child is arriving late, please let us know in advance. **Children will only be admitted after 9 with a note from a doctor, dentist, or physical, mental health, or behavioral service provider.**

#### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Children may only go home with a parent or other designated person listed on the Emergency Information Card. If your child is to go home with someone other than those listed (such as a playdate), we are required to be notified in writing of the change. Your child's pick-up person must have a valid PHOTO ID to present at the door each time. No child will be released to any person under the age of 16. Please be sure they understand that it is not always the same person at the door for dismissal and it may be necessary to show your ID at any time.

Maryland licensing requires that all children be signed-in and signed-out every day. If your child is coming to school with carpool, grandparent, etc, please be sure to instruct them on drop off and dismissal procedures.

**PRESCHOOL Dismissal:** Please wait in line as at drop off. Start line at the door, and line up in the alley. Please be courteous and patient. Children will be called in the order of the pick-up person in line. Please be on time. Late fees will be assessed if someone is not there when the line is finished or 12pm, whichever is later. (See LATE POLICY) There is no need to ring the bell unless you are late. We will open the doors when the children and staff are in their assigned places.

Parents must park in the large main parking lot. Do not park in the alleyway by our classroom door as we are using this for drop-off and pick up and it is otherwise reserved for maintenance vehicles and the owners of the building next door. Likewise, do not park in the small lot behind the playground. It is owned by the salon and for their customers. **Parking in the alley or Salon spaces may result in a ticket.**

#### **Late Policy**

Please make every attempt to be on time picking up your child. While our day is extended, our staffing is based on enrollment for each portion of our day. If you know you are going to be late, a call is appreciated so that we can make sure we are properly staffed. This means staff will be missing lunch or leaving late and since we must compensate staff for their time, we will pass those fees on to you. Be aware that our license ends at 5:30 and we are not to have children in the building. If you are more than 15 minutes late, CPS will be notified. Please also note that a call does not negate fees, it simply tells us to rearrange staff and is a courtesy to us. With that in mind, late fees are as follows: **Families will be charged \$3 per minute, per child, after your scheduled pickup time (not the time you called us).** This fee is due the next class day.

#### **Communication**

This year we have implemented the Kangarootime School Management program. This app is used for not just messaging, but we are also able to take electronic payments and our billing is now here as well. Messages about school closings, individual messages for your child, and school-wide messages will be sent through this app. A calendar is also posted there and reminders are automatically sent from the app. Please be sure you download the correct app Use the KT CONNECT app. Phone should be reserved for IMMEDIATE EMERGENCIES ONLY. Teachers will respond to app messages within 24 hours unless the message is received on a weekend and then a Monday reply can be expected. During the day, except for photo opportunities, staff will only be checking apps before dismissal, at naptime, and mid-afternoon. Emergency calls can be made to our school phone at: 443-546-0585

Sometimes things at home affect a child in school. It is helpful for teachers and staff to know if there are any changes at home so that we can understand if there are behavior changes in the classroom. Please notify your child's teacher if there are any major changes at home (new baby, visitors, death of a family member or pet, parent traveling, divorce, moving, new bedroom). If you cannot find time to talk with the teacher, please send a message through Kangarootime. Please allow a 24-hour window for a response.

It is important that you check and EMPTY, your child's backpack *every day*. If there are any changes to our schedule, field trips, parties, homework, etc. it will be on the app or a notice in your backpack.

If there is someone, such as a grandparent or babysitter, that you would like included on CLASS or SCHOOL messages, please let your teacher know, and provide an email and cell number. Information specific to your child may not be shared with anyone other than parents or guardians without expressed written consent. Be sure to complete the NEW Pickup and Communication form available at [www.RUMNS.com](http://www.RUMNS.com)

### **Inclement Weather Closings**

If we must close unexpectedly, for weather or any other reason, messages will be sent through Kangarootime. Please make sure you have it downloaded on your phone and notifications are turned on. Be sure your teacher has any contact information that is needed (daycare, grandparents, etc.).

### **Clothing Policy**

Each child will also need a complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks). It is helpful if the clothes are put inside a 2-gallon plastic bag with your child's name on it. All children need this change of clothes, as they can get messy, wet from play, and spills can happen in class. **Full day 2s and 3s should have 2 full sets of clothing.**

Please dress your children in comfortable play clothes. We do use paint and other messy materials. On class/school picture day, we will not do anything messy and you can safely dress your child in nice clothes. Make sure your child can take down his/her pants independently. Overalls and belts make it difficult for children to use the toilet and often cause accidents.

For playground and classroom safety, sneakers are required for school. **Crocs, boots, flip flops and sandals may not be worn as they are unsafe for playground and active play and will prevent children from participating in many outdoor activities.** \*Children not in sneakers will only be allowed to use the stairs to ascend/descend the playground as other shoes can slip on the rock wall and climbing bars. The same rule applies to children in skirts below the knee. Knees and feet get caught up in clothing and cause a fall hazard.

Maryland guidelines state that we must have a balance of indoor and outdoor play for children. As long as the temperature with wind chill is above 32 degrees, the playground is safe, and there is no measurable precipitation at play time, we will be going outside. Be sure your children have appropriate outdoor clothing. Please check the weather daily and dress your child appropriately for outdoor play. If your child is prone to getting chilly and you would like to send a sweater or hoodie to be left in the classroom for the week, you may do so.

In cold weather, children should have winter coats that zip, hats, and **mittens**. Do not send gloves unless your child can put them on completely by themselves. **Please do not send your child with scarves, umbrellas, rain boots, or winter/snow boots to school.**

### **What to Bring**

## **MATERIALS**

We ask that each child have a **full adult-sized** backpack, not the cute, child-size backpacks as their hard work and art will get crushed and their things will not fit.

## **FORMS TO BRING TO SCHOOL**

**\*\*If you have a custody order in place, you are required to submit that with your child's information. If custody is shared and the child/children will be picked up on a schedule by different custodians/parents, you are responsible for providing a calendar with the drop off/pick up schedule.**

(These can be found on our website [www.rumns.com](http://www.rumns.com) for download)

**\*Please Note-Children will not be permitted to attend school until outstanding forms are turned in. Parents are responsible for tuition during missed time.**

**\*\*Forms are now online fillable- to avoid problems with handwriting, please complete forms online and either print and return or email back to us.**

Emergency Form (Complete physician information, signature, VALID phone number, and at least ONE emergency pickup person in the area is required)

Health Inventory (including Blood Lead Test form)-must be dated within one calendar year of registration and updated at your child's annual exam)

Immunization Certificate

Information Form

Field Trip Permission Slip

Pick Up and Communication Permission (NEW 2024)

Photo Release (NEW 2024)

Wallet size photo of your child to attach to his/her records

Verification of receipt of Handbook

## **The following forms are AS NEEDED:**

Medication Administration Authorization Form

Asthma Action Plan And Medication Administration Authorization Form

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Medication Administration Authorization Form

Topical Basic Care Product Application Approval (for sunscreen, bug spray or lotion)

Seizure/Convulsion/Epilepsy Disorder Medication Administration Authorization Form

**\*\*If your child has already had a developmental screening, please include a doctor's copy of screening scoresheet for your child's records.**

## **What Not to Bring**

Children should not have toys, games, videos, juice cups, water bottles, food, etc. in their backpack. It is difficult to fit work into a backpack that is already full. We have plenty of access to food and water should they be needed.

To reduce transmission of germs, personal items are not to be brought from home. Teachers and staff will NOT be responsible for theft, breakage, destruction, or loss of these personal items. Children will not be allowed to play with items from home.

## **Potty Training**

We ask that children in the 3s and 4s classes be fully potty trained. A fully potty-trained child is a child who can:

1. Be able to TELL the adult they must use the bathroom BEFORE they have to go.
2. Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
3. Be able to wipe his/herself after using the toilet without assistance. (3s may need help)
4. Be able to get on and off the toilet by themselves.
5. Be able to wash and dry their hands.
6. Be able to postpone going if they must wait.
7. Wear cloth underwear: NO PULL-UPS OR DIAPERS ALLOWED
8. Can use the bathroom without a potty seat or chair.
9. Experience less than: Three (3) incidents of soiling himself/herself per month. This applies to before care and after care.

## **Allergens**

**Reisterstown United Methodist Church, the Nursery School, buildings and classrooms are PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE AT ALL TIMES.** According to <http://www.allergyexpert.us/food/treenut.html> and other reliable sources: Up to half of individuals allergic to peanuts will also be allergic to tree nuts. Tree nuts are nuts that grow on trees. They include almonds, cashews, hazelnuts (also called filberts), pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Avoid sending anything with your child that includes these or traces of these (along with items made on equipment that also processes these) including peanut butter and peanut butter products. These will be removed and sent home. Any food we cannot identify that is in question will also be returned. We may message to ask you to send an ingredient list photo. Lunches are thoroughly checked every morning. A jelly sandwich, Sun Butter/Wow Butter and jelly sandwich, or crackers with applesauce will be substituted for any main dish that is removed. We reserve the right to restrict other foods as health permits for the safety of children in the church and preschool/nursery school program. To reduce exposure to unknown allergens in foods, we do not allow homemade items to be brought in for celebrations, snack, or other sharing occasions. (Some restaurants we know are not peanut free include: Chick-fila, McDonald's, Dunkin, Krispy Kreme, and most sit-down restaurants. Serious allergies can trigger anaphylaxis and you do not want to be responsible for a child's hospital visit)

### **Birthdays, Celebrations and Snacks**

We provide breakfast, morning snack, and afternoon snack each day for the children. Please let us know if your child has any allergies or food restrictions so that we can make other arrangements. We will say a blessing before eating our meals or snack. Keep in mind, as a Methodist church, we say a Christian blessing.

If you would like to bring or have a birthday snack for your child, please make arrangements with the teacher. Staff will give guidance as to what we can have, and what can be brought in as permitted. Homemade food is not permitted at any time. Birthday snacks may be brownies, cookies, popsicles, crispy rice treats, gummies, or fruit. Cupcakes are not allowed. All food must be tree nut, peanut free at all times.

Children with **non-medical snack accommodations** (vegetarian, vegan, etc..) will incur a \$25 snack fee per month.

### **Health and Wellness**

In all cases, a child must be symptom and fever-free **without medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, et.al.)** for a full 24 hours prior to attending school. This means if your child is sent home vomiting, with diarrhea, or with a fever, *your child may NOT return the next day.* A fever is a temperature of 100.1 degrees Fahrenheit or more. **If a child becomes ill at school, the child's parent/guardian or someone on the emergency call list will be notified and arrangements will need to be made to pick up the child within the half hour. Late fees will be imposed for pickup after 30 minutes from the time of our phone call.**

A child missing 3 or more consecutive days without prior notice of travel or absence will require a note from home.

Any child diagnosed with a rash or communicable illness (including, but not limited to: strep throat, head lice, pink eye, bacterial meningitis, chicken pox, diphtheria, HFMD (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease), hepatitis, measles, mumps, pneumonia, viral illness, rubella) must have a doctor's note to return and report it to the school immediately.

**\*\*If the child's illness requires antibiotics, s/he must be treated for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school.**

**\*\*If your child requires medication to ease symptoms to get through the school day, your child is SICK and needs to be kept home!**

**\*\* Your child should be able to fully participate in dancing, running, and playing without gasping for air, coughing uncontrollably, or becoming unusually fatigued to be considered ready to come back.**

See below for policies regarding specific illnesses:

[Strep Throat: Treatment with antibiotics for a minimum of 48 hours, must have stamped Doctor's note](#)

Head Lice: Child may not return if nits or lice are present

Pink Eye: 24-48 hours of treatment, must have stamped Doctor's note

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: Minimum of 7 days exclusion from onset of symptoms, AND stamped Doctor's note

COVID: Minimum 5 days exclusion regardless of vaccination status, then mask for 5 days

RSV: No fever for 24 hours without medication (Tylenol/Ibuprofen, et. al) and significant reduction in symptoms

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE \*Guidelines are subject to change at any time. Childcare does not always follow the same guidelines as the public school system. Debates will not be entertained about the guidelines we are required to follow. While we know this may be inconvenient, it is how we keep outbreaks from happening.**

## **MAJOR EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a life-threatening or major medical emergency to a child at school, one staff member will remain with the injured or ill child. The parent will be notified as soon as medical care has been obtained. Transportation to the hospital will be arranged by rescue personnel or the child's parent. A staff member will accompany your child until you are physically present with your child.

## **MEDICATION**

If your child has allergies or requires medication, please communicate directly with your teacher and list all medications all emergency/medical forms. Children who require medication such as the Epi-pen, AuviQ, or asthma inhalers must have a Medication Authorization form completed by the child's pediatrician, accompanied by a completed Action Plan Form. The first dose of any new medication must be given at home at least 24 hours before the child returns to school so parents can monitor for adverse effects.

Any medication that is required to be given at school, including asthma and allergy medication, must:

Have a pharmacy label including child's name and prescribing doctor's name.

Be in original packaging

Not be expired

\*Medication sent to school that is to travel from drop off person to pick-up person must also be handed to staff. Medication cannot be left in lunchboxes or backpacks that may be accessible to other children.

## **HYGEINE**

Please note to prevent the spread of germs/illness, children and staff are asked to bathe daily and come to camp in clean clothing.

## **SYMPTOM CHECKS**

Upon arrival at the center, all children will be checked for symptoms of illness. Parents should not bring children to school who have been medicated within 24 hours for fever or are exhibiting symptoms of illness including hacking cough or severe cold symptoms. If a child or staff member exhibits these symptoms and/or has a fever of 100.1 degrees Fahrenheit, they will not be admitted to the building.

## **Conferences and accessibility**

Part of the preschool curriculum includes observation of children, developmental assessments, and conferences with parents. The teachers will hold individual parent/teacher conferences in the spring to update the parents on the child's progress and make recommendations for the upcoming year. The conference date is on your annual School Calendar, which is included in your Parent Notebook.

Each February, teachers will share the links for conferences on Kangarootime. Parents must follow that link to Sign Up Genius to schedule conferences.

Conferences are done in person. If there are separate custodians, each custodial party may ask for a separate conference. No more than 2 conferences will be scheduled for any child on spring conference day. Any issues that need to be addressed mid-year will be dealt with on a one-to-one basis.

Teachers are available by app to answer questions that you might have about your child. Please contact the teacher by app or note with your questions. You may request a conference at any time during the year and may schedule those with your child's teacher. Teachers will be in classrooms at drop off and pick up time and unavailable for comment in person at that time.

Parents/legal guardians are always afforded access to their child. No appointment is needed.

## **Safe Gatherings**

Your child's safety is of utmost importance to us. The United Methodist Church has a Safe Gatherings policy that affects all groups in the building that have contact with children. This policy is a United Methodist policy that promotes the safety of all children on our church grounds. This means all people in direct contact with the children are background checked on a regular basis. This includes all teachers, aides, substitutes, office staff, cleaning staff, etc. Each person cannot be Safe Gatherings approved without completing a background check, including references, and a training course.

### **Safety on Property**

- Parents/guardians should not leave siblings unattended in automobiles in our parking lot. Please have another adult that you know wait with your car and child while you walk your child in to class if you are not able to bring your child with you.
- Please make sure that you hold your child's hand from the time you leave the building all the way to your car. Our parking lot is a very busy place and the alley way next to the red building is a public thru street. Do not park in that alleyway. For safety, you should enter the parking lot either through Dreamers or the main church driveway.
- Remember: Maryland's child safety seat law requires that all children under 8 years old be secured in a federally approved child safety seat according to the safety seat and vehicle manufacturers' instructions, unless the child is 4 feet, 9 inches or taller. The child restraint must be right for the child's size, age, and weight. (<https://www.dmv.org/md-maryland/safety-laws.php>) As of October 2023, all children under 2 must be in a rear facing seat.

### **Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

Our policy on reporting abuse and neglect is mandated by State Law. We are all considered Mandated Reporters. This means if we suspect abuse or neglect, we must report it to Child Protective Services. We are **not** required to notify parents or caregivers if we are making a report.

From <http://dhr.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/mandated-reporters/>

#### **Mandated Reporters**

You are a mandated reporter if you are one of the following:

- \*Health Practitioner
- \*Educator
- \*Human Service Worker
- \*Police Officer

Reporting does NOT require PROOF that child abuse or neglect has occurred. Incidents are to be reported as soon as they are suspected. Waiting for proof may involve grave risk to the child and impede services to the family. Witnesses to child abuse and neglect are rare. Professional judgment and knowledge should be used to evaluate any suspicion.

Please refer to the link above for more information on abuse and neglect. Understand that not reporting makes us, as childcare staff, liable for unreported incidences if we are found to have been informed or know about them.

### **Maryland State Department of Education Developmental Screening**

Maryland State Department of Education has implemented a state regulation for all children in regulated care and early childhood educational programs. Beginning July 1, 2016, all children up to kindergarten entry attending regulated care and early childhood educational programs are required to have a developmental screening.

Developmental screening is a brief method completed by a parent or caregiver to quickly identify a child's progress through foundational early childhood developmental milestones. A child's development can be measured by how a child learns, speaks, moves, behaves and relates. Skills such as smiling, waving, and talking are some developmental milestones. Results from developmental screenings indicate which children would benefit from a full evaluation and assessment. Children who receive early intervention services generally do better in the long term than those identified later. Upon completion of the screening, we will meet with you to discuss the findings and whether a referral to another agency for further evaluation is necessary.

Children aged birth-36 months are required to have two screenings per year. Children aged 37 months-kindergarten entry will be required to have one screening per year. Parents should consider this process as part of required documentation in order for the child to attend our or any other licensed childcare program in the State.

### **Inclusion Policy**

Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School welcomes all children to apply and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

#### **Admissions/waiting list**

Children of different abilities are accepted into Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School and families interested in having their child attend the program will be given an equal opportunity for admission. A waiting list may be maintained, and children will be accepted from the list on a first-come, first-served basis. Educators at Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists, special educators and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families and other professionals supporting the child.

There may be times when our environment is not the right fit for a child. We will work with parents and support staff to make the smooth transition from our school to the next educational setting.

#### **Family Centered Practices**

Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success.

#### **Professional Development and Support for Staff**

Training and support are provided to ensure that staff are confident and competent to meet the developmental and educational needs of children. All staff receive an orientation on inclusion policies and attend training focused on effective inclusion and/or other disability topics whenever possible. The director provides additional support and resources as appropriate.

#### **Collaboration with Other Professionals**

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers and others. Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School welcomes those professionals and works with them to assure the child's success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment and the child's teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School supports the teacher's participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. Due to the Methodist Church's Safe Gatherings Policy, service providers may not remove children from the classroom to work with them. Any child requiring one-on-one service must schedule that outside of school.

### **Behavior and Discipline**

Discipline in the classroom will be handled through an environment that provides clear boundaries and interesting activities. Discipline is an integral part of our curriculum. Our teachers model caring behavior and help children build positive relationships with each other. Teachers also help children learn language so that they can express their feelings appropriately. RUMNS staff does not employ the use of harsh language or corporal punishment.

Effective Guidance techniques applied to all children include:

- Reinforcement of appropriate behavior – smiles, eye contact, verbal praise
- Modeling of appropriate behavior techniques



- Positive redirection of child to distract from negative behavior and reteach of expectations
- Providing alternative activity choices to calm child
- Teaching the child to solve his/her own problems using social stories and dialogue to deal with frustration

RUMNS reserves the right to limit, deny, or release a student when the health and/or safety of that child, other students, staff, or volunteers is threatened, regardless of ability. While we understand that young children are learning, we cannot allow behavior to occur that puts children or adults in position for injury. Behavior problems that may result in the release of a child include biting, persistent hitting or kicking, unwillingness or inability to follow school policies and rules, elopement or other behavior and/or action that persists after a behavior plan or parent conference has occurred. We make every effort to provide a safe program and strive to provide an environment that minimizes the potential for inappropriate behavior. When this occurs, documentation will occur.

If behavior persists, parents/guardians will be contacted for a conference and for home support of behavior modification. Discipline is centered on Effective Guidance techniques above. Some conflict is expected as children are still developing social skills. When children are together, their personalities don't always mix; this is a normal part of growth and development. We recognize each child as an individual. Teachers model the behavior that is expected. Children are reminded and required to keep hands, feet, all other body parts, fluids, and objects to themselves and stay in the classroom or learning setting. If problems persist, the following guidelines are as below:

\*First step- A verbal reprimand is given with redirection, appropriate choices, documentation, and notification to parent/guardian.

\*Second step- We will conference with parent/guardian with documentation. A Child Find referral may be given if necessary for parent to follow up

\*Third Step- There is a possible suspension or dismissal from program

Elopement from program will be documented and reported immediately. If elopement from classroom/building/school occurs, the first time will be documented and a one-day suspension will occur to put measures into place. If it continues beyond that, the child will be removed from the program.

### **Discharge Policy**

Reisterstown United Methodist Nursery School reserves the right to drop or terminate service when the welfare of the child or group would make this advisable. Reasons may include but not be limited to:

- Lack of parental cooperation
- Refusal by parents to obtain evaluations at request of teachers for observed and documented behaviors
- Non-payment of fees (repeated payments more than 5 business days late, not adhering to more than 1 payment schedule)
- Inability of the child to adjust to the school
- Continual late pick up/drop off (without a doctor's note or note from a service provider)
- Failure to inform the school of possible known communicable disease/illness diagnosis or symptoms thereof, including sending a medicated child to school
- Inability to meet the needs of the child without hiring additional staff

### **Payment Policy**

Payments are due the month prior to service (ex. October is due in September). Families will be given the option of 2 payment plans indicated on the Financial Contract. Families receive a copy of the contract once signed to keep track of payments. Please contact Lani Hoffmann immediately if there is some concern about payment. We are willing to work with you.

As of August 1, electronic payments will be accepted via the Kangarootime program. Credit card and bank transfers are accepted through the site. If you are paying by check, please be sure to include the child's name on the check. If you are paying by cash, make sure your payment is in an envelope with the child's name on it. Please put payment in designated envelope in the main pocket of your child's backpack and let staff at the door know.

There will be a \$10 late fee assessed automatically every 5 days for payments not received on time. Please note this is automatically applied by the program every 5 days. There will be a \$35 fee assessed for returned checks. If a check is returned more than once, payments will be permitted online or cash or money order only.

Once a child is 2 weeks behind in tuition, they will not be allowed to come to school until payment is up to date. If a child's tuition is not up to date at enrollment time, his/her place for next year will not be guaranteed. Recommendation letters for kindergarten and enrollment for the upcoming year will not be honored for those who are behind in their payments.

Tax receipts can be printed online through Kangarootime. Record of payment will be on your account and accessible by you.

You are responsible for your tuition annually. Billing will continue until your annual tuition is paid in full. You may pay it at any time. If you need to terminate your child's enrollment, a two-week notice is to be given to the school director. (No reimbursement of tuition will be granted).

All tuition is due regardless of attendance due to sickness, quarantine, behavioral/disciplinary removal, vacations, weather-related closings or holidays (including Thanksgiving, Christmas, snow days, and Spring Break).

### **Scholarships**

Scholarship applications are included with each child's application/enrollment packet. All families may apply. Scholarship application deadline is June 1 for the next year. Applications are collected and information without identifying information to our scholarship committee. Committee members meet in July to determine how our fixed scholarship amount will be distributed. Priority is given based on demonstrated need. Applications that are not complete will not be considered for scholarships. Recipients will be notified by mail in July. RUMNS does not give full scholarships.

### **Records Retrieval/Confidentiality**

All records requests must be made in writing to the director. Only custodial parents/guardians will be permitted to request records from a child's file. Health records and items that were provided by the parent can be copied on request. A flat fee of \$25 per request will be charged for copying of records. Other information in the file will be made available at the discretion of the school. Non-custodial adults must obtain a court order to obtain records. Requests for children's information requests in writing will not be refused to either parent unless a court-established Parenting Plan is in place and on file with us. It is the parents' responsibility to furnish the center with the Parenting Plan. All information required by court order, including conversations, will be provided to the party named on the court order/subpoena.

Parents will be given a copy of their child's conference form at the Parent Teacher Conference each spring.

Requests for **assessments and recommendations** may be made directly to the child's teacher in writing. They must be requested with 14 days' notice to complete. A release must be signed in for us to complete recommendations either in writing or verbally to schools or other entities about any child.

### **Electronics and Screen Time**

Screen time is reserved for educational material at special times. Electronics are not permitted at school. Watches, phones, iPads, tablets, video games, recording devices, and tracking devices are to be left at home.

### **Chapel Time**

Children will have monthly Chapel as a school in the church sanctuary with Pastor Jen Eschliman, and her husband Dan.

### **Pet Policy**

For safety and health reasons, pets are not permitted in the building. If you have a comfort animal, or other working animal, a certificate must be provided to staff to make a copy before your animal will be allowed to enter.

### **Volunteer Policy**

COMAR requires that centers make clients aware of volunteer policies in place. Please note that while this is our normal Volunteer Policy, no one but staff and children are permitted in the building.

All church volunteers are required to complete Safe Sanctuaries Training and are background checked by the church before being permitted to begin.

Our volunteers are always under the supervision of staff members when children are present. Anyone who is accessing our area regularly is fingerprinted and cleared by Childcare to do so.

No person is permitted to volunteer if they would be prohibited from employment because they have received a conviction, a probation before judgment disposition, a not criminally responsible disposition, or a pending charge for the commission or attempted commission of:

- (1) A crime involving:
  - (a) A child;
  - (b) Cruelty to animals;
  - (c) Domestic violence; or
  - (d) A weapons or firearms violation of federal or state laws;
- (2) A sex offense;
- (3) A violent crime classified as a felony;
- (4) Abduction or kidnapping;
- (5) Abuse of a child or an adult;
- (6) Confinement of an unattended child;
- (7) Manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing a controlled dangerous substance;
- (8) Perjury;
- (9) Pornography;
- (10) Possession with intent to manufacture, distribute, or dispense a controlled dangerous substance; or
- (11) Reckless endangerment.

COMAR 13A.16.06 Reg. 3A

**Please email Lani Hoffmann at [RUMNS234@gmail.com](mailto:RUMNS234@gmail.com) or Kirstyn Hutchinson at [RUMNNSDirector@hotmail.com](mailto:RUMNNSDirector@hotmail.com) if you have questions regarding this handbook.**

**\*\*Please check the website as rules are subject to change with changes in policy or Child Care laws**

### **Drop-off/Pick-up**

Full day students may be dropped off as early as 7:30am and must be picked up by 5:30pm daily. Please bring your child to the door and an adult must ring the bell for drop off. Children needing breakfast must arrive by 8:15am.

\*\*Please try not to have your child be the first dropped off and last picked up every day. This creates boredom and anxiety in children. We understand you have long hours to work, but a full day at school for a child here is 10 hours. We open earlier for those who need it and stay until 5:30 for those who need the later day. Some families work long hours, and we understand. Working parents are the backbone of the family. But if you have the opportunity to pick up a little earlier, or you are able to spend a few unrushed minutes at home in the morning, you should take that time with your child.

### **What to Bring**

With full day registration, you were issued a blanket, cot sheet, and nap bag. Please be sure to return that at the beginning of each week. These sheets and blankets are what fits in our bins and on our cots. We selected them for that purpose. We have provided this bag for your child's belongings to reduce the use of plastic bags, and because they are washable and identifiable.

### **Lunches**

Children should come with their lunches in a standard child's lunch box. The entire lunch must fit in that box. Items needing to remain cold will be taken out and refrigerated separately. Hot items must be in a thermal container to keep them hot. Please put no more than 4-5 items in your child's lunch.

More items does not necessarily mean they will eat more, but sometimes too many choices make a child shut down and not eat at all. There will be an information and idea sheet for preschooler's lunchboxes when you receive your paperwork on parent night.

We provide all snack, so there is no reason to send extra.

Please see the section in the main handbook on Allergens for more information on lunches.