



2026-2027 HANDBOOK

69 E. Main Street

Newark, DE 19711

(302)368-1754

nmp@newark-umc.org

www.newarkmethodistpreschool.com

PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS

Newark Methodist Preschool is an outreach of the Newark Methodist Church. Our school provides a developmentally appropriate learning environment for 2, 3, 4, and 5-year olds. The following are just a few of the preschool's most important goals:

- To provide a warm, accepting, and positive school atmosphere.
- To help children recognize their own special characteristics and abilities; self-esteem, self-control, and independence are encouraged in every aspect of our program.
- To help each child handle and verbalize emotions in appropriate ways while respecting the child's right to feel anger, impatience, sadness, etc...
- To share with children the wonder and beauty of the world in which we live.
- To offer a wide variety of activities and hands-on experiences.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Newark Methodist Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Newark Methodist Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

PRESCHOOL STAFF

PRESCHOOL OFFICE Room 110 368-1754

Director	Mandy Manzella	nmp@newark-umc.org
Assistant	Jill Hall	jhall@newark-umc.org

ROOM 106

2's	Yvette Vincent
	Tricia Shaw
	Patti Brooks

ROOM 215

3-day 3's	Mary Marzulli
	Nana Sackey

ROOM 217

3-day/2-day 3's	Diane Bohrer
	Almaz Beyene

ROOM 211

5-day PreK	Suzy Phillips
	Emma Gilroy

ROOM 12

3-day PreK	Taylor Hall
	Suzy Moyer

ROOM 216	Jackie Wolffe
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3 & 5 day PreK	Laura Stringer
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2026-2027 School Calendar

August

29 Sat. Family Work Day 9:30 am

September

1 Tues. Ice Cream Social/Meet Your Teacher 5:30-6:30pm
 8-11 Tues.- Fri. Classroom Orientations
 14 Mon. First Day of School
 29 Tues. Parent Orientation 6-7:30 pm

October

16 Fri. No School – Professional Development
 23 Fri. Trunk or Treat
 29-30 Thurs. – Fri. Halloween Celebrations

November

3-4 Tues. - Wed. Picture Day
 11 Wed. No School - Veterans' Day
 25-27 Wed. - Fri. No School - Thanksgiving Holiday
 28 Sat. NMP Vendor Fair

December

16 Wed. M/W 2's Christmas Celebrations & early dismissals
 17 Thurs. T/TH 2's & 3's Christmas Celebrations & early dismissals
 18 Fri. 3-day 3's & PreK Christmas Celebrations & early dismissals
 21-31 Mon. - Thurs. No School – Winter Break

January

1 Fri. No School – Winter Break cont'd.
 4 Mon. School re-opens
 18 Mon. No School - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 29 Fri. Snowball Dance

February

12 Fri. No School - Professional Development
 10-11 Wed - Thurs. Valentine's Celebrations
 15 Mon. No School - Presidents' Day

March

15-19 Mon. - Fri. Book Fair
 19 Fri. Spring Social
 25-31 Thurs. - Wed. Spring Break

April

1-2 Thurs. - Fri. Spring Break cont.
 26 Mon. No School – Professional Development

May

19 Wed. End-Of-Year Celebration & early dismissal
 for M/W 2's, M/W/F 3's & 4's
 20 Thurs. End-Of-Year Celebration & early dismissal
 for T/Th 2's & 3's, T/Th/F 3's & 5-day PreK
 20 Thurs. Last Day of School

GENERAL PRESCHOOL POLICIES

CHILDREN'S ARRIVAL:

To fully benefit from the preschool program, it is important to arrive on time; many children experience difficulty joining in if they arrive after the class has begun its activities. They also may miss lessons or important information that is provided at the beginning of the day.

For your child's safety, all students must be brought to the door by an adult. Upon arrival, you will be prompted to check your child in using the Brightwheel App and answer health screening questions.

DISMISSAL/RELEASE OF CHILD POLICY:

The preschool day ends for 2's at 11:45AM, 3's and room 12 at 12:00PM, and rooms 211 & 216 at 12:15PM. Teachers will open the door when the class is ready to dismiss. It is sometimes hard to be prompt when assisting a large group of children with coats and book bags - we appreciate your patience with this. We will call each child or carpool individually and see them safely into the hands of the responsible adult. If you have a special need to pick up your child early, please alert the child's teacher at drop-off time, or send a message to the teacher or office via Brightwheel.

We will release your child ONLY to individuals designated on your Release of Child form. Please include on the form the names of anyone who may pick up your child during the school year. You may notify the office at any time to make changes to this form. In the event of an emergency, a person who was not previously authorized may be able to pick up your child if you or another parent/guardian calls and provides the person's name. Individuals named on the release form may be required to provide a state-issued identification card as part of our efforts to keep all of the students safe.

Children will only be released to custodial parents unless previous arrangements have been made. Court documents detailing custody arrangements are to be provided. If a non-custodial parent who is not authorized to pick up your child attempts to do so, the custodial parent/guardian and the police will be contacted.

Please resist discussing your child's progress at dismissal time. We ask you to remember that the teacher is always available through Brightwheel or email to answer questions or schedule a conference. It is best for your child if discussions about behavior and development are done when your child is not present. Do feel free to contact your child's teacher with any concerns, or talk to Mandy Manzella or Jill Hall. They are available most preschool mornings in the Preschool office on the first floor, and they welcome your thoughts and concerns any time.

Late Pick-up. We will allow a grace period of 10 minutes after which a late fee of \$10 may be imposed.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS:

We take photographs regularly and all of our special events are recorded. These pictures may be posted in the center, displayed on our website, shared via Brightwheel or used to chronicle your child's development and illustrate the daily curriculum. We require written parent/guardian permission to disseminate photographs or videos of your child or if your child will participate in special events. All families have the opportunity to opt out of the photo release if desired.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

We require written parent/guardian permission before we will disclose or use any of your child's information to others. Our staff members who work with your child will only receive the necessary information regarding your child to ensure your child's needs are met. Please note that employees of the Office of Child Care Licensing and those with other duties related to the health, safety, and well-being of children may be given access to your child's information for official use.

CLOTHING:

The children spend a lot of time in active and messy play. "Good" clothes are often a source of frustration. Keep in mind the various activities your child may participate in (such as climbing, bicycling, painting, water play, etc.) when you help your child choose what to wear. Comfortable play clothes and closed toed, rubber soled shoes will give your child the freedom to actively and fully participate. Layered clothing is helpful since our classrooms are often warm and we play outside each day. During winter weather, mittens and hats are needed for the playground (please mark them with your child's name).

***PLEASE MARK OUTERWEAR & BOOKBAGS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

We welcome families into the classroom for visits throughout the year! If you would like to visit the classroom, please discuss with your child's teacher to schedule an appropriate time. Older classes have guest readers and other visiting opportunities during the year. Frequently ask your child about their activities in the classroom, experiences, and friends. This shows your child that you are interested in his/her school life. Your interest in what your child is doing at school gives impact to what we do.

ASSESSMENTS, ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND CONCERNS:

Within the first month of the school year, children will receive an assessment related to age-appropriate developmental and educational goals. Teachers will record developmental milestones, accomplishments, and concerns for all children throughout the school year.

If we have concerns or your child is not meeting his or her developmental potential, we may refer you to request additional support from the school district via Childfind or the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Services.

Once a year, you will be given the opportunity for a conference to discuss your child's developmental and educational progress. Conferences will be scheduled in February and March. Dates will be shared for these after the new year, and signups will be shared a few weeks before the conference dates. Conferences can also be requested at any time throughout the year by contacting your child's teacher.

If you have a question or concern at any time during the year, feel free to contact the teachers or the Director. You can be assured we will call you if there is anything unusual, we feel you should know. The wellbeing of your child is very important to us, and we are happy to meet with you or phone conference at your request.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION:

Teachers will be communicating with families through the Brightwheel app, as well as through weekly newsletters. Teachers use these newsletters to communicate the focus of the week, skills being worked on in the classroom, and special activities. This allows you to build on the teachers' curriculum by talking at home about similar ideas. The teachers also post requests for supplies, reminders, or items your child may need for class. It is very important that each school day you read the materials sent home in your child's backpack or posted on Brightwheel.

A monthly newsletter sent from the office will also notify you of upcoming preschool events and happenings. Additionally, you are encouraged to visit the preschool website at www.newarkmethodistpreschool.com for the preschool calendar as well as periodic updates. The NMP Facebook page is also informative. The Director is generally available from 8:30 to 3:00 weekdays - please stop in for a visit and feel free to suggest ideas that might improve the Preschool. We welcome your thoughts!

FIELD TRIPS:

Our Pre-K classes take a few trips throughout the year. Past trips have included Milburn Orchards, Coverdale Farms, Winterthur and White Clay Creek. Students are transported to these trips either by a parent/guardian or a carpool set up between families. More information will be sent home by classroom teachers throughout the year. 3's classes are invited to take part in a Family Park Day at the end of the year.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation is not provided to and from the preschool.

ILLNESS POLICY:

If your child exhibits symptoms of illness, requires medical attention, or becomes ill during the day, you will be notified immediately. If you are unable to be reached, your child's emergency contact listed on the information card will be notified. Our staff members will ensure your child's needs for rest, comfort, food, drink, and appropriate activity are met until the child can be picked up. Please do not drop your child off when your child is sick.

HEALTH EXCLUSIONS:

In order to ensure the health and safety of the children at the preschool and to comply with DELACARE: Rules for Early Care Education and School Age Centers, Newark Methodist Preschool cannot allow your child to be at school for the following reasons unless written documentation is provided by a health care provider stating your he/she has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to others or him/herself:

Symptoms of Illness for Exclusion Includes:
• Temperature of 100°F or higher without medication even if there has not been a change in behavior for infants four months old and younger;
• Temperature of 101°F or higher without medication accompanied by behavior changes or symptoms of illness for children older than four months;
• Symptoms of possible severe illness, such as unusual tiredness, uncontrolled coughing, unexplained irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs;
• Diarrhea; two or more times of loose stool during the past 24 hours, or if diarrhea is accompanied by fever, exclude for 48 hours after the symptoms end;
• Blood in stools not due to change in diet, medication, or hard stools;
• Vomiting; two or more times in the past 24 hours, or one time if accompanied by a fever until 48 hours after the symptoms end or until a health care provider determines the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
• Ongoing stomach pain (more than two hours) or off-and-on pain due to a fever or other symptom;
• Mouth sores with drooling;
• Rash with fever or behavior change;
• Purulent conjunctivitis "pink eye" (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment;
• Scabies, until 24 hours after starting treatment;

• Pediculosis “head lice” or nits, until 24 hours after starting treatment;
• Tuberculosis, as directed by DPH;
• Impetigo, until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment and sores are dry;
• Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment;
• Varicella-Zoster “chicken pox,” until all sores have crusted and are dry (usually six days);
• Shingles, only if sores cannot be covered by clothing or a bandage; if not, exclude until sores have crusted and are dry;
• Pertussis, until completing five days of antibiotic treatment;
• Mumps, until five days after onset of glandular swelling;
• Hepatitis A virus, until one week after onset of jaundice, or as directed by DPH;
• Measles, until four days after arrival of rash;
• Rubella, until seven days after arrival of rash;
• Herpetic gingivostomatitis “cold sores,” if the child is too young to have control of saliva; or
• Unspecified short-term illness, not chronic illness if your child is unable to participate in activities or our staff cannot provide care for your child and the other children.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:

Children with a reportable communicable disease cannot be admitted to the preschool unless documentation from the child’s health care provider states the child has been evaluated and presents no risk to others, or the Department of Public Health has advised the preschool that the child presents no risk. If your child has been exposed to a reportable communicable disease you will receive a written notice with recognizable symptoms as well as instructions telling you how to proceed. For information regarding reportable communicable disease, please view DPH’s website, <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/rptdisease.html>.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPOSURES AND QUARANTINE

The preschool will continue to follow all guidance given from the CDC, DE DPH, and the OCCL in regards to infectious and communicable disease exposures and quarantine. The preschool board reserves the right to update this policy if and when guidance changes, and refunds will not be given for absences due to illness, quarantines, or closures.

- **NMP will follow DPH protocol regarding closures and quarantines.**
- **REFUNDS AND/OR DISCOUNTS ON TUITION ASSOCIATED WITH AN UNPLANNED HEALTH QUARANTINE/CLOSURE WILL NOT BE ISSUED.**

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:

Trained staff will administer medication in accordance with state law and written parent permission. OCCL considers anything other than soap and water to be medication. Before administering any medication, you must complete a Medication Administration Record (MAR) and include all of the required information listed on the form. Medication must be in its original container and labeled with your child's name. When your child no longer needs the medication or the medication has expired, we will return the medication to you.

To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will make reasonable accommodations for children with medical needs. If your child needs accommodations, please speak the director to discuss your request.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT:

If your child becomes injured while at preschool, immediate action will be taken to protect him/her of further harm and a parent/guardian will be notified. If your child receives a serious injury, you will be notified immediately. Per licensing regulations, a serious injury includes any impact to a child's head. Therefore, if your child falls and bumps their head, lips, mouth, or face you will be notified immediately. An accident/injury report will be completed and provided to you within one business day and a copy of this report will be kept in your child's file. You will be notified of less serious accidents/injuries before your child is released at the end of the day. Less serious injuries include bumps, scrapes, and scratches. If your child has a life-threatening injury or illness or a serious medical incident such as a seizure, allergic reaction, burn, etc., you will be notified immediately after an ambulance is contacted and you will receive an incident report. You will be required to sign the report as proof that you were notified of the accident/injury/serious incident.

EMERGENCY HEALTH POLICY:

In the event of a life-threatening accident, injury or illness an ambulance will be called. In the event of an accident, injury or illness that is non-life threatening but requires prompt, professional medical attention the Director will provide transportation. In either event the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If they cannot be reached the emergency contacts listed on the child's information card will be called.

DEVELOPMENTAL AND EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

The teachers plan new activities each week, and often each day; they follow the school curriculum but use their own ideas to implement. Many hours are spent in preparation for each day. Preschool-aged children learn best through hands-on activities (play!), so it is our goal to provide them with a wide variety of experiences and to encourage their exploration. We focus on all areas of development: language, large and small motor, sensory, emotional, cognitive, and social. Lesson plans are posted in each classroom. Each plan has activities listed to support your child developmentally and educationally.

A TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY:

Many parents ask what happens on the average school day. Of course, no two days are ever the same, but we do have a time frame that is generally followed. Each teacher will share your child's classroom schedule with you at the beginning of the year. Your child may choose not to do some activities that are offered. Do not be concerned - each child develops interests according to his/her needs and stage of development. They learn best from the activities that interest them most. Once a month all students have three specials, physical education, music and story time. (The day for two-year old students is 45 minutes shorter, and routine emphasis is on socialization and language development. A less structured version of the following is typical for the twos.)

The main components of a day in preschool include:

Group Circle Times: 2 sessions lasting 10-30 minutes depending on age when the class gathers for a story, songs, music, fingerplays, games and other shared experiences.

Activity Time: 60 minutes - This is probably the most important part of the day; your child may choose any of the many activities and centers in the room such as: painting, other arts and crafts, dramatic play, puzzles, blocks, manipulative toys, books, science area, and math area.

Outdoor/Gross Motor Play: 30 minutes – Children are given opportunities for physical activity each day. Each class has its own time on the playground. Please ensure your child has outdoor clothing that is appropriate for the weather. In the event of inclement weather, we have a large area in the basement dining room where we set up a variety of active play equipment.

The rest of the preschool day is made up of snack, music and movement, story times, mindfulness practice, and other transition times throughout the day.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

The goals of the Newark Methodist Preschool program support the use of positive discipline. We provide a warm, accepting, and nurturing atmosphere where children feel comfortable and confident; capable of self-control. The teachers establish an environment where appropriate examples are set, and positive behavior is reinforced, recognizing each child's individuality. When inappropriate behavior must be addressed, we do so with the use of redirection and the offering of choices. We believe that the use of these positive guidance strategies will assist the children in acquiring and developing the skills needed to be successful in a learning community.

FOOD/NUTRITION:

A daily snack will be provided to your child. An example of a typical snack would be whole grain pretzels, apple slices, and water. The menu will be posted on the parent bulletin board outside of each classroom. Please note all snacks served will follow the nutritional guidelines set forth by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Your child will be encouraged to, but not forced to eat. If you do not want your child to eat certain foods due to food allergies, religious reasons, or your family's food preferences please list those on your child's information sheet. If your child requests a second portion of food or drink, we will gladly provide it.

SAFETY:

Safety is very important to our center. Our staff members are thoroughly screened, highly trained, and have successfully completed a comprehensive criminal background check as well as First Aid and CPR training. Our building has a safety plan in place to ensure unauthorized people do not have access to your children. Classrooms are set up to be kid friendly and hazard free.

SCREEN TIME:

As a play based preschool setting, it is imperative that most of our class time be spent offering hands on and interactive activities for our students during the few hours they spend with us. To help achieve this, screen time in the classroom will be limited to teachers showing short, educational videos to enhance a lesson, or to support music and movement through dancing or other gross motor opportunities. This use will take up no more than 15 minutes of class time per day.

FAMILY CRISES:

Every family experience times of stress. Prolonged visits, the anticipation of a trip, new people in the household, death, illness, or changed relationships in the home may create stress. Children sense your worries even when they are not aware of the problem. At such times the child might need extra attention and emotional support. It is not necessary to explain the source of the tension, but it will be helpful if you alert the teacher. Frequently children's behavior patterns may change under trying circumstances. The staff wants to be able to respond to your child's needs, especially when the child is most vulnerable.

BAD WEATHER CLOSINGS:

Preschool closings due to inclement weather will be posted on Facebook and Brightwheel by 7:00 a.m. These will also be listed on NBC Channel 10's school closing website as well as WSTW. You may also register to receive text and/or email alerts. When these events arise we try to follow the Christina School District decision, however, there may be days we consider it appropriate to open when Christina closes or delays their opening, so please refer to the resources mentioned above to know for sure. Snow closing time is NOT made up at the end of the year due to building and staff availability, however, there are scheduled snow contingency days for winters with inclement weather that forces several school closings.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT:

Before your child begins care, we must have the following information on file:

- Completed Application for Registration
- Completed Teacher Information Form
- Current medications and completed Medication Administration Record
- Signed Parents Right to Know
- Screen Time Permission
- Permission to Photograph
- Any court orders on custody and visitation arrangements, if applicable
- An IEP, IFSP, or Section 504 plan, if applicable
- Emergency Care Parent Permission

Within 30 days of enrollment, you must provide your child's health appraisal that includes his or her health history, a physical examination, growth and development, age-appropriate immunizations, and medical information for treatment in cases or emergency, the child's blood lead level at ages 12 and 24 months, and recommendations regarding required medication, allergies, restrictions or modifications or the child's activities, diet, or care, if applicable.

TUITION PAYMENTS:

Tuition may be paid monthly, semi-annually, or annually. Payments made after the 15th of the month may be charged a \$5 late fee. Refunds and/or discounts on tuition associated with an unplanned closure will not be issued. No refunds or tuition reductions will be made for the absences of a student from the school, unless prior arrangements are made with, and approved by the Preschool Board of Directors. You may pay online through the Brightwheel system, or by check, cash, or money order. Checks are made payable to NEWARK METHODIST PRESCHOOL. They may be dropped off in the preschool office (Room 110, 1st floor), placed in the locked mailbox outside the preschool office door, or mailed to:

Newark Methodist Preschool
69 East Main Street
Newark, DE 19711

If you have a temporary or special financial burden which will delay your tuition payment, please call the preschool office to notify Jill or Mandy @ (302) 368-1754, or reach out via email or Brightwheel.

Requests for tuition refund or discount will need to be pre-approved by the preschool board.

****Refunds and/or discounts of tuition will not be provided if a classroom undergoes an unplanned quarantine due to pandemic or any other unexpected and unpreventable closure, or if a child misses school due to illness or travel.****

Newark Methodist Preschool's duties and obligations shall be suspended immediately without notice during all periods that the school is closed because of force majeure events, including, but not limited to, any fires, act of God, hurricane, war, epidemic, pandemic, government action, act of terrorism, insurrections, emergency government orders or restrictions, or any other force majeure event beyond the school's control. If such an event occurs, the preschool's duties and obligations will be postponed until such a time as the school, in its sole discretion, may safely reopen. In the event that the school cannot reopen due to an event under this clause, the school is under no obligation to refund any portion of tuition paid.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

We understand how important your child is and know that questions and possibly complaints or concerns may arise. If you have a concern or complaint, please speak to the child's teacher first, unless you do not feel comfortable doing so. If that is the case, please speak with the director. If your child's teacher does not handle your concern or complaint in a satisfactory or timely manner, please feel free to contact the director. We want you to feel comfortable speaking with our staff members. Please know that your questions, concerns, and complaints are especially important to us and will be addressed to the best of our ability.

SAFETY & SANITATION POLICY:

To provide your child with the cleanest environment possible play tables, floors, carpets, sinks, faucets, toilets and toilet seats are disinfected daily. To reduce the spread of germs and bacteria proper hand washing techniques are used by staff and taught to the children. Standard precautions are used by staff and custodians to clean and disinfect areas that have been contaminated by bodily fluids. All teachers are trained in proper hygiene practices, which include hand-washing procedures, standard precautions, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, safe food handling, and diapering procedures. Each classroom is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected according to licensing regulations.

The proper diaper changing procedure is posted in the bathroom where diapers are changed and used when it is necessary to change a diaper. A lined, foot-activated container, inaccessible to children is used to dispose of all diapers.

LICENSING & ACCREDITATION:

Effective February 2004, the Newark Methodist Preschool is fully licensed by the State of Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families pursuant to Title 31 Chapter 3 of the Delaware Code.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

As a preschool provider in the State of Delaware, if any staff member in good faith suspects child abuse or neglect they are required by law to make a report to the Division of Family Services of the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families.

MEGAN'S LAW:

In compliance with "Megan's Law" (11 Del Code 4121), the preschool is notified about all registered sex offenders who have recently moved to, attend school in or are employed in the City of Newark. We, in turn, are required to maintain a binder which holds the information that we receive. This binder is kept in the preschool office where any parent who wishes to access the information is welcome to do so anytime during preschool office hours.

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW NOTICE:

Under the Delaware Code you are entitled to inspect, at any time, the active record and complaint files of any licensed child care/preschool facility. To review a child care facility record, contact the Office of Child Care Licensing at (302) 892-5800.

The DELACARE Rules for Early Care & Education are always kept in the preschool office for parents to read and review upon request.