



Maitland Community Preschool
@ ORANGWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Parent Handbook

2009-2010

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Welcome to Maitland Community Preschool! We are so glad to have your family with us!

The Vision of MCP:

We believe that each child is uniquely created by God. The purpose of Maitland Community Preschool is to help children grow spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. We believe parents should be the primary teachers of their children, therefore our role is to support and encourage parents in the nurture and training of their children. We believe that children learn best in a loving, caring environment where they may experience the awe and wonder of God's world through hands-on, developmentally appropriate activities.

As Maitland Community Preschool is a ministry of Orangewood Presbyterian Church, we support the Children's Ministries mission and vision statements of teaching children to:

- Know God
- Know God's Word
- Understand God's grace through Christ Jesus
- Worship God in spirit and truth
- Share Christ with others both near and far
- Gain a Biblical world and life view

Arrival and Dismissal:

Arrival: You may choose to drop your child off in the carpool line, or walk them into the classroom each morning. Carpool is available from 8:55 – 9:05. Please have your child arrive within this time period, as children often feel uncomfortable arriving after the other children are already involved in activities.

If you choose to walk your child in to the school, please stop at the front desk to sign your child in. Please walk your child to his class, but say goodbye at the classroom door. Once you cross into the room, it is harder to leave and more disruptive to the other children. If your child has a hard time with you leaving, try the carpool line instead – it is often easier for the child to leave you than for you to leave him. If your child is upset when you leave, PLEASE feel free to call MCP to check on him! We are happy to check to be sure he has calmed down.

Dismissal: You may use the carpool line to pick up your child, or park in the gravel lot and walk up to get your child. The children will be seated with their classes in the main hall of the preschool for pick up. Pick up begins at 12:55.

All children must be signed in and out of school each day. We will have the sign in/out sheets at the front desk as well as available in the car line. VPK parents will also need to sign monthly attendance sheets, which will be available at the end of each month. Thank you for your help with this record keeping!

As we are getting to know you, please have your picture ID ready when you come to get your child. We will be checking all ID's the first two weeks of school. If there is a change in who is picking up your child, we must have a note from you with the person's full name (not just 'grandmother' or 'the nanny'). They should have your carpool card, and expect to be asked for their ID. **We will not release a child to anyone other than their parent without prior written permission from the parent.**

Carpool: In order to help our assistants identify your cars, please hold your carpool card out of your driver's side window as you are in line. Once your child has been called, please place it in your front windshield. This

allows the Assistant Teachers to easily identify you and bring your child to your car as promptly as possible.

If you plan to carpool with another family on a regular basis, please notify the school. Your child's teacher will then know who to expect, and we will prepare a carpool card with all the children's names on it for you.

Please do not get out of your car in the car line. Wait for a staff member to bring your child to you and put your child in the car. If possible, please have your child's car seat on the passenger side of the car. If you prefer to buckle your child into the car seat yourself, please pull into a parking place to buckle them.

Due to liability issues, fastening car seats into the car is the parent's responsibility. Teachers and assistants will not secure the seat into your car. If you are carpooling, please have the seats already buckled, ready for the children to use.

For the safety of your children, and our staff, please do not use your cell phone while in the carpool line! If you are on your cell phone in the car line, you will be asked to park your car and walk in to pick up your child instead. This is an important safety issue to us, as well as allowing you to focus your attention on greeting your child as he enters the car.

Please be patient with us with the pick up procedures. It really will get quicker as we get to know all of our families!

Arrival/Dismissal During The School Day:

If you need to pick up your child early, or arrive to school late, please come to the front desk. You will be asked to sign your child in/out. We will call to the room and an assistant will bring your child to/from the room. The preschool entrance is locked during the school day, so please knock and our receptionist will unlock the door for you to enter.

Calendar for 2009-10:

August 24 – 28	Teacher Planning Days
Thurs. Aug. 27	7pm Parent Orientation
Aug. 26-28	Classroom Visits
Mon. Aug. 31	Classes begin
Mon. Sept. 7	No School – Labor Day
Fri. Oct. 16	No School – Teacher Workday
Nov. 23 – 27	No School – Thanksgiving Break
Wed. Dec. 16	Last Day - Christmas Break
Dec. 17 – Jan. 1	No School – Christmas Break
Mon. Jan 4	No School – Teacher Workday
Tues. Jan. 5	Classes resume
Weds. Jan 6	New 2 Day 2's class begins
Jan. 11-15	Parent Conferences
Mon. Jan. 18	No School – MLK Holiday
Tues. Jan 19	2010-2011 Registration begins
Mon. Feb. 15	No School – President's Day
Fri. April 2	No School – Teacher Workday
April 5 – 9	No School – Spring Break
Thurs. May 27	Last Day
June 1-4	Teacher Planning Days

We will follow Orange County Public Schools' bad weather plan for closing school. If Orange county schools are closed, we will be closed also. If there is an exception to this, you will be notified by the school or your child's teacher.

Chapel:

All of our classes participate in chapel weekly. Chapel is a special time of worship for our children led by Orangewood Presbyterian Church's Director of Children's Ministries.

Clothing:

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and closed-toed shoes. Clothing should be easy for the child to manipulate when using the bathroom. Dress your child in clothes you don't mind getting messy. Flip-flops are not acceptable shoes for school. Outside play is on the schedule each day, so consider the weather conditions when dressing your child.

Please send a complete change of clothes (including socks) in a gallon ziplock bag labeled with your child's name. In the event your child has an accident (potty or spill), we will send the dirty clothing home in the plastic bag. Remember to return the bag with fresh clothing the next school day.

Communication:

We consider communication between home and school to be of utmost importance. Your child's school bag is our best form of daily communication. Please check the pin on the bag for any notes, calendars, newsletters, etc. from the school daily. You will receive a calendar for the upcoming month's classroom activities on the last day of each month. Please attach any correspondence with the teacher to the pin on the school bag. You are also welcome to send tuition checks on the bag. Be sure your child brings his bag to school daily.

Teachers and the Director will also utilize email to correspond with families. Please keep email addresses and phone numbers current with the office.

Remember that changes at home affect a child's behavior at school. Please let us know the joyous happenings, the upsetting experiences, or important changes at home which may affect your child. It is also important to let teachers know what a child has been told about an impending birth, serious illness, adoption, or a recent death, so that any conversation can follow with complete empathy. In all events, we consider this school year a joint venture with you in the continuing development of your child.

Discipline Policy:

We believe that children learn best in an environment where the uniqueness of each individual child is valued and respected. We believe that an important part of our teaching task involves helping children develop self-discipline. This means we must provide reasonable rules and limits, which are clearly defined and consistently maintained, while being willing to give more personal responsibility to children as they are able to assume it.

We will utilize positive discipline techniques such as modeling appropriate behavior, redirection, anticipation and removal of potential problems, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. We will help children recognize and accept logical or natural consequences of their behavior, taking time to talk through both positive and negative outcomes related to their choices of behavior. We will develop and maintain daily routines to help children understand our expectations.

If the circumstances require it, we will use supervised time apart from the group to help the child control his behavior. In the event of a persisting problem, the teacher and parent will work closely together to develop a plan to direct the child's behavior. If a child has repeated difficulty controlling his behavior to the extent that it continually disrupts the class, making it impossible for others to have a positive school experience, a conference with the teacher, parents, and Director will be held to determine whether the child can continue in our program. Corporal punishment will not be used by MCP staff members.

Early Birds:

Early Birds is our optional enrichment program running from 8:00-9:00 each morning. Children are welcome to join Early Birds at a cost of \$5/day. Families must sign up and pay for the days they wish to participate on the monthly Early Bird Calendar. Please walk your child into the school for Early Birds (no carpool) and be sure to sign him in at the desk. Early Birds will begin on September 8 for our 3's, 4's and Transitional PreK children. Our 2's are invited to join beginning in January 2010.

We are pleased to offer Music (Mon), Art (Tues), Spanish (Weds), Fun & Fitness (Thurs), and Little Einstein's Math & Science (Fri).

Health:

Your child's health is important to us. If your child develops any symptoms of illness at school, he will be isolated from other children and you will be notified to pick him up immediately.

The school makes every effort to protect the health and safety of all of our children. For your child's protection, and the health of others, please keep your child at home if he has:

- a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- heavy nasal discharge, sniffles, reddened eyes
- signs of rash on face or body
- constant cough, sore throat, headache
- tired, listless
- fussy, cranky, just not himself

Please notify the office immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease (strep throat, chicken pox, H1N1 virus) or any other condition that could be spread through our school (lice...)

Swine Flu Concerns

Due to concerns about swine flu (H1N1 virus), we will be calling parents to pick up their children if they have any fever or symptoms of respiratory infection (sore throat, cough, runny nose – new and unexplained by allergies). We are asking our parents to err on the side of caution if their children appear to be ill. There is a quick and simple screening test for the H1N1 virus available at most physicians' offices and walk-in clinics. Please have your children screened if they are having symptoms. Don't assume that it's "just allergies" or a cold. If your child tests positive for the H1N1 virus, please contact MCP right away. We will then notify the other MCP parents.

If your child has a fever or other flu symptoms, please do not send him to school. Even if you can give your child Tylenol or Advil to bring down the fever, please do not send him to school until he is fever-free with no medication for 24 hours.

MCP will stay in contact with the CDC and local health officials as long as there is any risk. MCP will cooperate with any recommendations or requests by the CDC. Currently, the CDC has a one-minute video on its

website that you might find helpful--“What to Do About the Flu: CDC Director Dr. Frieden” It is the second video in the list at: <http://www.flu.gov/psa/index.html>.

Thanks for helping to keep us all healthy!

Parent-Teacher Fellowship/Volunteers:

All families and staff members are part of our Parent Teacher Fellowship. Parents are encouraged to help with PTF in a variety of ways, including staff appreciation, fundraising, and school-wide events. Each class will also have a Room Mom and Library Mom. Room Moms are in charge of working with the teacher to plan class events such as parties and monthly play days. The Library Mom is responsible for checking out and returning books from their local library for classroom use. Teachers will work with the library mom to select specific titles or themes of books for the classroom. A parent is also needed to volunteer to decorate the school bags for each class before the beginning of the year.

Parents who wish to volunteer on a regular basis in the classroom must first be fingerprinted and pass a background screening. Parents are invited by the teacher to volunteer in the classroom. Not all classes will involve volunteers on a regular basis. Neither student nor parent volunteers will ever be left alone with one child, or with the class. The teacher is always responsible for the supervision of the children.

Parents coming for holiday parties or birthday celebrations do not need to be fingerprinted.

For field trips, each parent may drive his/her own child. Only parents who have been fingerprinted and background checked by MCP or OPC or OCS may drive other children. If there is a limit on the number of chaperones permitted because of the destination of the field trip, teachers will choose the chaperones.

Snacks/Lunch:

Helping your child develop healthy eating habits is important to the staff at MCP. Our teachers will encourage children to try new foods, eat all (or most) of their lunches, and teach the children about balanced diets, health and nutrition. Please be sure that you are sending snacks and

lunches which are healthy, including fruits, vegetables, and protein, and limiting fats and sugars. Please ask your child's teacher if you need ideas/suggestions for packing kid-friendly, healthy lunches.

Each teacher will let you know how she plans to handle snacks. Some will have a snack basket where each child has the occasional opportunity to bring snack for the class for the week. Others prefer each child to bring his own snack each day. Either way, please provide simple, healthy snacks. Crackers, cheese cubes, cut fruit, raisins, cereal, pretzels, and goldfish make good choices. Please do not send sugary snacks, cookies, cupcakes, chips, or candy for snack. You do not need to send a drink with snack. The children will be served water at snacktime. Your child's teacher will make you aware of any restrictions due to food allergies in your class.

Parents may send a special snack for the class to celebrate their child's birthday. Parents are welcome to come celebrate their own child's birthday during snack time. No gifts or party favors please.

Please pack your child a healthy, simple lunch. Please label all lunchboxes with your child's name, as well as any plastic containers you would like returned. Please be sure all food is cut to avoid choking hazards. Don't forget napkins, spoons and forks, when needed. We will not be heating lunch items for the children.

Tuition:

The following are the monthly tuition rates for the 2009-2010 school year:

2 Day 2's: \$186.00	January 2's class: \$200.00
2 Day 3's: \$182.50	3 Day 3's: \$230.00
4 Day 4's: \$283.50	4 Day VPK: paid by VPK program
5 Day 4's: \$355.00	5 Day VPK+: VPK funding plus \$124
Transitional PreK: \$355.00	

Tuition is an annual fee divided into 10 equal monthly payments. Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of each month. A \$20 late fee will be charged for tuition payments received in the office after the 10th of each month. A \$25 fee will be charged for returned checks.

Two Year Old Classes:

Our Two Year Old Classes will dismiss at 12:00 for the first month of school. Please walk in to pick up your child during this period. Beginning the week of September 28, your child may be picked up any time between 12:00 – 1:00. If you choose to come at 1:00, you may walk in or pick him up in the carpool line. For some of our children, especially those who nap, 9:00 - 1:00 is a very long school day. For others, it is just fine. Please work with your child's teacher to determine the best time to pick up your child, remembering that this time will probably change during the year as your child grows. Our Two's will eat lunch at 11:30, so they will have eaten when you come to pick them up.

Our Early Birds Program is not open to our Two's until January. After Christmas break, you are welcome to sign your child up for Early Birds, provided he is potty trained and it is not making too long of a day for him.

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We hope that you find the information helpful. Please contact the school anytime you have questions or concerns. We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your family.