



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

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Introduction

Welcome to Aldersgate Weekday Children's Ministry (WCM)! We are delighted that you have chosen our school for your child's preschool education and childcare.

Aldersgate WCM is a ministry of Aldersgate United Methodist Church and receives guidance and spiritual support from the church. The WCM supports and participates in the mission and ministry of the church as it serves its membership and the community. The Christian principles of the United Methodist Church guide the ethical code by which the WCM was founded and is sustained. Aldersgate United Methodist Church is fully dedicated to act on behalf of the needs, rights, and well-being of the children of the WCM.

Our teaching staff is a team of well-trained and experienced individuals. Each member of our team brings to our staff their unique experiences and expertise allowing the WCM to provide a childcare and education experience that compares to no other. The WCM provides a developmentally appropriate, curriculum-based approach to education while adding enrichment opportunities such as chapel, music, art, dance, gymnastics, and field trips.

It is the philosophy of the WCM and its staff that children, their families, and the community benefit from high-quality early childhood programs. We believe that there is a critical link between a child's early experiences and later success in life. We believe that you cannot separate childcare and education; children learn best through their play, interactions, and experiences.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide quality childcare and education in a Christian environment that provides opportunities for spiritual, educational, emotional, and physical development.

Program Goals and Standards

Goals

The learning environment at the WCM is structured in such a way as to give the child an opportunity to independently explore, select, create, and problem solve. Classrooms are organized around interest centers and play areas that include art, math, science, language arts, blocks, dramatic play, cooking, and nutrition. The WCM staff plans and facilitates these experiences for the total development of your child. In order to do this, we have the following Program Goals:

- To provide a quality program to meet the needs of our students.
- To provide a stimulating, multicultural environment with developmentally appropriate activities for intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual growth.
- To support and enhance relationships between WCM staff and families.

Standards

The WCM is an Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) licensed facility and adheres to the regulations and procedures set forth in the Child Care Licensing and Performance Standards for Day Care Centers and Nighttime Centers. We are reviewed

annually by DHR. In addition, the WCM is annually inspected by the Health Department and the Fire Marshal. The WCM remains in compliance with all standards.

DHR Child:Teacher Ratios

The Weekday Children's Ministry is licensed for 186 children. The WCM complies with and/or exceeds the Department of Human Resources required student:teacher ratios:

Classroom	DHR Ratio	WCM Ratio
Nursery A (6 weeks -18 months)	5:1	4:1
Nursery B (6-18 months)	5:1	5:1
Toddler A (12-24 months)	5:1	5:1
Toddler B (18-30 months)	7:1	7:1
Younger 2's (24-36 months)	8:1	8:1
Middle and Older 2's (2.5-3 years)	11:1	11:1
Threes	11:1	11:1
Fours	18:1	14:1*

*During periods where staff availability is limited, the WCM will follow the DHR ratio for this age group.

Curriculum

In order to meet the needs of all our students and teachers, the WCM uses a variety of curriculums including Learning Without Tears, Thematic Units/Themes, and Abeka. Our teachers are very creative and include many extra activities to enrich their curriculum and help them meet the goals and objectives for the students in their classrooms.

Registration and Enrollment

Families are encouraged to request a time to tour the facility, meet teachers, review classroom schedules, and become familiar with our policies and fees before enrolling their child.

Current students have the opportunity to register each spring for the following year. Openings not filled during that time will then be offered to families on our wait list.

Enrollment is year-round (August - August). If you would like your child to be off in the summer, you must return the Summer Intent Form that we send home before registration in the spring. This will be on a first come, first serve basis. If we are able to fill your child's spot for the summer, you will not be charged tuition. We will fill the spots in the order we receive the Summer Intent Form back. If we are unable to fill your child's spot for the summer, you will be charged ½ tuition in order to hold that spot for August. Also, two week withdrawal notices will not be accepted after committing to attend in the summer. We also offer a summer-only registration if space is available.

Younger students are placed in age groups according to age at the time of enrollment. Students ages 3 and up will be placed in appropriate age groups based on the September 1 public school cut off date. We will not place children beyond their age group.

A registration packet must be completed before enrolling at the WCM. This packet must be complete before your child's first day of attendance. Paperwork and fees that must be provided include:

- Registration Fee
- Annual Fees
- Registration Form (Parents must provide their social security number on this form. Why are we asking for your SSN? We need this information to assist the WCM in the event that your tuition account should come into default and collection actions becomes necessary. The WCM will safeguard your SSN information and protect it from disclosure or use. The registration form will be placed in your child's folder and locked in a secure location. At no time will social security numbers be entered into our computer program.)
- Valid Immunization Record (Official Immunization Record that must be obtained from your child's doctor)
- DHR Preadmission Form
- Media Consent & Contact Information Form
- Student Information Sheet
- Special Notices Form (if applicable)

Please Note: Immunization Records have expiration dates. It is your responsibility to get an updated Immunization Record to the office staff prior to the expiration date. You will receive a reminder notice when your child's Immunization Record is about to expire. All students must have a current, valid Immunization Record or an Alabama issued medical exception certificate on file to attend school.

Hours of Operation

- Monday - Friday year round
- 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM Full-time care
- 7:00 AM - 7:30 AM Early Care (\$25 a week per child)

Tuition and Fees

Tuition

Weekly tuition is charged and due on Monday of each week. A \$20 late fee will be charged to any account with a balance due at close of business (5:30pm) on Wednesday. If payments are made late on a continuous basis, we reserve the right to request that payment be made each Monday when children are signed in at school. If the account balance owed is equal to two weeks of tuition and the total balance due is not paid by close of business on Wednesday of the current week, enrollment will be terminated and a \$30 late fee will be charged to the account. Upon receipt of the total balance due and a \$50 re-enrollment fee, the student can be re-enrolled if a spot is still available. If the total balance due is not received within 30 days of termination, the account will be sent to collections. The only week that full tuition is not charged is the week we are closed for Christmas holidays.

If you are having financial difficulties, please make an appointment to talk with the WCM Director(s) before your account is declared delinquent. Failure to respond to Aldersgate WCM collection efforts will result in your account being turned over to a collection

agency, and will result in additional collection fees. Checks, money orders, cashier's checks, and bank drafts should be made payable to Aldersgate WCM **with the child's name on the "for" line**. Please drop payments in the black Tuition Box located on the wall outside the office door.

You can fill out a Tuition Express Enrollment form for automated bank draft (ACH) weekly payments. If you sign up for the ACH payments there will be a \$0.75 (subject to change) processing fee added to your payment each week. In order to cancel the weekly automated payment, we will need a written notice of 10 business days.

You can also fill out an Online Payment Form and set up an account on myprocare.com in order to pay online. The fee for online payments is 2.7% of the amount paid plus \$0.30 (subject to change). Procare accepts payments from Visa, Master Card, Discover, and American Express. Debt cards and pre-paid cards have the same fee as credit cards. You are able to sign up for weekly or monthly online payments. If you sign up to pay by the month, you will not be able to split payments. Therefore, you will have to pay for the full month at the start of the month. If you sign up to pay by the week, the transaction fee will be charged every week even if payments are made in advance. Online payments can be stopped at any point; however, we will need a written notice of 5 business days to cancel the associated fees.

Current Tuition Rates are as follows:

- Nursery A&B \$195 weekly*
- Toddler A \$185 weekly*
- Toddler B \$175 weekly*
- K2 \$170 weekly*
- K3 & K4 \$165 weekly*

*Tuition rates are subject to change.

Families with two students will receive a 10% discount for the lesser tuition amount. Families with three students will receive a 10% discount for the least tuition amount and a 5% discount for the 2nd least tuition amount. **However, discounts will not be applied to nursery or toddler aged children.**

Annual Fees

These are non-refundable fees due at the time of enrollment.

- **Registration Fee** \$100 (Nursery A – K4)
- **Curriculum Fee** \$30 (Toddler – 2s) \$45 (K3 – K4)
Curriculum includes workbooks and/or activity sheets, art projects, journals, assessments, etc.
- **Activity Fee** \$55 (Nursery A&B) \$70 (Toddler A – K4)
This fee includes a WCM T-shirt (Toddler A – K4 to wear on field trips and special days) and all activities that the WCM does throughout the year, such as Pictures with Santa, Halloween, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Spring Programs, Water Days, End of Summer Party, etc.

Other Fees

A late pick-up fee of \$10 per child will be charged to your account when a student is not picked up by 5:30 PM with an additional fee of \$1 per minute after 5:40 PM. After the 3rd late pick-up, the amounts above will double. If late pick-ups become excessive, a student may be dismissed from the program.

A fee of \$25 will be charged for each returned check or Tuition Express payment declined due to insufficient funds. After two returned items, all payments must be made with a money order or cashier's check.

Calendar

An annual calendar of school closings and events will be available at the beginning of the new school year. This year, the WCM observes the following holidays:

Labor Day

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Holidays (Nov. 22-24)

Christmas Holidays (Dec. 25-29: No tuition is charged this week!)

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

President's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day and the day after

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the weekday closest to the holiday will be taken (i.e., Friday will be taken for Saturday holidays, Monday will be taken for Sunday holidays).

Although public school closes for spring break and extended Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays, the WCM remains open for all children except for the days stated above. The WCM will be closed for teacher inservice two days prior to the new school year, the first weekday after New Year's Day is observed, and the Friday before Memorial Day. Specific dates will be posted on the WCM School Calendar.

Arrival and Departure

Parents/guardians must escort their children to and from the classroom daily. For the safety of the children in the classroom, parents, other adults, and siblings, should remain outside of the classroom when dropping off and picking up if children are present in the classroom. It is required by DHR regulations that you sign your child in and out at the classroom using your **full name**, not initials. You must also notate the standard time you sign your child in or out on the clipboard (not military time). After Chapel, when teachers leave their classrooms during the day the clipboard will be with them to sign children in or out while at the playground, gym, music, library, or other special activities. Children will be released to parents from the playground only at the

fence gate and will not be released to go to the parent's car unattended. Please check information on the door, bulletin board, and cubbie daily. Teachers will often leave important information and other reminders on the clipboard for parents. The WCM office may also leave correspondence envelopes, so it is important to look for communications each day.

Please use great caution when getting children into and out of automobiles. Children may dart out into WCM traffic if not supervised carefully. **Never leave any children or babies unattended in the car at any time.** Please bring your child in with you and always lock your car. Do not leave personal items, such as your purse, in the car unattended.

Children are only released to the custodial parent, guardian or persons authorized in their file. A copy of court orders restricting a parent's right to pick up their child must be on file to deny pick up. Written authorization for persons other than legal guardians is required for pick up and proper photo identification (driver's license) must be provided at the office.

If a custodial parent, guardian, or authorized pick-up person arrives to pick up a child and they are being perceived as though they are impaired due to the use of drugs and/or alcohol, WCM Office Staff may deny the individual access to the child. WCM Office Staff will call another approved pick-up person to pick up the child.

Security System

For the safety of our students and staff, the WCM has keypad entry. All parents are provided an individual security code for the outer entrance doors. Please do not give this code to anyone. All others picking up or bringing your child must ring the call button and then we will buzz them in to check in at the office. Photo Identification is required for pick-up. All parents will have the same general code to access the inner doors.

Meals and Snacks

Menus are posted on the bulletin board outside each classroom and emailed to parents. Occasionally a minor change to the menu may occur. This will be noted on the posted menu. Children's food allergies are posted in each classroom and teachers take great care in serving food to children with food allergies.

The WCM provides two snacks and a lunch daily. The WCM does not serve breakfast and asks that parents not send breakfast food for their child to eat after arrival as this impacts other children in the room.

Parents must notify the WCM in writing of any food allergies and/or food restrictions. Children may bring their lunch. Please get approval from your teacher prior to bringing food into the class. There are many children with food allergies. Whether the infant uses powdered formula or breast milk, the bottles must be prepared at home and brought to the school. Per DHR requirements, children old enough to drink water must have access to water at all times. Therefore, parents of children old enough to drink water must bring a sippy cup or water bottle to school every day. (Sippy cups can be used until children enter the Young Twos.) Please do not send juice, sodas, or any drink

mixed with medication. When bringing your child's lunch containers, milk containers, water bottles, cups, and/or bottles, make sure they are clearly marked with the child's name. All lunch containers, milk containers, water bottles, cups, and/or bottles must be taken home daily.

Clothing

At least one seasonally appropriate outfit and pair of socks should be kept in your child's bag or cubbie at all times. Children who are potty training may be asked to have more than one set of clothing in their cubbie. Please mark EVERYTHING with your child's name.

Weather permitting, the children will play outside every day, so please dress your child in seasonally appropriate play clothes. Hats, gloves, and coats are needed in the winter. Children's footwear should be safe for walking, running and climbing. Flip-flops, sandals, Crocs, and fancy dress shoes **are not suitable** for safe play or learning to walk. **Please send children in tennis shoes and socks.**

Napping

Parents of Toddlers through K4 children will need to send a crib-sized sheet & blanket or a roll up napper for sleeping. Parents will be asked to take these items home on Fridays to launder and return on Monday. Please mark EVERYTHING with your child's name. We provide bedding for the Nursery, which is washed daily. Children in the Nursery can only sleep on a crib sheet. Per DHR, no blankets, pillows, toys, or other soft items can be in the crib.

Outside Play

According to DHR guidelines, every child must go outside every day, weather permitting. DHR guidelines require that a child in school must be healthy enough to participate in the center's activities. Outside play is a center activity. We do not have the resources to keep a child inside while his/her class is outside.

Medications and Treatments

According to DHR's Performance Standards, "No medication or medical procedures (prescription or over the counter) shall be administered without being ordered by the child's health professional and without a written, signed authorization, on the required form, from the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). Blanket authorization forms are prohibited. The authorization form shall include time(s) and date(s) to be administered, dosage, storage instructions (refrigerated or unrefrigerated), and specific directions for administering the medication/medical procedure, such as given by mouth, apply to skin, (such as but not limited to sun-screen, bug spray, hand sanitizer), inhale, drops in eyes, etc. An authorization form shall be valid for no more than seven (7) days unless accompanied by a written physician's statement." If needed, please apply sunscreen and bugspray before dropping your child off at school.

There cannot be any medication (which also includes: lotion, sunscreen, chapstick, diaper rash cream, bug spray, etc.) left in your child's bag. This is a DHR violation.

Medication is kept in a locked cabinet in the child's classroom or in the office. Medication must be in its original container with dosage amounts and times to administer. WCM Staff will not administer medication that is not in its original container or medication that is not intended for children (cough drops, etc.). If medication requires measurement, parents must provide the dropper and/or measuring cup. We will not administer any medication that has to be rectally inserted. Parents may also come to the WCM to personally administer medication.

Illness

If your child develops symptoms of illness while at school, we will contact the people listed on your child's DHR Preadmission Form. Your child must be picked up within **one hour of contact**. After one hour, late pickup charges will apply. If your child is sent home from school because of symptoms of illness, they **cannot return the next day without a doctor's note**. However, children will not be permitted to stay at school if still exhibiting fever, vomiting or diarrhea, even with a doctor's note.

It is important that all communicable illnesses be reported to the WCM. The goal of the WCM is to prevent the spread of illness. Parental cooperation is essential.

To protect the health of all children, the WCM follows the American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for School Exclusion. Below is a list of the most common illnesses for which a child must be excluded:

- Fever of 100 degrees F or above - the child may return after 24 hours of **no fever without medication**.
- Diarrhea – 2 or more episodes - the child may return after 24 hours episode free.
- Vomiting – 2 or more episodes – the child may return after 24 hours episode free.
- Pink eye – the child may return after the condition is treated with a doctor's note.
- Rash with fever or unusual rash – the child may return once cleared by a physician with a doctor's note.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (strep throat) – the child may return 24 hours after initial treatment and fever free with a doctor's note.
- Viral or bacterial infections – the child may return after being treated and released by a physician with a doctor's note.
- Ringworm – the child may return once treatment has begun. The area infected must remain covered at all times.

For a full list of conditions, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for School Exclusion which can be found at:

<http://health.ocde.us/Health/Documents/SchoolExclusion>

Injuries and Accidents

If a minor accident occurs, first aid measures will be taken and a WCM Minor Incident/Accident Report completed. A signed copy will be emailed to the parent/guardian and one placed on file. Parents/guardians will be called in the case of accidents that may need a doctor's attention or injuries that need a parent/guardian to determine a course of action. If you should take your child to the doctor after an accident/injury that occurred at school, please inform the school as soon as possible.

In the event of a serious accident, the child will be taken immediately to the hospital by ambulance. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contacts will be called. An office staff member will stay with the child as allowed by emergency and medical personnel until the child's parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.

Birthdays

The WCM does not host birthday parties during the instructional day. Parents may send one special treat (small cupcakes or cookies) for the whole class if they wish for a child's birthday. Please bring the treats during morning drop off and get prior approval from your child's teacher or the office. There are many children with food allergies. For the safety of the children in the classroom, parents and other adults will not be able to participate while the children are eating the special treat. However, you can request for the teacher to take pictures and post them on our Facebook page if time permits. If you are planning a private party outside of school for your child, you may send invitations home with the children only if the whole class is invited. Otherwise, we ask you to mail invitations or call parents individually. However, we cannot give out contact information.

Field Trips

Well-planned and carefully supervised field trips are an important part of a quality curriculum. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to chaperone field trips. Field trips will be paid for on an individual basis. Some of the field trips we take are free and parents will only be charged for use of the bus(es), whether or not their child rides a bus. Parent chaperones cannot ride the bus. However, there will be others throughout the year that parents will be responsible for paying at the time of the trip. Field trips must be paid IN CASH (no checks) to your child's teacher. We secure group rates for our field trips. Therefore, if your child is a member of any organization or field trip destination to be visited, we cannot recognize memberships. Also, once you pay for your child to attend a field trip, we are unable to refund the amount of the field trip if your child should be unable to attend. This is an educational experience with your child's class, so please do not bring siblings or other children on the field trip.

A Field Trip Authorization Form will be required for each trip. It is a DHR regulation that all children under 5 years old must ride in a 5 point latch car seat. Children 5 years old AND weighing 40 pounds or more must ride in a booster seat. The WCM does not have the means to weigh children; therefore, we rely on the parents to inform us of the proper weight of the child and provide the correct car seat. Children 6 years old and older may ride with the regular bus seat belt. Parents will bring car seats or booster seats on the day of field trips and install the seats into the WCM bus. Please do not bring seats into the building unless the bus is not available when you arrive. Parents are encouraged to recommend places for age appropriate outings.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Contact

Current emergency phone numbers for each child shall be kept on file so that a parent or designated emergency contact can be reached in the case of an emergency. It is important that parents report changes immediately to the office. In emergencies, we will contact the first person listed on your child's DHR Preadmission Form and if they are

not immediately available, we will call the next person until someone is reached. Please note that emergency contacts cannot pick up your child unless they are also listed as an authorized pick-up person on the DHR Preadmission Form.

Emergency School Closing Information

Should the WCM have to close because of weather or other emergency situations, we will do our very best to notify parents/guardians. We will post closures on our group Facebook page. If the decision to have an emergency school closure takes place during operating hours, office staff will send out an email to notify parents of the closure. It is essential that the correct email address and cell phone number are on file in the office. Please let the office staff know should your email address and/or cell phone number changes throughout the year. During times of inclement weather, parents can also watch for postings about school closings on the Alabama News Network television stations (WAKA Channel 8-CBS & WNCN Channel 32-ABC). **However, the most reliable method of communicating emergency school closings is our Facebook page** as news networks will remove small schools from their closure list in order to make room for larger schools when necessary.

In most cases, the WCM will follow the Montgomery County Public School decision about closing. Tuition is not prorated due to emergency school closings, including weather, natural disasters, pandemics, etc.

Fire Safety

Fire drills are conducted monthly at different times during the day. Children are escorted out of the facility until an all-clear is sounded. An annual fire inspection keeps the facility current for fire safety.

Severe Weather Safety

Severe weather drills are practiced once a quarter. A weather radio and severe weather warnings notify the WCM staff of severe weather conditions. When tornado sirens sound, all children are immediately escorted to the weather emergency area of the facility - the "safe hall". The Director(s) monitors conditions and notifies WCM staff when it is safe to leave the safe area.

Parents are urged not to pick up their children during severe weather warnings. The WCM is an approved shelter and children are safer in the facility than in an automobile.

Lockdown Plan

The WCM has a plan in place for if there were to be an intruder in the building or other possible threats. Lockdown drills are practiced once a quarter. The lock down plan is located in the Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan is emailed to all parents at the start of the school year and can also be emailed to parents as requested.

Evacuation Plan

The WCM has a plan in place for situations that could demand the evacuation of the building. Evacuation drills are practiced once a quarter. The evacuation safety plan is located in the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Attendance and Vacation Credits

Attendance

Children benefit from predictable routines. Regular attendance helps them gain the most from our program. Chapel services begin at 8:30am each day! It is beneficial if all children arrive no later than 9:30am, so they do not miss center activities. Teachers encourage children to arrive on time, so they can fully participate in planned activities. Parents are urged to not drop off or to pick children up during naptime.

Vacation Credits

Each student will be permitted two weeks of vacation credit per school year (August-August) at the rate of 50% off tuition. A school year is considered the first day of school in August through the day before the first day of school the following August. Students only attending in the summer will be permitted one week of vacation credit. A student must be absent five consecutive days to receive the vacation credit. A Vacation Credit Request Form must be filled out and turned in to the office staff at least one week in advance. Your request will be either approved or denied and given back to you. Credits will not be applied unless a Vacation Credit Request Form is given in advance and the student is absent five consecutive days. If you have already used two weeks of vacation credit, your request will be denied. Vacation Credits will not be approved during a two week notice of withdrawal period. Vacation Credit Request Forms are located in the office.

Advancement and Promotions

Children ages 3 and up are placed and advanced in accordance with public school policy based on their age on September 1 of that school year. Infants, Toddlers, and children under 3 are placed in age groups according to age at the time of enrollment and are advanced to the next class in January, end of May and/or August of each school year. Although this is the promotion schedule we strive to follow, there are times when a child will not be able to move up at the scheduled time. Based on circumstances, there may also be times when a child needs to be advanced at another time throughout the year. ALL promotions are based on the age of the child, development of the child, and space availability. Children will always attend a class that has been DHR certified for their age. (See DHR Child:Teacher Ratios on pg. 4 for classroom ages.)

We will not advance children beyond their age group. Children who advance early will have to repeat a year at some point before entering school. Generally, their social skills develop best by staying with their own age group. Teachers make every effort to individualize education to meet each child's needs.

When students move from one class to another grade level, the following is expected:

Nursery A to Nursery B – Begin offering baby food and items from our WCM food menu, having a morning and afternoon nap, & work on moving from bottle to sippy cup before moving to Toddler A

Nursery B to Toddler A – No bottles, drink from sippy cups, eating from the WCM food Menu, and sleeping on cots for one afternoon nap

Toddler A to Toddler B – Move towards regular cups, giving up the pacifier

Toddler B to 2's – No sippy cups, no pacifiers, begin potty training at school/home

Before entering K3 – Must be independently potty trained and in underwear.
Before entering K4 – Must be bathroom independent due to using large restrooms on the hall

Parent Communication

There is an entry information television located outside the WCM Office with helpful information about the WCM. Please check the monitor screen located in the entryway often! The office staff communicates with parents/guardians via email and/or letters sent home with the children. We also have a private Facebook page you can join to receive important information. The Parent Newsletter or Calendar is sent via email during the school year, at the beginning of each month. It contains information about field trips, school closings, and special events. Please take the time to read this information so you will be aware of what is happening in the classrooms.

Teachers also communicate with parents via notes sent home with the children, posted on the sign-in/out sheets, and/or posted on the bulletin boards located outside the classroom. A daily schedule, monthly menu, and weekly themes are also posted on the bulletin boards outside the classrooms.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to use email to communicate with the Director (wcmdirector@aldersgateumc.org) and Assistant Director (wcmpreschool@aldersgateumc.org) when possible.

We use Procure text service for sending reminders and other important information. Standard messaging rates apply.

Parent Involvement

Periodically, the classes invite parents/guardians to come to the school for events. Parents/guardians and grandparents are encouraged to attend. It is important that children feel the adults in their lives are interested in their education.

Potty Training

For successful potty training, a child must be physically, cognitively, and emotionally ready and must be able to indicate the need to go potty. Our teachers work with the family to help make potty training a relaxed and successful process that builds the child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Potty training usually begins around 24 months of age, but success is dependent on the readiness of the child. We will work closely with our families and students on potty training. To be successful, potty training must be done on a consistent basis at **home and school**. We request the following procedures be followed:

1. Dress your child in easy on/off clothes.
2. Please buy pull-ups that have Velcro on the side, so that we do not have to completely undress your child if they have an accident.
3. Please discuss wearing underwear with us when you think your child is ready to transition from pull-ups to underwear.
4. Once your child is no longer wearing diapers/pull-ups, they will need to wear underwear each day.

5. Your child may still need to wear a pull-up during naptime.
6. Your child will need several changes of clothes and underwear in his/her cubby at all times.

Children are expected to be independently toilet trained and in underwear before they start attending a three-year-old class. Please remember that all registration fees are non-refundable, even if a child has to withdraw from the WCM because he/she is not potty trained by the beginning of the new school year for K3 and K4.

Biting

Biting is a common behavior of young children. Children bite for a variety of reasons. The teachers at Aldersgate WCM will work with parents to help identify the reason for the biting and a solution to help eliminate the behavior, so that the child may move quickly through this phase. If necessary, dismissal from the WCM for biting will be handled on a case by case basis. Possible examples for dismissal are: If biting becomes excessive, repeatedly breaks the skin, and/or when the child enters older age classrooms.

Child Guidance

Here at the WCM, we prefer a positive approach to managing children's behavior that is consistent with the developmental needs of children. The children are encouraged to develop self-control and to handle conflict in a peaceful and positive manner. Positive guidance includes prevention, redirection, positive encouragement, modeling, and age-appropriate time-out. For communication purposes, a student may receive a WCM Minor Incident/Accident Report explaining inappropriate behavior.

The WCM does not permit ANY form of corporal punishment or force by any other child, teacher, staff member, or parent while in the facility or on the church premises. The following techniques are not permitted:

- Depriving of food, water, nap, or bathroom
- Using disrespect, shaming, blaming, intimidation, ridicule, or harsh language.

If there is a discipline problem we cannot solve, we will ask for assistance from the parent. The WCM reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior becomes so disruptive as to cause physical and/or emotional harm to the child, other children, or staff members and/or causes a severe disruption to the daily schedule of the center.

Confidentiality

Parents and children have the right to expect that all information about their family is confidential. A child's behavior and development should be discussed only with his or her teachers and parents. A parent does not have the right to know who injured their child; they do have the right to know the circumstances and how both children were cared for and/or disciplined. Children's records are stored in a secure cabinet and computer files are password protected. Photographs will be used on the website or publicly only with parental consent. A media release form will be on record for each child.

Video footage obtained by the camera security system installed in the classrooms and hallways are only accessible by WCM Office Staff and Aldersgate UMC Church Administrator. To ensure the confidentiality due to all students and their families, parents are not permitted to view video footage. Parents can request for the Director(s) to review video footage and inform them of relevant information that does not breach the confidentiality of other students.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Child care providers are mandated by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Resources. The priority of the Center is to protect all children and maintain safety and well-being.

Conferences

We are concerned about the round-the-clock experiences of the child in his/her home, school, and community. We recognize our opportunity to cooperate with parents and to learn from them. All teachers and staff members are more than happy to talk with you about your child at any time, but please set up a time to meet with them outside the classroom. Although teachers love talking with you when you are picking up or dropping off your child, they are still in charge of taking care of their students. Rather than discussing issues in the class, please set up a time when you can meet together outside the classroom or have a telephone conference. We always strive to give the best attention to our children!

Grievances

The WCM takes parents' concerns very seriously. Should you have any concerns, we want to hear them and do everything we can to bring resolution! If you have a concern regarding the classroom or teacher, please set up a conference with the teacher to seek resolution. If, after meeting with the teacher, you are not satisfied with the results, please contact the Director(s) to set up a conference. However, we do not conduct conferences between 7:30am-8:45am and 4:30pm-5:30pm, due to duties during arrival and departure times.

If you have a concern regarding the school, please set up a conference with the Director(s). If you should have a concern regarding the Director(s) that cannot be resolved by meeting with the Director(s), please send a written grievance to the Aldersgate UMC Church Administrator.

Withdrawal and Termination of Services

Parents are expected to notify the WCM in writing **at least two weeks** in advance of withdrawing from the program. If notice has not been given, you will still be responsible for tuition for the two week notification period. (See page 4 concerning two week notices after committing to attend in the summer.)

The WCM may terminate services in the event of excessive:

- Late pick up by parents.
- Inappropriate behavior of parents.

- Requests for special accommodations the WCM cannot meet.
- Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner.
- Failure to comply with WCM policies concerning ill children.
- Failure to provide documentation.
- Failure to keep immunization records current.
- Failure to provide emergency contact updates.
- Behavior of the child that prevents the child from participating safely with peers, staff members, or causes a severe disruption to the daily schedule of the center.
- Behavior of the child that prevents them from participating safely in center activities.



2023-2024 Aldersgate WCM Calendar

August 4 & 7	CLOSED - WCM Teacher In-service
August 7	Open House (Time will be announced.)
August 8	First Day of the New School Year
September 4	CLOSED - Labor Day
October 9	CLOSED - Indigenous Peoples' Day
October 31	Halloween Parade & Classroom Parties (AM Snack)
November 10	CLOSED - Veteran's Day
November 17	Thanksgiving Program 4:00 PM
November 22-24	CLOSED - Thanksgiving Holidays
December 14	Christmas Program 10:00 AM
December 15	Christmas Classroom Parties (AM Snack)
December 25-29	CLOSED - Christmas Holidays (No tuition is charged.)
January 1	CLOSED - New Year's Day
January 2	CLOSED - WCM Teacher In-service
January 15	CLOSED - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 14	Valentine's Day Classroom Parties (AM Snack)
February 19	CLOSED - President's Day
March 28	Easter Egg Hunt & Classroom Parties (AM Snack)
March 29	CLOSED - Good Friday
May 6-10	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 17	K4 Preschool Graduation 10:00 AM
May 24	CLOSED - WCM Teacher In-service
May 27	CLOSED - Memorial Day
June 19	CLOSED - Juneteenth
July 4 & 5	CLOSED - Independence Day

The only week that tuition is not charged is the week we are closed for the Christmas holidays.

Tuition is not pro-rated due to emergency school closings.