



# Family Handbook 2026-2027

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## Welcome from Our Pastor

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We are so excited to welcome you to a wonderful year of learning, exploration, laughter and joy at Soapstone UMC Preschool. Thank you for entrusting your children to this community. It is a privilege to offer and experience the love of God through their presence!

If you are looking for a faith community, we'd love for you to join us on Sunday morning, at either 8:30 am or 11 am. Children are a vital part of our worship services, and we strive to make them, and their family members feel comfortable and welcomed. Sensory bags with fidget toys and activity binders are available in the sanctuary, on the left as you enter. Danny Peck, our Director of Family Ministries, who also leads Preschool Chapel, provides a special message for children during worship. Afterward, children five or under are welcome to stay in the worship service or enjoy time in the church nursery.

You and your family are also invited to attend any event at SUMC including Vacation Bible School, the Strawberry Festival, Live Nativity, Christmas Eve Family Service, and more. You can learn about all of these ministries at [soapstoneumc.org](http://soapstoneumc.org).

Additional opportunities that may be of interest:

-MOMCo (The MOM Community), a group that supports women through their parenthood journeys, meeting twice a month for learning, conversation, and playdates. Childcare is provided. Contact church member Blair Roberts ([bbroberts218@gmail.com](mailto:bbroberts218@gmail.com)) for more information.

-Free Pilates classes, Tuesdays at 1:30 pm, and Thursdays at 9:45 am, upstairs in Room 200. Bring a mat!

I am looking forward to meeting you, and your children this year!

Peace,  
Laura



# 2026-27 SOAPSTONE PRESCHOOL STAFF

## Toddlers

Room #133      Lead Teacher      Peg Feely  
                          Assistant Teacher      Jamie Fordin

## 2 Year Old Classes

Room #131      Lead Teacher      Karen Sazani                      Room #132      Lead Teacher      Val Moser  
                          Assistant Teacher         Assistant Teacher      Brooke Barksdale

## 3 Year Old Classes

Room #134      Lead Teacher      Linda Schwarz                      Room #135      Lead Teacher      Jennifer Schudlik  
                          Assistant Teacher      Ali Riter    Assistant Teacher      Kim Sauls

## 4 Year Old Classes

Room #137      Lead Teacher      Vicky Fouse                      Room #137      Lead Teacher      Michelle Partsch  
                          Assistant Teacher      Rebecca Myers    Assistant Teacher      Sabrina Brown

Room #138      Lead Teacher      Julie Scott  
                          Assistant Teachers      Jill Fitzpatrick

## Transition Kindergarten Class

Room #118      Lead Teacher      Katie Bigler  
                          Assistant Teacher      Tina Rodgers

**Music and Movement**      Cheryl McNeil

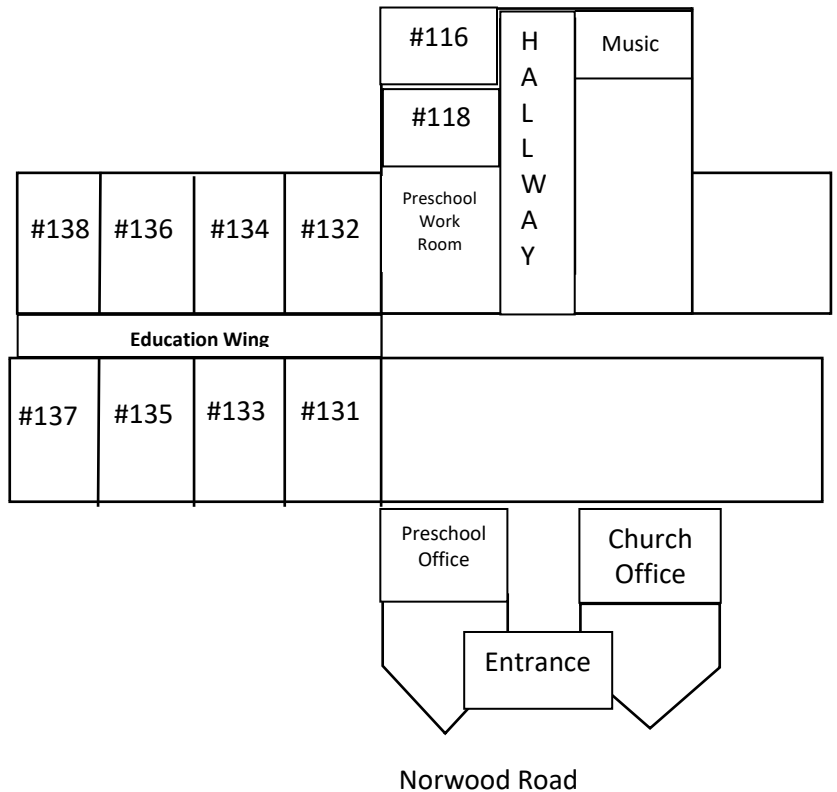
**Chapel**

**Yoga**      Jamie Fordin

**Science**      Chelsea Jones

**Preschool Office Administrator**      Mika Scarlett

**Preschool Director**



# GENERAL INFORMATION

**Mailing Address:** Soapstone Preschool  
12837 Norwood Road  
Raleigh, NC 27613

**Phone Number:** 919-870-7727

**Website:** [soapstoneumc.org/preschool](http://soapstoneumc.org/preschool)

**Email Address:** **Office:** [preschooloffice@soapstoneumc.org](mailto:preschooloffice@soapstoneumc.org)  
**Director (I):** [@soapstoneumc.org](mailto:@soapstoneumc.org)

## School Hours

**2's – TK:** 9:15am – 12:45pm

**Toddlers:** 9:15am – 12:15pm (August – December) **No Lunch**

9:15am – 12:45pm (January – May) **Lunch**

## About Soapstone Preschool

Soapstone Preschool is a ministry of Soapstone United Methodist Church offering genuine love and care to children and families in a safe, nurturing Christian environment. We believe, as Fred Roger's once said, that "play is really the work of childhood". At Soapstone, every child is special, and we strive to teach the whole child, by helping them grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and mentally. Learning is fostered through age-appropriate learning centers and hands-on activities that encourage positive socialization with teachers and peers. Parent involvement and partnership is welcome and vital to our preschool family.

## Mission, Vision, and Values

Our mission is to guide, educate and nurture children in a creative Christian environment. Children will confidently engage in enthusiastic, play-based learning and build meaningful relationships and skills within a loving, joyful, and educational space, filled with Christian love.

## TUITION & FEES

- The registration fee is equal to, but not replacing, one month's tuition. This is a non-refundable fee.
- Tuition is based upon yearly costs determined by the number of days a child attends classes weekly, which are then divided into nine equal payments.

### Monthly Tuition Schedule

Tuition Due Date:	Tuition for the Month of:
May 10, 2026	May 2027
August 10, 2026	September 2026
September 10, 2026	October 2026
October 10, 2026	November 2026
November 10, 2026	December 2026
December 10, 2026	January 2027
January 10, 2027	February 2027
February 10, 2027	March 2027
March 10, 2027	April 2027

**Tuition Schedule:** Tuition will be due on the monthly schedule as indicated above. **ALL May Tuition 2027 must be paid on May 10, 2025, or, if you register after May 2026, that payment will be collected at the time of registration.**

- Your child is enrolled in the preschool program for the school year. There is no tuition credit for absences, illness or holidays.
- In case of a late start or an extended absence, tuition must be paid if the child's place is to be held.

### **Payment Options:**

1. ACH Draft, Debit Card, Credit Card in your Procure account. *This option is highly recommended.*
  - Families paying by credit card will incur a small surcharge
2. Checks, made payable to "Soapstone Preschool".
  - New families will receive an invitation to join Procure upon admission to the preschool.
  - New families will be charged \$15 for your child's Soapstone tote bag in August 2026.

**Bulk Tuition Payments:** Tuition is collected monthly; however, if you prefer to do a bulk payment, please let the preschool director know. Your choices are the following:

- 1) One (1) payment for the entire year
- 2) Two (2) payments per semester (August – November/December – March).

**Late Tuition Fee:** The preschool will send a friendly reminder if you are late paying your tuition; however, a \$20 late fee will be charged for any tuition payment not received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Another \$20 fee will be charged for any tuition payment not received by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. *If you miss 2 monthly tuition payments, your child will be unable to return to school until payment is received or a payment program is set up with the director.*

**Returned Check Fee:** A \$25 fee will be charged for any returned check.

**Withdrawal from Preschool**

If a child is withdrawn from the preschool for any reason, the family will be charged tuition through the month in which they withdraw.

- In the case of withdrawal, registration fees are not refundable.
- In the case of withdrawal, pre-paid May tuition will be reimbursed if the family withdraws prior the first day of school. Once school begins, pre-paid May tuition is non-refundable.

# ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

## Morning Arrival

*Arrival procedures begin between 9:10-9:15 am. The time prior to this is for teacher preparation and our morning meeting and devotion.*

## **Parent Drop-Off**

Parents can walk their child to their classroom in the mornings. Parking is available at the front of the church (on the Norwood Road side) or in the back of the church. **No parking is allowed near the entrances off Norwood Road on the grassy or concrete areas, or in any Handicap spots.** Adults may enter the lobby doors and walk their child to the classroom.

- *We do ask parents to not cluster around the classroom doors during morning drop-off, as our hallways fill quickly with children.*

## **Carpool Drop-Off**

Carpool drop-off (located on the Old Creedmoor Road side of the church) is used for children in the 3's, 4's, and TK. Please follow the map on page 11 to ensure that the traffic will flow smoothly.

**Note:** 2's are also welcome to use carpool if they have an older sibling.

- Use the Norwood Road entrance closest to Old Creedmoor Road. Loop around to back of church to get into line.
- Teachers will unload children on the **passenger** side of the car. Parents are not allowed to exit their vehicle to assist with unloading, as this creates a safety hazard with cars that are entering the carpool lane.
- Children must remain safely in their cars until preschool staff unloads them. We ask that children do not hang out of cars or stand through sunroofs while in the carpool lane.
- Parents may not pull around other cars in the carpool lane to leave the line early.

## **Arrival Notes**

- It is important that your child arrives on time each day. This will help your child adjust more quickly to the routine and develop a habit that will carry into the formal school years.
- Goodbyes are sometimes difficult for both parents and children. Our teachers try to make this a smooth transition for everyone involved. Children usually adjust to the morning separation with a cheerful kiss and confident assurance that you will see them in a little while. If your child is still having a difficult time adjusting after 30 minutes, we will let you know.

## **Afternoon Departure**

**Toddler Classes (12:15pm August – December/12:45pm January - May):** Parents will pick children up by the gate of the Busy Bee Garden in front of the church. In case of inclement weather, parents will pick their Toddlers up in the preschool lobby. Inclement weather dismissals will be communicated to parents by their teachers. In the beginning of the school year, teachers may communicate an earlier pickup time with parents based on the needs of the child.

**Toddler Late Fee will be assessed beginning at 12:15pm (August – December) and 12:45pm (January – May).**

### **2's Classes (12:45pm):**

Parents will pick children up by the gate of the Toddler's and 2's playground in the front of the church. In case of inclement weather, parents will pick their 2's up in the preschool lobby. Inclement weather dismissals will be communicated to parents by their teachers. In the beginning of the school year, teachers may communicate an earlier pickup time with parents based on the needs of the child.

**2's Late Fee will be assessed beginning at 12:45pm.**

### **3's/4's/TK Classes (12:45pm):**

Carpool is **mandatory** for all 3's, 4's, and TK children for dismissal. **If you have children in both the Toddlers/2's and an older class, please pick up your younger child first.** You may then walk over to the carpool line and wait in the designated "Parent Pick-Up" area for a teacher to bring your child to you.

- Use the Norwood Road entrance closest to Old Creedmoor Road. Loop around to back of church to get into line.
- Please hang your family carpool tag from the rearview mirror.
- Teachers will load children on the passenger side of the car. Preschool children are required to have a car seat. Staff is unable to load children into a car that does not have a car seat or booster seat present. We will wait with your child at preschool until an appropriate seat is provided for transport.
- Please do your best to stay in your cars. We ask parents to turn around to strap their child into the car seat. If you need to get out to buckle, we ask you do it very quickly and carefully. For liability reasons, preschool staff is unable to strap children into their car seats/boosters during dismissal.

**Carpool Late Fee will be assessed beginning at 12:55pm.**

### **Late Pick-Up:**

Soapstone Preschool does not provide after school care. A late fee (\$7 for the first minute, \$1/each minute after) will be assessed for each child who has not been picked up by the completion of the class day (see times above). After the third late pick-up, the Preschool Advisory Committee (PAC) will be notified and a discussion will be held with the family to provide appropriate next steps, which may include reviewing continued participation in the program or adjustments to registration privileges.

### **Alternate Person Picking up Child**

We MUST be made aware if someone other than the parent or authorized adult (as stated on the enrollment form) will be picking up your child. Please give this written information to the teacher. We will not allow your child to leave with another person unless we have this information. If the person picking up your child is unfamiliar to our staff, we will ask for ID to verify their name matches the name we were given. Please make sure the person you ask to pick up your child is aware of this requirement.

Should you fail to put this information in writing, you must call and leave a message with the Director so they can inform the teachers. These measures are very important to the safety and security of every child, as well your child's sense of security.

### **Alternate Student Drop-Off/Pick-Up Times**

If you need to drop you child off at preschool after the school day has started, or plan to pick your child up earlier than normal dismissal hours, please follow the steps below:

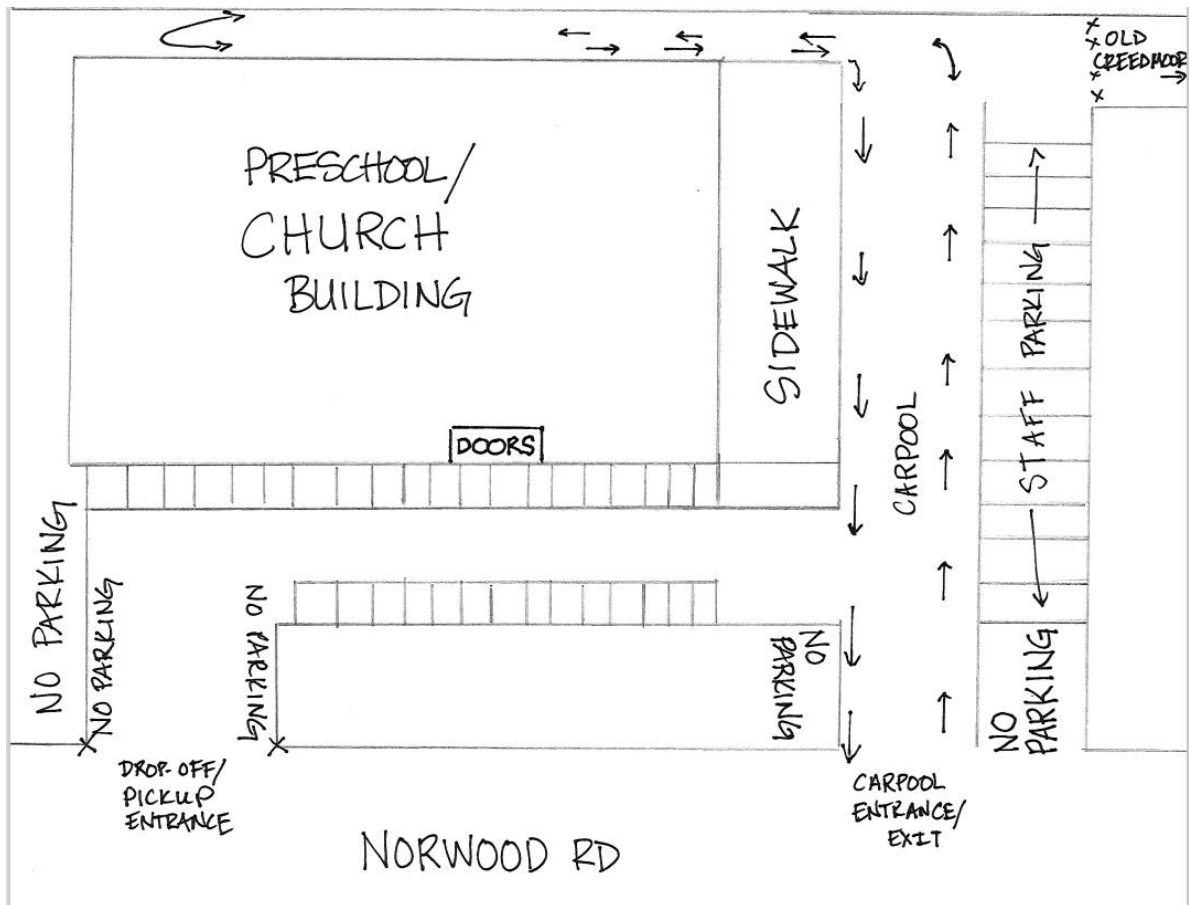
1. Ring the doorbell at the preschool entrance. Display your "Soapstone Preschool Family Card" in the camera monitor.
2. Stop at the Parent & Visitor Kiosk in the lobby
3. Scan the QR Code directly from your Procure app. Select your child and then enter your signature.
4. Next, check into the preschool office. A staff member will escort you down to your child's classroom.
5. If a staff member is not in the preschool office, please check in with the church front office. They will find a preschool staff member to assist you.

\*For detailed assistance, please refer to the "Parents: Checking Children In/Out of Soapstone Preschool" document posted on our website here: [Checking Children In/Out of Soapstone Preschool](#)

# PARKING PROCEDURES

Safety is our top priority at the preschool - for children, adults, and your vehicles. Our front parking lot does get busy (particularly in the beginning of the school year). Here are a few guidelines to make morning drop-off easier and safer.

- If you are parking in the front lot to walk your child into the school, please park **only in marked parking spots**. Do NOT park on the sides of the entrance to the front parking lot or on grassy surfaces. This blocks our entrances and does not allow for two lanes for cars to enter or exit.
- **Do not park in any spot designated for Handicap parking.**
- If you cannot find a parking spot right away, please use the carpool exit to circle around on Norwood Road and come back into the drop-off entrance.
- Carpool families – please exit straight out of the parking lot in the morning to allow the front lot to be used by those who are parking and walking their children into the school building.
- Do **NOT** use your cell phone when you are trying to park in the front lot.
- We encourage 3's, 4's, and TK families to use carpool in the morning when you can.



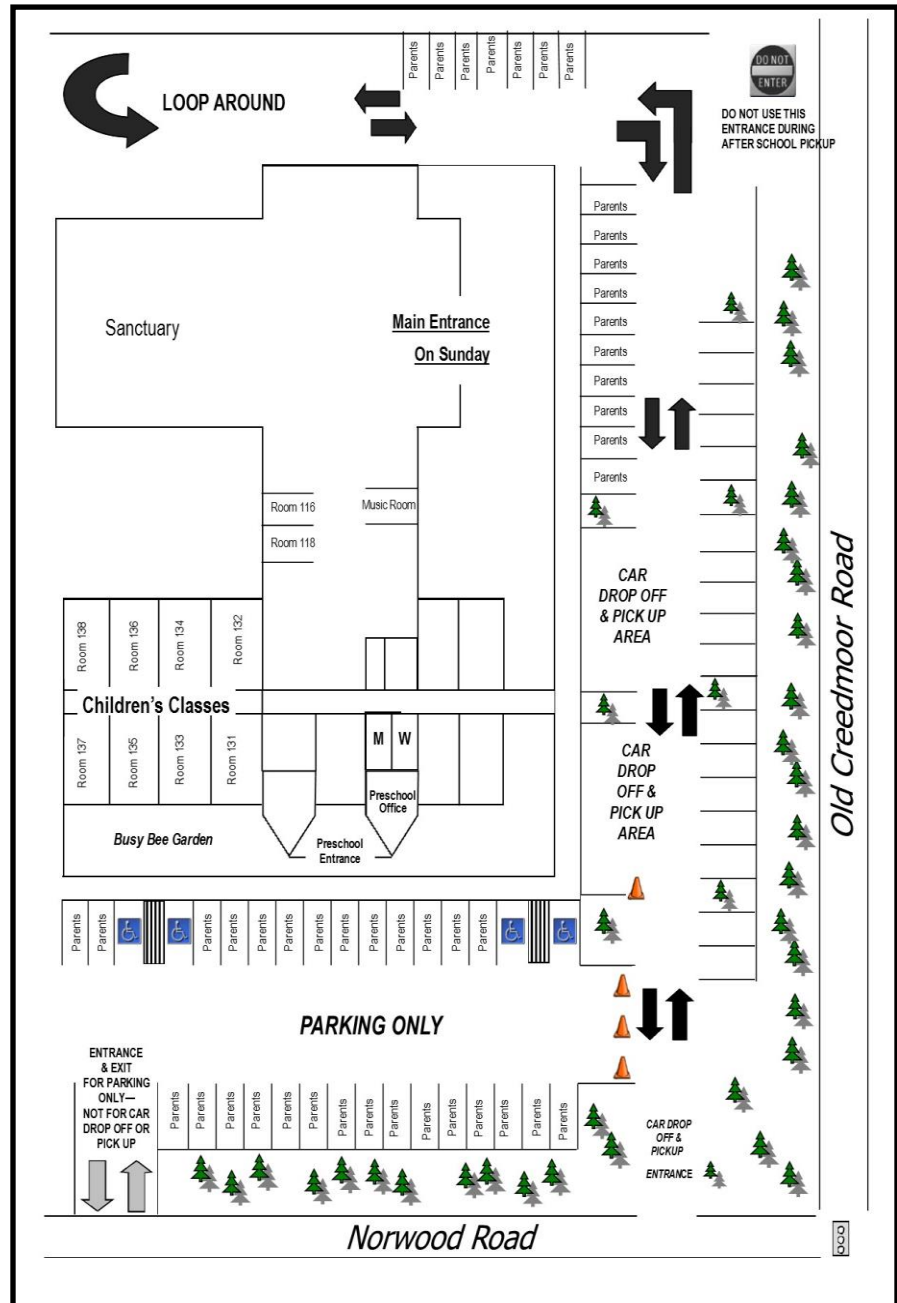
# CARPOOL LINE PROCEDURES

## For Morning Drop off

- Staff will unload children from the **passenger** side of the vehicle only. For safety reasons, please stay in your car and keep the doors closed.
- Please don't allow children to stand in sunroofs and or hang out of windows.
- Cell phone use is not permitted in the carpool line!
- Wait until the cars in front of you have moved. **DO NOT PULL AROUND!**

## For After School Pick up

- Hang your family carpool tag from the rearview mirror.
- Staff will bring children to the car on the **passenger** side.
- Please do your best to stay in your cars. We ask parents to turn around to strap their child into the carseat. If you need to get out to buckle, we ask you do it very quickly and carefully.
- Wait until the car in front leaves. **DO NOT PULL AROUND.**
- Cell phone use is not permitted in the carpool line!
- Carseats/booster seats must be used.
- If parents need to speak to a teacher, please pull around to the front parking lot to do so.



# WHAT TO WEAR/BRING

## **Clothing**

Clothing for preschool should be comfortable and appropriate for the weather. **We get messy at preschool!** Tennis shoes and approved closed-toe shoes are the most appropriate and safe footwear for children. **Flip-flops, clogs, boots with no tread, sandals, "crocs", and jellies are not allowed.**

Each child needs to keep a seasonal change of clothes in their tote bag in case of an accident. Please keep a complete change of clothes including underwear and socks in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name. The clothing will need to be changed according to each season. Please label everything —coats, gloves/mittens, hats, and face masks. Mittens are preferred for all children.

## **Disposable Diapers & Wipes**

All children not potty trained should bring enough disposable diapers or disposable training pants and wipes for the day. Please label diapers. Parents of children in older classes are to communicate with teachers concerning the potty-training progress so that the child's needs are clearly understood.

## **Personal Items**

We do not encourage bringing personal toys unless the teacher has requested them. Please make the teacher aware if there is an item your child wants to share. PLEASE LABEL it when it is brought to school.

## **Preschool Supplies**

Your classroom teacher will provide a monthly sign-up for needed classroom supplies (baby wipes, paper towels, Chlorox wipes, etc.)

## **Tote Bags**

Each child is required to purchase and bring a Soapstone Preschool tote bag to school daily. This bag is for them to carry a change of clothing, their artwork, etc. Please note that children will not necessarily bring home their work every day. **Bookbags/Backpacks are not allowed.** You'll find a communication clip hanging on their tote bag, which is a visible place to send notes to and from school.

# SNACK AND LUNCH INFORMATION

Children will have a snack and packed lunch each day. Each day, we ask that you please provide the following:

1. Small, simple snack in a labeled container **separate from lunch box.**
2. Nutritious lunch in a **labeled lunch box.**
3. A **labeled** water bottle.

**Teacher will inform parents of food allergies within their classroom and we reserve the right to make a classroom “peanut-free” if there is a child in the classroom with an allergy.**

## **SNACK & LUNCH SUGGESTIONS**

### **DRINKS**

Water Only

### **RAW VEGETABLES**

Cucumber slices or sticks

Celery sticks

Cherry tomatoes - **cut in half**

Broccoli flowerets

Radishes

**Note: No carrots**

### **BREADS AND CEREALS**

Dry cereal - not sugar coated

Trail mix of raisins and dry cereal, **NO** nuts

Crackers – saltine, round, whole grain

Vanilla wafers

Goldfish

Graham Crackers

Pretzels

### **PROTEIN**

Turkey roll-ups (or other deli meat)

Hardboiled eggs

Cheese

Greek yogurt

Edamame

### **FRUITS**

Apple wedges

Applesauce

Citrus – orange, clementine, etc.

Melon – cantaloupe, watermelon

Raisins

Grapes - **seedless and cut in half**

Pears

Peaches

Pineapple chunks

Berries

Banana

### **DAIRY PRODUCTS**

Yogurt – Plain or with fruit

Cottage Cheese

Cheese Cubes or Slices

### **SPECIAL BIRTHDAY SNACKS – MUST BE STORE BOUGHT WITH INGREDIENTS LABEL**

Mini Cupcakes

Doughnut holes

Rice Krispy Treats

Muffins

Cookies

Ice Cream Cups

Foods **not** allowed in the preschool for safety reasons

**Please do not send in the following:**

- Whole grapes or whole grape tomatoes
- Any variety of nut (including granola bars that have whole nuts)
- Carrots
- Hot Dogs
- Fruit Gummies
- Popcorn
- Any form of candy
- Juice and Soda

**Children eat independently when at preschool. Pack items for snack and lunch that your preschooler will be able to eat with minimal help.** We are not able to slice, heat, or prepare lunches.

# CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

## Conscious Discipline®

*“Discipline is not something you do to children; it is something you develop within them.”  
— Dr. Becky Bailey*

Our first priority at Soapstone Preschool is to ensure that each child who walks through the doors feels SAFE and LOVED. Physical and emotional safety dictates the ways in which we positively guide children during the preschool day. At Soapstone Preschool, we follow the tenets of Conscious Discipline to proactively teach children self-regulation skills and to build their social-emotional skills, as they learn to navigate relationships with peers and adults.

Developed by Becky Bailey, Conscious Discipline is a social-emotional learning program for parents, educators, and mental health professionals that emphasizes behavior-modeling and problem-solving, rather than punishment for misbehavior.

Conscious Discipline starts with adults. When we pay attention to our own emotions and how we react to upsetting or triggering circumstances, we can learn to self-regulate and become conscious of the words and reactions we use with children. Only then can we proactively model and teach self-regulation and problem-solving strategies to children, focusing on the following skills:

- Anger management
- Helpfulness
- Assertiveness
- Impulse Control
- Cooperation
- Empathy
- Problem-Solving

In addition, at Soapstone, we work to build classroom and preschool “families” that emphasize connection, a sense of belonging, and a shared commitment for all children. We help achieve these goals by implementing strategies like the following:

- Wish You Wells
- Safe Spaces
- Morning Meetings
- I Love You Rituals

For more information on Conscious Discipline, including free podcasts and webinars, please visit [www.consciousdiscipline.com](http://www.consciousdiscipline.com).

### **Additional Behavioral Supports**

There is a wide range of behaviors that are developmentally appropriate from 15 months - 5 years of age. However, there are times when a child needs more support in the classroom, even with targeted strategies that have already been put in place by the classroom teacher. In these instances, the following steps will be implemented:

1. The teacher will document observations of classroom/preschool behavior and will meet with the director to discuss intervention strategies. Teachers will utilize their training in Conscious Discipline and other positive discipline techniques to aid in helping each child be successful in the classroom.
2. The teacher will contact parent(s) to explain the observed behaviors and implemented strategies/interventions. The teacher will work with the parents to determine any strategies used at home to help in the classroom setting.
3. Next, the teacher, parents, and preschool director will meet in-person to discuss alternative approaches to the situation. Outside consultants (Wake County Preschool Services, Project Enlightenment, etc.) will be contacted to conduct observations, evaluations, and/or offer strategies that will help the child, the teacher, and the parents.
4. Teachers will implement recommended strategies on any observations or screenings conducted

- The policies above apply to all children enrolled at Soapstone Preschool. When a child has identified needs, Soapstone Preschool will make reasonable efforts, within the scope of our resources as a half-day preschool program, to support the child's success. This may include collaboration with parents, therapists, Wake County Preschool Services, Project Enlightenment, Child Find, and other support providers. Accommodations and modifications will be considered on an individual basis to help maintain a safe and successful learning environment. If, after reasonable interventions and support efforts, the preschool determines it cannot safely or appropriately meet a child's needs, the preschool will work with the family to discuss alternative placement or support options.

- Successful support plans require active partnership and cooperation between home and school. Families are expected to participate in meetings, follow through with agreed-upon strategies, and cooperate with recommendations made by the preschool and outside support agencies, including but not limited to the preschool, Project Enlightenment, Wake County Preschool Services, Child Find, therapists, or other agencies/professionals involved in supporting the child. Soapstone Preschool seeks to be inclusive and supportive of all children; however, if a family declines to participate in or follow recommended support plans and interventions, the preschool will no longer be able to serve the child at the preschool. No monies paid up that point will be refunded.

**Please know that the safety of all children and staff is the first priority here at Soapstone Preschool.** Aggressive behaviors against other children and staff members (kicking, hitting, pushing, spitting, etc.) that go beyond what is developmentally-appropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Children who consistently exhibit these behaviors may be asked to leave the preschool.

## 2026-27 HEALTH POLICIES

*Soapstone Preschool has adopted the following “Recommendations from the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics” and recommendations from the North Carolina Childhood Commission as our general guidelines for sickness. Soapstone Preschool follows the [American Academy of Pediatrics Immunization Schedule](#) (chart found on page 2).*

We proudly partner with our families to help prevent the spread of illness at Soapstone Preschool. It is the responsibility of our families to contact your child’s pediatrician to determine if your child’s condition is contagious to others. If your child has a contagious illness, families must contact the preschool. Likewise, the preschool will notify families when their children have been exposed to a contagious disease at the preschool.

Children may not attend preschool if they exhibit any of the following:

**\*Indicates a condition in which a doctor’s note is required for return.**

**FEVER:** If your child has a fever of 100.4 or higher, children may not return to school until they are 24-hours fever-free WITHOUT fever-reducing medication.

**INTESTINAL INFECTION:** (vomiting and/or diarrhea) not associated with changes of diet, or new medication. Children may not return to school until they are 24 hours without vomit and/or diarrhea. **If a child is sent home from school due to vomiting or diarrhea, they may not return to school the next day.**

**STREP THROAT:** Children may NOT return to school until given two doses of an appropriate antibiotic 12 hours apart.

**COMMON COLD:** 1) congestion and/or 2) persistent and discolored runny nose, and/or 3) frequent cough/wet cough. We require symptoms to be minimal and improving upon return to school (without medication).

**FLU (INFLUENZA):** Children may return to school once he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine, Tamiflu, etc. AND he/she is no longer exhibiting symptoms of the flu. We reserve the right to ask a parent to keep their child home for additional day(s) to keep the flu from spreading in the classroom.

**COVID:** Children may return to school once he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours, with minimal and improving symptoms - without any fever/symptom-reducing medicine. We reserve the right to ask a parent to keep their child home for additional day(s) to keep COVID from spreading in the classroom.

**RASH:** accompanied by a fever or behavioral changes OR skin infections (impetigo, boils, ringworm).

**EYE INFECTIONS:** (pink eye or drainage) – Children must be on medication for a full 24 hours before returning to school.

**\*CROUP**

**\*HAND, FOOT, MOUTH:** If your child exhibits bumps or rashes (particularly on their face, around their mouth, hands/feet), they can return to school **with a doctor's note** and if they have met the following criteria: *fever-free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication), no new blisters/lesions and existing blisters/lesions have closed/begun healing, and children can participate comfortably. This can typically take up to 7 days after symptoms have appeared.*

**LICE:** Head lice is a reality of living in a community and as such, sometimes will show up in our school. *There is no shame or stigma, it just happens.* Any child with diagnosed head lice will need to remain home for 24 hours after the initial treatment has been administered (not 24 hours after being notified). After that time, children can return to the preschool. Please make sure you inform the preschool if your child has lice so that we can take appropriate actions in the classrooms.

Lice treatment information will be distributed to you if your child is in a class with a confirmed case. Impacted families (in the immediate classroom) will receive an initial notification for a confirmed case, with a reminder to monitor your child's symptoms. Weekly updates will then be provided, if necessary.

Siblings of children with known cases of lice who attend the preschool must be treated for lice, too. If siblings show no nits or lice, they can return to the preschool once treated.

**\*OTHER CHILDHOOD COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:** If your child is exposed or becomes ill with a communicable disease, such as chicken pox, mumps, measles, fifth disease, etc., the director and the child's teacher must be contacted immediately.

- If your child will miss preschool (for any reason), please message your teacher and/or the preschool director in Procure or via email. It is essential that we can reach you, or your emergency contacts, during the preschool hours.
- If a family member is exhibiting a contagious illness above, the preschool requests that you keep your child at home in the interest of the health and wellbeing of the other students and staff at Soapstone Preschool.
- Medical history and current immunization record must be on file before any child may attend preschool. **Children with food allergies/medications must have a separate Food Allergy/Medication Action Plan on file.**

# POTTY-TRAINING GUIDELINES

Toilet-training is an important developmental milestone and a first step toward independence. At Soapstone Preschool, we recognize that every child develops at their own pace. As such, we do not require children to be potty-trained by a specific age.

Potty-training is a partnership between families and the preschool. Our goal is to support your child's success while maintaining a safe, healthy, and manageable classroom environment.

## **Key Understandings:**

- Potty-training routines used at home may not always be practical in the classroom due to teachers' responsibilities and hygiene/safety guidelines.
- Progress and success at home may not immediately carry over to the preschool setting. That's okay! Children often need time and consistency in both environments.

## **Preschool Potty-Training Guidelines (Wearing Underwear to School)**

### **1. Communication First:**

Before your child begins wearing underwear to school, please notify your child's teacher (via Procure, email, or in person) that you are actively potty-training at home.

### **2. Developmental Readiness:**

Your child must be able to communicate the need to use the bathroom in order to wear underwear at school.

### **3. Transition Period:**

Children must wear pull-ups with Velcro sides for a minimum of two weeks while actively potty-training. If your child stays dry and communicates their need to use the potty consistently during this period, they may begin wearing underwear at school. Teachers will work with parents individually to determine this timeline.

## **Mandatory Expectations**

- **Arrival & Dismissal:**  
Parents are responsible for toileting their child during drop-off and pick-up times. Teachers are unable to assist during these transition windows.
- **Clothing Guidelines & Supplies:**  
Avoid dressing your child in clothing that is difficult to remove independently (e.g., overalls, buttons, snaps). Please provide **2 complete changes of labeled clothes**, including socks and shoes.  
Pull-Ups with velcro on the side are required for use when a child is actively potty-training
- **Accidents:**  
Accidents happen! If your child has an accident and does not have a full change of clothes at school, parents will be called. You will need to come to school to change your

child or take them home, depending on the severity of the accident.

- **Frequent Accidents:**

If your child continues to have regular accidents while at school, it may be a sign they are not yet ready to transition to underwear in the classroom environment. We will require pull-ups with velcro as your child continues to practice.

- **Potty Watches:**

Reminder watches are not allowed at school due to classroom distraction and hygiene concerns.

*If families do not comply with these expectations, we will be unable to continue working with your child on potty in the preschool.*

# PROCARE

Procure Solutions is Soapstone Preschool's communication, billing, and enrollment tool.

- **Communication:**
  - Ability to message parents and staff as text message or email
    - Allows for class, whole school, and staff messaging
    - Text messaging used for emergency-type situations like weather delays and closing, classroom announcements, staff announcements
  - Ability to send customizable newsletters on a weekly basis – whole school and individual classes.
  - Allows teachers to post pictures of children, sent notes to parents, track absences, and send incident reports electronically.
  - Parents have a newsfeed of activity their child.
- **Student Tracking:** Daily Student Attendance & Checking Students In/Out of School
- **Staff Check-In/Check-Out**
- **Billing:**
  - Parents can set up a payment method (ACH draft, credit/debit card) on an auto-draft schedule
  - Parents receive monthly tuition invoices and payment notifications
  - Parents can be quickly charged for a miscellaneous purchase (t-shirt, late fee, etc.)
  - Parents can access their own monthly and tax YTD statements
  - Preschool can easily track tuition, registration, camp, and miscellaneous payments with quick reports.
- **Enrollment:**
  - Tracks leads for new school year easily, with tasks/notes/messages to document any interested prospects
  - Automates enrollment process to an online application and for existing parents, online registration fee payment.

## **STAFF TRAINING GUIDE:**

[HTTPS://S3.AMAZONAWS.COM/CDN.PROCARESOFTWARE.COM/PDFS/CONNECT/PROCARE+ONLINE+STAFF+TRAINING.PDF](https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.procaresoftware.com/pdfs/connect/procare+online+staff+training.pdf)

## **STAFF MESSAGING HELP GUIDE:**

[HTTPS://HELP.PROCARECONNECT.COM/EN/ARTICLES/3960194-STAFF-TO-STAFF-MESSAGING](https://help.procareconnect.com/en/articles/3960194-staff-to-staff-messaging)

# INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Soapstone Preschool will follow the closings and delays determined by the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) with an occasional exception. Follow radio (101.5 FM), television (WRAL), or online ([www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net)) for WCPSS closings. We will post on the website, Procure, and Facebook as soon as a decision has been made. Days missed due to inclement weather may be rescheduled after the preschool, not the child's class, has missed 5 days of school.

The preschool does not reimburse families for missed days due to inclement weather, sickness, or other unknown events.

## Determination of Closings and Delays

**Wake County Public School System Closed:** Preschool will be closed if WCPSS closes schools.

**1, 2 or 3-hour delay by Wake County:** Preschool will be delayed 1 hour if WCPSS delays school by 1, 2 or 3 hours. Preschool will open at 10:15am and close at normal time— 12:45pm (12:15pm for Toddlers).

**3 or 4 hours early dismissal by Wake County:** Preschool will close at 11:00am.

If the children attend for any portion of a day, that day will be counted as a full day of Preschool.

## FOR PUBLIC HEALTH/PANDEMIC-RELATED CLOSURES:

Follow the updates on Procure for any public health related closures.

**Short-Term Closure (2 Weeks or less):** During this time, the preschool will move to a virtual learning platform for each classroom and a re-opening date will be announced. Tuition will still be collected.

**Long-Term Closure:** If the closure extends past two weeks, the Preschool Advisory Committee will determine action steps.

# SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Soapstone Preschool is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all our students and staff. Listed below are the many things we implement to keep safety as our top priority for all!

## **CPR Certification**

All staff are required to have updated CPR certification, which is offered at the preschool each summer. CPR must be completed every 2 years.

## **Background Checks (Staff)**

All adults employed by the preschool have current background checks (repeated every 3 years).

## **Safe Sanctuaries**

Safe Sanctuaries is a program of the United Methodist Church which assists local churches in establishing policies and procedures to protect children and youth from abuse. Soapstone Preschool follows the safe sanctuary guidelines as established by Soapstone UMC. This plan reflects our commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, employees and volunteers who participate in our ministries. Safe Sanctuary training must be completed every 2 years.

## **General Safety Policies**

- Entrances to the preschool are always locked (except for morning arrival and dismissal)
- All outside classroom doors are always locked when children are inside the classroom
- Cameras installed inside and outside the building/preschool wings to monitor building visitors and foot traffic
- Only those who are authorized to pick up your child in Procare will be able to do so. We **will** ask for identification from this person if they are unfamiliar or picking up for the first time
- Classroom teachers carry an emergency red bag and walkie-talkies at all times

## **Soapstone Preschool Family Card**

Each family will be issued 2 family cards at the beginning of the school year. If you are visiting the preschool during preschool hours (dropping off a bag, picking your child up, volunteering, etc.), you will be **required** to show this card upon arrival when you ring the doorbell at the preschool entrance. This allows both preschool and church staff to verify you are a member of the preschool community. If you do not have your card on your person, you will be asked to wait outside until preschool office staff can verify your identification.

## **Parent & Visitor Kiosk**

If you visit the preschool during preschool hours, please stop at the Parent & Visitor Kiosk in the lobby. You will scan one of the QR codes to either:

- Sign your child in/out (late arrival or early dismissal)
- Check in as a visitor to a classroom or volunteer

After you scan the QR codes, go to the preschool office. A staff member will escort you to your child's classroom. If there is no one available in the preschool office, please check in with the church front office. They will find a member of the preschool staff to assist you.

## **Active Attack Training & Plan**

Soapstone Preschool has developed a comprehensive Active Attack Plan that covers safeguards and strategies in the unlikely event of an active attack. This plan was created by Soapstone Preschool, in conjunction with the expert recommendations from ALERT, Special Agent Craig West (NCSBI), the Wake County Sheriff's Department, and members of the SUMC staff, the Trustees Committee and the Preschool Advisory Committee.

All Soapstone Preschool staff have received active attack training from Special Agent Craig West from the NCSBI and ALERT program. In addition, all staff have been trained on the Soapstone Preschool Active Attack Plan.

## **Safety Drills**

- Fire Drills will be conducted throughout the school year
- Active Attack Drills will be conducted throughout the school year (based upon Soapstone Preschool's Active Attack Plan)

## YOU CAN HELP BY...

- **Keeping children home when they aren't feeling well!** Remember **The Golden Rule!**
- **Providing preschool supplies for your child.**
- **Dressing your child in comfortable clothes.** We will be busy moving around and doing many art projects throughout the year. **For their own safety, children are not allowed to wear crocs, flip-flops or sandals to school.** Please keep a labeled change of clothing (socks included) in your child's tote bag.
- Download the Procare app on your phone for easy access to class/preschool messages, your child's newsfeed, and bill-pay. Please keep your profile, as well as your child's profile, up-to-date with current information.
- **Carry your "Soapstone Preschool Family Card"** with you to gain access to the building during school hours
- **Check out Teacher Wish Lists** for additional supply requests
- **Volunteer at the preschool** – mystery read in a classroom, help with special events
- Participate in our annual fundraisers.
- Linking your **Harris Teeter VIC card** to Soapstone  
Must re-link each August; Soapstone Preschool's code is **6147**  
You can link to more than one school!

# Parent Code of Conduct

At Soapstone Preschool, we believe children thrive when families, teachers, and staff work together with kindness, trust, and mutual respect. As a faith-based community, we strive to model compassion, grace, and respectful communication in all interactions.

## **Families and guests are expected to:**

- Communicate respectfully with teachers, staff, and other families
- Address concerns directly with the appropriate staff member or administrator
- Support school policies, classroom procedures, and behavior expectations
- Model kindness, patience, and self-control while on campus and at school events
- Refrain from hostile, aggressive, threatening, intimidating, or inappropriate language or behavior
- Refrain from harassment, bullying, disruption of school operations, or posting harmful or confidential information about the preschool, staff, or families on social media

We understand concerns may arise, and we are committed to working together in a respectful and constructive manner to support every child and maintain a positive school community.

Soapstone Preschool reserves the right to require a family to withdraw from the program if conduct does not meet these expectations. In that event, tuition and fees already paid will not be refunded.

*Thank you for helping us create a caring and respectful preschool community.*

# Soapstone Preschool Family Handbook Acknowledgment Statement

Thank you for choosing Soapstone Preschool! By enrolling your child, you are entering into an agreement with us to ensure the best possible educational experience for your family. We agree to provide a high-quality preschool experience. You agree to be responsible for reading all communication that comes from the preschool including the handbooks, policies, and newsletters/emails, and to satisfy all financial obligations set forth herein in a timely manner.

To ensure a positive preschool experience for our children, families and staff, anyone who does not adhere to preschool policies stated in our preschool handbook or communicated through the director may be asked to withdrawal from our program and forfeit any paid tuition

As the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, I do hereby acknowledge that I am aware of and agree to adhere to the aforesaid policies of Soapstone Preschool.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child/Children's Names

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature