

FIRST METHODIST DAYCARE

2011—2012 HANDBOOK



*Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old
he will not depart from it.*

Proverbs 22:6



FIRST METHODIST DAYCARE
353 Main Street
P. O. Box 8
Thomson, Georgia 30824
706-595-0403 (phone)
706-595-2202 (fax)
www.thomsonfumc.org/daycare

Dear Parents,

Our staff welcomes each of you and looks forward to working with you and your child this year. This handbook is your guide to the policies of First Methodist Daycare.

Each child is welcomed by their teachers with love and acceptance. We strive to give one-on-one attention as often as possible. We are glad to be their “Mommies” for the day and we will treat them as if they were our own children.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to get to know your children. It is a blessing to us.

In Christ,

Beth Reville

Beth Reville
Director

DAYCARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The daycare is governed by a board of directors appointed by the church council of Thomson First United Methodist Church. Members of the board are:

Pam Edmondson, chair of board	706-595-8283 pamcedm@bellsouth.net
Laura Williamson, member rep	706-595-9245 laurawill5@hotmail.com
Robert Knox, member rep.	706-595-7812 bknox@knoxandswanattortneys.com
Rindi Harbeson, non-member rep.	706-597-9380 Rindirozier@hotmail.com
Benny Colclough, TFUMC trustee rep.	706-595-5329 Benny-carolandbenny@comcast.net
David Wells, TFUMC lay leader	706-556-6588 dwells@radudley.com
Michelle Braddy, parent rep	706-597-1542 rbraddy@bellsouth.net
Rev. Beverly Casstevens, Assoc. Pastor*	706-595-3936 beverly@thomsonfumc.org
Beth Reville, director*	706-364-6822 beth@thomsonfumc.org
Lynne Jenkins, assistant director*	706-986-5152 Lynne@thomsonfumc.org
Cindy Meadows, CPA*	706-597-1595 cgm_cpa@hughes.net
Charlotte Derry, pre-school board chair*	706-595-0156 slicktop96@comcast.net

* denotes non-voting members of the board.



POLICY STATEMENT

First Methodist Daycare is a ministry of Thomson First United Methodist Church. The daycare is licensed by the state of Georgia, *Bright from the Start*, and subject to regular compliance inspections. The center meets or exceeds all rules and guidelines for state licensing. Our daycare strives to provide the highest quality care for children ages 6 weeks to 11 years of age. We have a certified staff dedicated to providing all the love, care, attention, and guidance that would be expected in their own how.



PHILOSOPHY

Our daycare program is based upon the following principles:

- ✎ Each child is a unique individual with special talents and abilities and should be treated as such.
- ✎ All children are worthy individuals capable of success and we strive to instill in all children a positive self-image and confidence in their abilities.
- ✎ Children learn by doing when provided with a variety of materials appropriate for their level of development. The child will learn skills necessary without undue structure or pressure.
- ✎ Children have a natural curiosity and desire to learn and that our teaching should capitalize on these characteristics, knowing that a solid foundation in the early years is basic to future success in learning.
- ✎ Learning is a process, and children grow and develop at their own rate. Pressure and unreasonable expectations tend not to be productive, therefore we will lend positive reinforcement to children as they attempt to master skills appropriate for their level.
- ✎ A sound program of early childhood education should focus on all areas of development: spiritual, social, emotional, physical and intellectual.
- ✎ The center and home must work together. Parental interest and participation in our program makes our program better.

- ✎ A teacher should instill in children a desire for learning, encouraging them to become independent learners.

Bright from the Start wants us to clearly communicate several things to our parents, and we are pleased to comply::

- ✎ First United Methodist Day Care does not discriminate against race, color, religion, or natural origin.
- ✎ The cooperation of all parents is required in carrying out all state rules and regulations for daycare licensing.
- ✎ Important notices and other information of interest are posted on the bulletin board to the right of the entrance. Please check these daily.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our hours are 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

A late fee will be charged when a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m.
(See Tuition and Fees: Late Pick-Up below)

HOLIDAYS

First Methodist Daycare will be closed on nine weekdays each year:



New Years Day
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the day after
Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after.



If a holiday occurs on a Saturday, we will be closed on Friday (the day before); and if the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on Monday (the day after).

TUITION AND FEES

REGISTRATION FEES





Registration Fee (first year)	\$120.00 per family
Annual Continuation Fee	\$ 60.00 per child

WEEKLY RATES

Infants and Up	\$77.00 for first child \$70.00 additional children
After-school	\$37.00



WEEKLY TUITION PAYMENTS

-  Tuition is due by Friday of each week. Tuition will be accepted without late fees until Monday morning (9:00 a.m.) of the following week.
-  If your tuition is not paid by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, a \$25.00 late fee will be added.
-  If your tuition has not been paid in two weeks, you must pay in full before your child can return to daycare.
-  \$35.00 will be charged for a returned check, and we reserve the right to request that future payments be made by money order only.

LATE PICK-UP

We close at 6:00 p.m., and all children should be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m.

In addition to consideration for our staff and their families, when children are not picked up on time, the center incurs additional expenses for staff, heat, lights, air conditioning, etc. In order to keep our fees as reasonable as possible for all parents, those who cannot pick their children up on time, will be charge a late pick-up fee.

The fee for being late is \$1.00 per minute, per child for each minute after 6:00 p.m. This late fee will be added to your tuition for the week and will be due with the next tuition payment. Just as with tuition, your child will not be allowed to attend daycare if these late pick-up fees are not paid.



CURRICULUM

We use the Abeka curriculum with all age groups. Each week the children will learn a Bible story and verse that they should be able to tell you by the end of the week. Christian songs as **well as other children's songs are taught.**

Our curriculum includes chapel time, basic music instruction and time with our pastors, church **program staff, and lay volunteers. We celebrate Christmas and Easter. We talk about Jesus' Birthday and how he died for our sins.**

The children will also learn basic such as colors, numbers, letters, and shapes. They also are

guided in their behavior toward others: learning to share, take turns, follow instructions, etc..

We prepare a monthly calendar for each class that provides the themes, Bible stories and verses, field trips, and other activities in which your child will participate. Calendars are **posted on the bulletin board as well as placed in your child's mailbox.**



The teachers and directors will keep you updated on your child's progress and issues related to your child's care. (See Discipline Policy for additional information on behavior.)

Parents are always welcome to visit the center and participate in activities.



ENROLLMENT

Before becoming enrolled in First Methodist Daycare, the following forms must be completed and returned to the daycare office:

-  enrollment form
-  medical history form

Within 30 days of enrollment a current immunization record (From 3231) must be provided to the daycare office. This form may be obtained from the Health Department or your own doctor. It may be mailed, hand delivered or faxed (706-595-2202).

WITHDRAWALS

Most children (and their parents) require a period of adjustment to daycare. Please allow at least two weeks of consistent attendance before deciding whether continued attendance in the program is appropriate for your child. Communication between the center staff and parents is always important, but especially so immediately after beginning daycare. Let us know of difficulties your child seems to be experiencing. Talk with their teacher.

We want to help your child adjust and thrive, and for you to be confident and comfortable as well.



Withdrawal without further notification may occur at the end of the first two weeks of enrollment. If you decide to withdraw at a later date, we ask that you provide us with two-weeks notice.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Parents are expected to walk with their child into the center and into his or her classroom.

Please take a moment when you arrive with your child as well as when you pick-up your child to speak with the teacher. Not only will they need to sign your child into and out of the center, but they may want to speak with you about your child or about an upcoming activity or requirement.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK-UP A CHILD



Only parents or guardians will be allowed to pick up children, or give others permission to do so. Permission to pick up a child by someone other than their parent or guardian must be provided in writing to the center directors. A photo ID must be presented before a child can be picked-up.

VISITORS




Parents are welcome to visit the center anytime their child is present. We do ask your **cooperation in minimizing disruption to your child's routine.**

All visitors, with the exception of parents who are dropping off or picking up a child, shall be **required to go by the office to sign in and receive a visitor's name tag.**

SECURITY

The center is located in the Family Life Center of Thomson First United Methodist Church. In order to ensure that we have visibility of all those entering and leaving the building, we have installed a security system. Access to the building is obtained using electronic fobs or by paging the office staff from the external console. This console allows us to see who is seeking access as well as unlock the door.

Parents (or guardians) will be given two fobs. These should be used by adults who are picking up your child(ren) on a regular basis. We strongly discourage you from giving these fobs to any other family member, or to someone picking up your child only occasionally.

-  The first two fobs are free.
-  If you lose a fob notify the center directors immediately so that it can be deactivated.
-  If you require a replacement fob, the cost is \$20. This fee must be paid before you can be given a replacement fob.

✋ Please return all fobs to the center office upon withdrawal from the program. \$20 will be deducted from your final tuition statement following the return of the fobs.

COMMUNICATION

We encourage parents to talk with teachers, staff, pastors and volunteers about the center, its programs, their children, and concerns. These conversations are the best forms of communication.

We also have a number of ways of keeping you up to date and informed about center activities, events and information. Monthly communications include:

Newsletter
Class Calendar
Menus



Our student information database will also allow us to develop e-mail lists and phone tree messages. We encourage you to update contact information whenever this changes, and to correct and return your information from at the beginning of each school year.

The daycare center is also part of the Thomson First United Methodist Church web site: www.thomsonfumc.org/daycare. The newsletter and menus are published on the site along with a copy of this handbook, our application, etc.

CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

On days of severe weather – for example, ice and snow – safety is our first priority. We make our decision to close based upon the action of the McDuffie County School District. If McDuffie County schools are closed, we will be closed. WTHO radio station and local T.V. channels will have this information as soon as the decision is made.

If we do open on a snowy or icy day, we will make every effort to open the center by 7:00 a.m.

We will post information on closings and delays in opening on the website www.thomsonfumc.org/daycare.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

If an emergency occurs at the daycare center (which is house in the Family Life Center of First Methodist), we will move all children to the main church building on Main Street. These emergencies include such things as a power outage, flooding due to burst pipes, and fire alarms

that cannot be traced to a “false alarm.”

MEALS & SNACKS

MORNING SNACK is served at 8:30 a.m. in the summer and 8:45 during the school year. This snack consists of foods such as cereal, pop-tarts, grits, eggs, toast, etc.

- ✎ Children who arrive before 8:30 may bring a snack from home. We ask that this be a healthy snack, and not fast food.
- ✎ Pre-school children will not get a snack on the mornings they attend pre-school. They are given a snack after school begins.
- ✎ LUNCH is served at 11:30 in the classrooms. Lunches consist of a vegetable, meat, fruit, bread and milk.



MENUS are published monthly, and posted on the bulletin board as well as on our website (www.thomsonfumc.org/daycare).

We will prepare an alternative meal or use a different recipe for children with food allergies. Please make sure that you notify the daycare director immediately if a food allergy is diagnosed.

Other important information regarding food and drink:


- ✎ Georgia state licensing requirements prohibit home prepared lunches, therefore, we cannot allow you to send lunches from home
- ✎ Soft drinks are not allowed. Milk, fruit juice and water are served.
- ✎ Children will be encouraged taste, but are not required to eat all foods served. **Additional servings will be provided at the child’s request.**

DISCIPLINE


Some basics of our disciplinary policy include:

- ✎ Teachers and staff do not spank, jerk, pop or yank a child for any reason.
- ✎ No abusive language, yelling or verbal threats of any kind are permitted. This pertains to staff, parents, visitors, and children.



 We use “time out” as our method of discipline, and the length of the “time out” is administered as a “minute per year of age.”

 Praise, rewards and treats acknowledge good behavior and accomplishments.

 Smiles and hugs are important all the time.

We do not expect your child to be perfect. Most children will – at one time or other – test teachers and the limits they place on the children, have difficulties with another child as they learn social skills, have an outburst of temper, or express themselves in ways that are inappropriate in one way or the other. Most of these incidents are minor. Our disciplinary policy is designed to help your child learn appropriate behavior by experiencing the consequence of a time out, and also by being guided in their understanding of the impact of their behavior on others.

If a child’s behavior becomes a chronic problem, we will take a series of steps as we work to correct the problem behavior. Parents will be notified and brought into this process so that we can work together on the problem behavior.

These steps are taken if the misbehavior is chronic, disruptive, and hurtful/dangerous to the child or others.

1. Time out (in the class) for each incident
2. Time out in the daycare office and if multiple occurrences in the same day, dismissal from the center for the remainder of the day. Parents will be notified whenever their child is sent to the office via e-mail and/or phone call.
3. Suspension from the center for one day. Parents will be notified via phone or e-mail as soon as the decision to suspend is made, and the directors will meet with the parent when they arrive to pick up their child.
4. Parent conference with daycare director, board chair, and pastor occur when there are multiple suspensions and the misbehavior continues.
5. Dismissal is our last resort, and not our desire. Review of the individual case by the board of directors is required for a child to be dismissed.

BITING



This specific example of the discipline policy addresses behavior that can physically harm to another child: biting.

Biting occurs between the ages of one and two years. It is not usual for a child to bite, and many if not most children require guidance in learning not to bite. Here is how we apply our

disciplinary policy to biting:

When a child bites the first time, they are sent to time out (one minute per year of age), and the parent is notified.

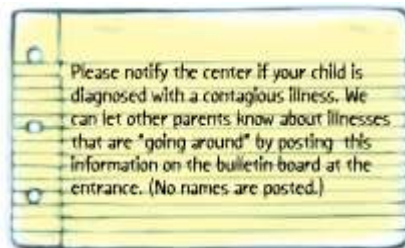
If a child bites again on another day, the child is sent to the office and the parent is notified.

If the child continues to bite frequently (3 or more times in a week), the parent is asked to come to the center to observe and/or to correct their child.

If a child bites twice in one day the parent will be asked to pick up the child, and the child will be required to stay home for the remainder of the day.

If a child continues to bite, the board will review the biting episodes, and may decide that the child be dismissed from the program. The safety and welfare of the children (including the one who is biting) will be of vital importance. The board may offer the parent referrals to community resources as appropriate.

MEDICAL POLICY



Children who are ill do not need to be in daycare. Not only does their continued attendance make it more difficult for them to recover, but they put all the other children and staff at risk. We know this presents problems for working parents, but we know that a sick child will infect others, and eventually re-infect themselves if they remain in the center. We will provide written notification of our policy to your employer if this will assist you.

Our policy is:

- ✋ If your child is sick, keep them at home until they are free of fever for 24 hours.
- ✋ If your child becomes ill at the center, we will call you to pick up your child. Your child will remain in the office until picked up. Please have a number available at all times so that we may reach you.

- ✎ If your child has a fever, has vomited or has diarrhea, they may not return until they are free of these symptoms for twenty-four (24) hours. We encourage you to provide your child with the additional rest they need in order to fully recover.

For example, if your child has a fever at 2 pm on Monday, they can return to the center no sooner than Wednesday morning.



- ✎ If a child needs medical care and we can not reach the parents or the emergency contacts, staff will transport the child to McDuffie Regional Medical Center.
- ✎ **If your child's medical situation is life threatening, we will call an ambulance and a member of the staff will accompany your child to the hospital.**
- ✎ Thomson First United Methodist Church Daycare must have written authorization if any other actions in response to a medical situation need to take place.

- ✎ We can give prescription medicines only.

- ✎ **Unless otherwise instructed by your child's physician of record, medications are given at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.**

- ✎ You must sign a permission form in order for us to give medicine.

- ✎ All prescription medicines must be in a pharmacy labeled container, **and the prescription must be written for your child. If your child's name is not on the prescription, we cannot give them the medicine. That means that we cannot give "sample" medications.**



- ✎ We can only give a medicine for two weeks. After that we need written instructions from **your child's doctor of record instructing us to continue the medicine.**

- ✎ We will notify you if your child has any adverse reaction to the medicine.

HEALTH POLICY

- ✎ Smoking is not allowed on the grounds or in the building.

- ✎ Each child will have the advantage of an afternoon nap. We will provide a sheet and blanket. If the child wants to bring a blanket or stuffed animal they are welcome to do so.

- 👏 Weather permitting; all children will spend time outside.
- 👏 Please make sure that your child has outer garments appropriate for the season.
- 👏 Children are to wear a complete set of clothing that is comfortable and easily cleaned.
- 👏 All children must wear shoes (cleats are not permitted).
- 👏 Make sure that your child has an extra change of clothes for the correct size for the current **season. Please be sure that extra clothing is labeled with your child's name. If you use the extra clothes, make sure that you bring in an extra pair the next day.**
- 👏 It is impossible to keep the children clean all day, however, if you need for them to be in clean clothing at the end of the day, we will gladly change them into clothing you provide. **Please let your child's teacher know.**

SAFE SANCTUARY

As a ministry of Thomson First United Methodist Church, the center follows a program know as Safe Sanctuaries. Guidelines for this program conform to those mandated by the state in this area. Staff and volunteers undergo criminal background checks, and are given training that helps us ensure that all our children are safe within the center. Their training includes identification of symptoms of abuse and neglect.

State licensing and Safe Sanctuary mandates that suspected cases of child abuse and neglect are reported to the Department of Children and Family Services (DFACS).



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BY AGE

INFANTS

DIAPERING PROCEDURES

We make every effort to maintain a sanitary environment. We wear gloves, and after every diaper charge we spray the mat with an antibacterial spray. Our teachers wash their hands after each diaper change.

FEEDING

- 👏 Please make sure that you fill out the infant sheet. The infant sheet is what the nursery goes by to feed your infant.
- 👏 **If you add something new to your child's schedule, Please make sure that you fill out a new form each time.**
- 👏 When a child starts eating from the table, the daycare will provide your child with a lunch.

THINGS TO BRING FOR YOUR INFANT

Wipes

Change of clothes labeled with child's name

Bottles – first and last name on the bottle

Diapers

Diaper Cream

Baby Food



OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. Please make sure that you tell the teachers or write on the board when your child had his or her last bottle.
2. No jewelry, with the exception of earrings, is allowed in the baby room.

TWO-YEAR-OLD'S TOILET TRAINING PROCEDURES

Potty training is a team project! You and your child's teacher will need to work together.

Because your child may be with us for a major portion of their day, the teacher may have insights about their readiness, and we encourage you to ask for their opinion as well as express yours.

When you think that your child is ready to be potty trained, discuss this with the teacher. If the teacher suggests to you that your child may be ready, discuss this with them. In these ways, you can begin working together from the start.

A few things you will need to know about how we handle this training:

Whatever your child comes to school in – for example, pull-ups or underwear - that is what we will keep them in.

If your child is in pull-ups or underwear, we will take them to the bathroom when they ask, or at appropriate times for them.

When the teacher feels that the child is ready to go from pull-up to underwear, they will discuss this with you.

ONE'S, TWO'S, THREE'S & FOUR'S

THINGS TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD:

Wipes (if your child is not potty trained)

diapers/pull-ups (if your child is not potty trained)

a change of clothes labeled with your child's name.

An item that he or she is attached to for nap such as a stuffed animal, baby, blanket, etc.

OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. **Please be sure to label coats and other outerwear with your child's name.**
2. Unless your child has a food allergy, they must eat our snacks and lunches. An alternative snack or lunch will be provided for those with these allergies
3. Baby food is not allowed except for infants in the infant room.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

👉 Thomson First United Methodist Church Daycare does not provide transportation between the center and elementary school. The center only provides transportation for field trips.

👉 In order to participate in field trips, each child needs to have an Emergency Information Sheet on file in the office. The center makes every effort to keep information up to date, but we need your help to do that. Permission to seek medical treatment in the event of need is also part of this Emergency Information Sheet.

👉 The children who attend Norris Elementary, Thomson Elementary or Maxwell Elementary may ride the bus to our center.

👉 Please notify the center if your child is not going to be attending, and therefore will not be on the bus from school. In that way we will be better able to respond if your child is not on the bus when they should be.



👉 When the children arrive at daycare from school they will have an afternoon snack.

👉 After snack they will have homework time (45 minutes). If you do not want your child to do homework; we need a note from you stating that your child does not have to do his or her homework.



- ✎ Children in the third thru fifth grades are invited to sing with the Canterbury Choir of Thomson First United Methodist Church. Rehearsals for special performances such as the Hanging of the Greens which begins the Advent season and for the spring musical will be held during after-school hours. An additional practice or two may be required for dress rehearsals outside daycare hours.
- ✎ Other activities are available to the children. Some of these, such as baton, require an additional fee for the teacher. Parents will be notified of these opportunities.
- ✎ After 4:00 the children will be either outside or in the gym if they are not participating in other activities such as choir, baton, etc.

ELECTRONICS POLICY

Our children are members of the “wired” generation ... or perhaps we should now say, the “wireless” generation. They love their electronic games, ipods, cell phones (yes even young children will ask for them!), and have their favorite electronic games.



We strive to provide your child with an environment that balances learning, play, and rest. For older children, we hope to also give them time for school work as well as recreational activities. A big part of our day is in helping them develop social skills, and we have found that electronic devices such as the hand-held games are disruptive to these efforts.

Further, it has been our experience that these electronic devices present many problems, not the least of which is that these items tend to get lost, misplaced, loaned or borrowed. Realistically, we have learned that we cannot help your child keep up with these items much less be responsible for them.



Therefore, it is the policy of First Methodist Daycare that no handheld devices are permitted in the center. Please leave these at home.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

We enjoy celebrating your child’s birthdays and making them feel special. We post a birthday calendar in our monthly newsletter.

If you wish to celebrate your child’s birthday at the center, please coordinate with their teachers. Please do not surprise your child’s teacher by appearing with cake and ice cream

without making sure that this works with the plans for the day.

If you are planning a party outside the center, it is our policy that invitations distributed at the center be to **all the children in your child's class**. If you do not wish to have all the children in the class attend, you must mail invitations or otherwise extend these invitations outside of the center.



PARENT'S NOTES





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