

1st Step Learning Center

A ministry of Troy United Methodist Church

2012-2013
Family Handbook

407 Edwardsville Road
Troy, Illinois 62294
(618) 667-6241

Two year-olds:
Class meets Monday and Wednesday
or
Tuesday and Thursday
8:15-11:15

Three and Four year-olds:
Classes meet Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
Morning Session: **8:15-11:15**
Afternoon Session: **12:15-3:15**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to 1st Step Learning Center. Please know we feel that we have your most important possession when your child is at the 1st Step Learning Center. Parents are always welcome here, so please feel free to stop by any time.

This handbook is provided to inform you of our policies and procedures. We hope that it will answer any of your questions. If you have any concerns that are not covered in this handbook, please feel free to contact the Coordinator at 667-6241 x13. As special events arise, we will be sending home notes to inform you of what is going to be happening here at 1st Step Learning Center.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year. Thank you for choosing the 1st Step Learning Center.

Sincerely,

Kim McGrath
Coordinator of 1st Step Learning Center

1st Step Learning Center

Mission Statement:

1st Step Learning center is a ministry of the Troy United Methodist Church that serves preschool children and their families. In a loving environment, children will be challenged to learn and develop spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually through hands-on, open-ended, developmentally appropriate activities.

Our Goal

It is our goal to provide a loving and nurturing atmosphere for children to grow and develop spiritually, physically, and mentally. We will provide age-appropriate activities in order to promote each child's intellectual growth. In specific, we will work on colors, shapes, numbers, and the letters of the alphabet through a variety of art, science, and reading readiness activities. We will also use songs, finger-plays, stories and games to reinforce the above concepts.

Daily Schedule

Each of our three and four year-old classes meet three times per week. Classes are held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. In each of these days, there is a morning session from 8:15-11:15, and an afternoon session from 12:15-3:15.

The two year-old classes meet on Mondays and Wednesdays or on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:15-11:15. Our two year-old classes meet only two times a week.

Every day, each class has the following activities: a story, music, kindergarten readiness skills, snack time, calendar time, and a project that works on specific motor skills.

Three and four year-old classes gather weekly for chapel and music.

Classroom Placement

Class placement is based upon your child's age as of September 1 of the current school year. Otherwise, classroom requests are accepted and taken into consideration when putting your child in a class but not guaranteed.

Classroom Communication

On the first week of each month, a newsletter with information and news that pertains to all of the families will be published and sent home with the students.

The teachers are available to talk before and after class each day as well as available for conferencing upon request. The preschool coordinator is available by appointment.

Discipline

No child shall be subject, under any circumstances, to corporal punishment inflicted in any manner upon the body, to verbal abuse, or be deprived of any regularly scheduled snack, or punished for toilet accidents. If it is necessary to correct a child, the teacher will first make sure the child understands the issue. If after repeated warnings, the child does not cooperate, he/she will be asked to leave the group and sit in "time-out" within the same room as the class. If "time-out" does not achieve the desired results, the child will be brought to the coordinator's office. The Preschool Coordinator will help resolve the issue or contact the parents to discuss discipline methods used at home.

Payments

The monthly tuition payment is due the first day of attendance each month. The annual tuition for the 2 year old program is \$1035 payable monthly in \$115 installments. The annual tuition for the 3s and 4s programs is \$1215 payable monthly in \$135 installments. A \$65 registration fee is due at registration for all classes and is not refundable.

Please make checks payable to 1st Step Learning Center. Please put your child's name in the memo line if you are paying with a check. If you pay with cash, put the money in an envelope with your child's name on it. Receipts are available upon request.

Classroom Aide

2 yr.-old class only

The 2yr. - old class will be staffed with a teacher and a teacher's aide to help in changing of diapers, potty training and overall needs of the children in the class.

Bathroom Policy

A child will be allowed to use the bathroom any time he/she asks. In the two year-old programs, the parents on a daily basis must supply all diapers and wipes; please keep teacher informed of potty-training details.

Snack

Please plan to bring two snacks at the beginning of each month for your child's class. Please refrain from sending sugary snacks. These snacks will then be served with water. Some snack ideas could include: graham crackers, fruit, raisins, cereal, goldfish, pretzels, crackers, etc. Please don't send homemade baked goods. This is required by the state due to possible food contamination.

Toys from Home

We ask that you please do not bring toys from home to the preschool except on sharing days. Your child's teacher will let you know when the day is for that specific classroom.

School Entrance/Exit

We ask that you bring your child in through the doors by the classrooms. For your child's safety, we ask you to accompany your child to his/her classroom and remain, if for some reason the teacher is not present.

Pick Up

If someone other than who usually picks up your child is coming, please let us know in advance with a written notice or by contacting the coordinator.

If you know you are going to be late picking up your child from school, a phone call helps us to know what to tell your child about why you are not there.

A late fee may be charged for late pick-up. Parents are given a 10-minute grace period after which they may be charged \$2.00/minute.

Attendance

Please notify us when your child will be absent. Our phone number is 667-6241x13. If no one answers, please leave a message.

Snow Days/School Cancellation

School cancellations will be announced on KMOX and FOX. School Cancellations may also be heard by calling the church at 667-6241x 13.

After an accumulation of five school cancellations it will be up to the discretion of the Preschool Coordinator to determine what days will be made up. Parents will be notified of the make up scheduled.

Sickness

For the protection of all the children, your child should be kept at home if he/she shows any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 99 degrees or above within the last 48 hrs
- a deep cough
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Diarrhea
- A rash
- Nasal discharge
- Vomiting within the last 48 hrs

-Parents should exercise every precaution and keep their child home should other unusual symptoms occur.

If your child has been diagnosed with any of the following illnesses, please keep your child home and notify the preschool coordinator of the specific illness.

- Strep throat
- Infected ears and/or glands
- Mumps
- Scarlet fever
- Whooping Cough
- Flu Virus
- Viral infections
- Measles
- Chicken pox
- Pink eye
- Fifth disease

It is best to wait 48 hours after the symptoms of any illness have passed before bringing your child back to school.

Medicine

We do not administer medicine during the time your child is with us. They are only here a few hours, so please adjust the doses accordingly. If you find it necessary to medicate during school hours, please plan to administer the medication yourself.

Birthday Treats

If you want to send a special treat for your child's birthday, please send pre-packaged treats only. This is required by the state due to possible food contamination.

Dressing your child for preschool

The following items are not suggested for your preschooler

- Belts (belts make it very difficult to be independent in the bathroom)
- Undershirts / shirts with snaps between the legs (onsies)
- Tights or pantyhose (we suggest you practice at home with tights and hose to make sure your child is able to pull them up and down without difficulty)
- Bib overalls
- One piece outfits

All dresses must be accompanied by shorts, tights, or bloomer covers

We suggest dressing your child in layers

We suggest sending your child in play clothes (we paint, color, use markers, play with shaving cream, play dough and other fun but messy things!!)

Shoes -

We will venture outside or we may play in the gym during gross motor skills time. This requires shoes that are easy to run in and do not come off feet easily.

Tennis shoes are strongly recommended in spring and summer weather (we like to go outside and play on the playground)

Flip flops and high heels are discouraged

The following items are not to be worn at preschool:

- Costumes
- "Dress up" clothing
- "Dress up" shoes

Basically we suggest you put your child in comfortable, easy up and down play clothes.

Basic Preschool information

Each class time includes – Free play, group music, snack, story time, centers, art projects, calendar time (which includes ABCs, colors, shapes, and counting) table activities such as practicing writing name or work sheets that require following directions, group participation, and socialization skills.

Snacks – we ask that for the 3 and 4 yr old class's parents donate 2 snacks monthly and the 2 yr old class 1 snack monthly.

Occasionally we may ask for items such as Kleenex, wipes, or hand sanitizer in place of snacks.

Tuition – Tuition is due the 1st Tuesday of the month. Checks can be dropped off at the coordinator's office.

Absences – We do request that you call if your child will be absent for any reason from class.

Progress reports – Progress reports are sent out several times throughout the year and you will be able to keep your child's progress report at the end of the school year.

Class parties –

We will have class parties throughout the school year and we will offer a sign up sheet for parents to volunteer or donate items for the party. Due to space in the classrooms we may feel the need to limit the amount of volunteers for a party.

Please do not bring children that do not attend 1st Step to class parties.

Volunteering –

We will have several opportunities for parents to volunteer throughout the year.

We are always looking for Parents to volunteer for our big Rodeo day and Zoo day.

If you are interested in visiting your child's class or volunteering please see the Preschool Coordinator or your child's teacher.

Please feel free to contact Kim McGrath 667-6241 x 13 or 567-0499 or kim@troyumc.org with any questions.

Please sign and return with the other registration materials

I have read and understand the details outlined in the
1st Step Learning Center Handbook.

Date: _____ Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed name: _____