

# United Methodist Christian School



**2026-2027**

**Parent / Student Manual**

# Parent Student Manual

## Section 1.0 – Introduction – Welcome Letter from Head of School

### Welcome to United Methodist Christian School!

Our mission at UMCS is to provide a nurturing and enriching environment for students to grow spiritually, academically, and emotionally. We believe in the importance of hands-on learning and creative expression in helping students explore and understand the world around them. As we focus on nurturing faith and knowledge, we are dedicated to achieving excellence in education and fostering spiritual growth.

In this Parent/Student Handbook, you will find important information about our school's policies, procedures, and programs. By familiarizing yourself with the contents of this handbook, you will gain insight into what is expected from UMCS as we work together to help students become compassionate and resilient individuals who are proud to be Champions for Christ.

We are committed to partnering with parents in the education and growth of their children. Our goal is to hire dedicated teachers who are passionate about working with students, who excel in academics, and who support our mission of spiritual and personal development. We value collaboration and believe that working together as a team will not only benefit our students and families but also enrich our entire community.

As stated in Philippians 3:13-14, we are encouraged to press forward towards our goal and strive for continuous improvement and growth in all that we do.

We are thrilled to have you join us on this journey of educational excellence and spiritual growth. Thank you for entrusting us with the education and development of your child at United Methodist Christian School.

**Sincerely,**  
**June O'Connell**  
**School Executive Director**

### 1.0.1 Handbook Purpose

This handbook contains the purpose, policies, and procedures of United Methodist Christian School. Staff, parents, and students may consult this handbook with any questions regarding school policies. From time to time the School may encounter situations that are outside the scope of this handbook. When this occurs, the Chair will have the final say regarding any decisions that need to be made. The School Board reserves the right to amend or change this handbook at any time.

### 1.1 Mission Statement

At UMCS our philosophy is centered on fostering an environment that holistically nurtures the social, emotional, cognitive, physical and faith development of each child. We believe in the intrinsic value of hands-on learning and creative expression as fundamental tools for exploration and understanding. We are committed to nurturing faith and igniting minds.

### 1.2 School History

United Methodist Christian School opened in 1983.

### 1.3 Statement of Faith

WE BELIEVE the Bible to be the inspired and the only infallible authoritative Word of God.  
WE BELIEVE that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father.

WE BELIEVE that for salvation of lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

WE BELIEVE in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: Those that are saved unto the resurrection of life and those that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

WE BELIEVE in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE in the importance of the visible, local, New Testament Church.

WE BELIEVE in the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **1.4 Statement of Philosophy/Purpose**

### *Nurturing Faith and Igniting minds*

At UMCS, our philosophy centers on fostering an environment that holistically nurtures the social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and faith development of each child. We believe in the intrinsic value of hands-on learning and creative expression as fundamental tools for exploration and understanding. We are committed to preparing children for kindergarten by building a strong foundation in early literacy, numeracy, and social skills. Embracing diversity and inclusivity is at the heart of our approach, as we recognize and celebrate the unique backgrounds and perspectives of each child and family. At UMCS, we strive to nourish faith, ignite minds, and prepare children for a lifetime of learning and growth.

We believe that every child has the right to feel welcomed, accepted, and valued in our program. We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children, regardless of their background, ability, or identity. Our staff is trained to support diversity and promote a culture of respect and understanding among all children in our care.

If we are not able to meet the diverse needs of a child in our program, we are committed to providing a referral to the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) for additional support and resources. Our goal is to ensure that every child receives the necessary care and attention they deserve to thrive and succeed in our program. We believe that by working together with parents, caregivers, and community partners, we can create a nurturing and inclusive environment where all children feel empowered and valued.

## **1.5 Goals and Objectives**

PCCC School goals are to:

1. Provide a positive, safe, healthy, supportive Christian environment for students and staff.
2. Provide opportunities in which a personal relationship with Jesus Christ can be developed.
3. Develop a Christ-centered, child-oriented curriculum.
4. Develop self-discipline of right and wrong.
5. Develop a high standard of academic achievement for lifelong learning.
6. Encourage individual creativity.
7. Promote decision-making and problem-solving skills.
8. Help each child become an integrated whole person: spiritually, academically, socially, physically, and emotionally.
9. Build positive school-child-parent relationships.

## **1.6 Statement of Nondiscrimination**

UMCS admits students of any race, color, or ethnicity.

### **1.6.1 Statement from the Pastor**

Welcome to the New School year at UMCS!

As the lead pastor of Palm Coast United Methodist Church, I am honored to support a community dedicated to the holistic and spiritual growth of our children. We are committed to nurturing their faith and spiritual development as well as their academic and personal growth.

May this year be filled with discovery, faith, and success as we journey together in educating our young people.

Blessings,

Dr. Kevin M. James, Sr.

### **1.7 Affiliation and Accreditation**

UMCS is accredited by the Christian Preschool Association, formerly known as UMAP. The United Methodist Association of Preschools was in existence for over 30 years, working with churches and early childhood programs in the Florida U M Conference and in other conferences. They support churches and schools in their efforts to provide for God's youngest children the best quality care and education. Accreditation League of Christian Schools.

### **1.8 Professional Ethics in Education Policy**

"In accordance with the Florida Ethics in Education Act" all employees of United Methodist Christian School have a duty to report all suspected or actual cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, have immunity from liability if they report such cases in good faith and have a duty to comply with child protective investigations. There is a legal penalty for not reporting suspected or alleged child abuse or alleged misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators. The Florida Abuse Hotline is 1-800-962-2873.

#### **United Methodist Christian School Code of Ethics:**

##### **1. Commitment to Students**

Employees of United Methodist Christian School shall:

- Value the worth and dignity of every student, promoting their right to learn in an environment of respect and inclusion.
- Prioritize the student's well-being and development, ensuring they receive a high-quality education guided by professionalism and integrity.
- Protect students from conditions that may be harmful to their learning, mental, emotional, or physical well-being.
- Support student independence in academic pursuits and avoid unjustly restraining them from expressing diverse perspectives.
- Present subject matter in an accurate, unbiased manner that aligns with academic and Christian values.
- Refrain from exposing students to unnecessary embarrassment, humiliation, or disparagement.
- Respect students' legal rights and avoid any conduct that would violate them.
- Treat all students fairly and without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, nationality, political beliefs, marital status, disability, or social background.

##### **2. Professional Integrity and Conduct**

Faculty and staff shall:

- Act in the best interest of students while maintaining personal and professional integrity.
- Not exploit professional relationships for personal gain or advantage.
- Keep confidential all personally identifiable information about students, families, and colleagues unless disclosure is required by law.
- Refrain from making malicious, false, or misleading statements about students, parents, or colleagues.
- Demonstrate honesty in all professional dealings and avoid conflicts of interest.

### **3. Respect and Fair Treatment of Colleagues**

Employees are expected to:

- Foster a supportive, collaborative, and professional workplace.
- Treat colleagues with respect and fairness, avoiding discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, nationality, political beliefs, marital status, disability, or social background.
- Not interfere with a colleague's political or civil rights.
- Maintain honesty in all professional interactions and communications.
- Report unethical behavior or violations of this policy to the appropriate school administrators.

### **4. Maintaining a Safe and Ethical Work Environment**

All employees must:

- Ensure that interactions with students, parents, and colleagues promote a positive and professional atmosphere.
- Refrain from any form of harassment, intimidation, or discriminatory conduct that creates a hostile or oppressive work or learning environment.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that all individuals within the school community are protected from harassment and discrimination.

### **5. Commitment to the School Community and Christian Values**

United Methodist Christian School employees shall:

- Act as role models in accordance with Christian principles and values.
- Promote a culture of respect, inclusion, and faith-based learning.
- Encourage student leadership, community service, and ethical decision-making.
- Uphold the school's mission and policies while engaging positively with parents and the broader community.

### **6. Compliance and Enforcement**

Violations of this Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action, including warnings, suspension, or termination, depending on the severity of the offense.

Employees are encouraged to report ethical concerns or violations to school administration confidentially and without fear of retaliation.

This policy shall be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect the evolving needs of the school and its community.

## **1.9 Resource Information**

Home Church Information:

United Methodist Church  
6500 Palm Coast Parkway  
Palm Coast, Florida 32137  
386-445-1600

School Information:

United Methodist Christian School (UMCS)  
6500 Palm Coast Parkway  
Palm Coast, Florida 32137  
386-445-2344 [www.UMCSunitedmethodist.com](http://www.UMCSunitedmethodist.com)

#### **Emergency Information:**

Life threatening emergencies, call 911  
Facility emergencies, call School office (386) 445-2344  
Florida Abuse Hotline: 1-800-962-2873

For any health or safety concerns, please see the director.

## **Section 2.0 – Admissions**

### **2.1 Admissions Policy**

- Completion of the Enrollment Packet and submission of the Enrollment Fee.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate and Immunization records /religious exemption form
- VPK must be four years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>, and toddlers must be 2 years of age. 3 years of age ( see potty training sheet attached to packet)  
ELC students must be full time students unless permission has been given by ELC.

### **2.2 Enrollment Policies**

- Each registration form and associated forms must be fully completed and returned to the School along with the Registration Fee.
- The parents and the student applicant must have a face-to-face meeting and tour with the Executive Director/Admin Personnel.
- If a class has reached capacity and the family desires to be placed on the waiting list, the family will be notified if/when a slot becomes available for the registrant.
- All forms must be submitted prior to entering for the school year.
- If a VPK-only student enrolls in the wrap-around program, the full registration fee of \$100 will apply.

### **2.3 Re-Enrollment Procedures**

- Re-enrollment for students expecting to return to UMCS begins in July. Current students and their siblings will have first access to space available. At the time of re-enrollment, all financial obligations to the School must be up to date.
- **Registration fees must be paid before the re-enrollment can be completed.**
- Re-enrollment Fee will be annually charged to the card on file.
- For any additional children beyond the second, the same Initial Non-Refundable Registration Fee of \$83 will apply.
- For any additional children beyond the second, the Re-Enrollment Fee of \$35 will apply.

## **Section 3.0 – Financial Information**

### **3.1 Tuition/Fees**

Tuition normally must be increased each year, at a minimum of a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) amount. Tuition payments are expected to be paid weekly unless alternative arrangements are made with the finance manager. I understand:

- Tuition is annual and divided into scheduled installments.
- Tuition is enrollment-based, not attendance-based.
- Tuition is due regardless of illness, vacation, school closure, or absence.
- The school observes 11 federal holidays (tuition remains annualized).
- A separate Financial Agreement governs payment details.
- Co-pays and Step Up differentials are my responsibility.
- If Step Up funding is delayed, denied, reduced, or revoked, I am responsible for the full tuition

balance.

- Extended absences exceeding three consecutive weeks require:
  - Option 1: Continue paying to hold the spot
  - Option 2: Release the spot (return not guaranteed)
- ELC families must comply with attendance requirements; excessive absences may affect eligibility.

Late pick-up fees will be charged at \$\_1\_\_ per minute after scheduled pick-up time.

I acknowledge that my financial breakdown will be done with the finance department and a contract with all responsibilities will be signed.

### **3.1.1 Tuition Costs**

Tuition prices are prepared in advance of the school year. All prices are subject to change without advance notice. For further personalized information, please contact the Admin office for assistance. *Tuition not paid by the end of the grace period (month) will result in termination of enrollment.*

### **3.1.2 ELC Assistance**

An ELC certificate must be submitted before a calculation of tuition is given. The calculation for the tuition breakdown is as follows:  
School Daily Rate - Coalition Reimbursement Rate (minus Goldseal) = Total  
Total + Co-pay = Daily Rate.

### **3.1.3 Tuition Computation**

To determine the total monthly installment payment required for ELC students: Parents will be given a breakdown by the enrollment specialist after payment certificate is submitted. Self Pay students will receive a tuition price sheet with their application.

### **3.1.4 Registration Fee**

All students must submit a Registration Fee along with their Enrollment Application in order to hold their roster position. Unless the registration fee is received on time, your child may have to be placed on a waiting list, if there are no available seats in the class desired. This is a first-come-first-served policy.

VPK only students (9:00a.m - 12:00p.m) with a voucher will not pay a registration fee.

### **3.1.5 Wait List Policy**

- **No registration form will be considered complete unless accompanied by the appropriate monies as stated above. Without the fee payment, no registration will take place.**
- All registration monies are normally considered non-refundable where there is no waiting list for the class in question.
- In the event of a waiting list, registration or re-registration forms will be kept active on the waiting list only. No fees are charged for being on the waiting list.
- In the event of an opening, families on the waiting list will be contacted in the order they were received. They will then be given the opportunity to accept or reject placement on the class roll. This family will have one (1) full business day from the time of attempted notification to respond to the opening. Phone messages will be left to contact individuals. E-mails may be sent, should there be one on file.

### 3.1.6 Class Fees

There will be additional supplies, as indicated on the school supply list, that the student must bring to school. The supply list is made available by the teacher.

### 3.2 Financial Policies

#### Summary of Tuition Costs:

Age Group	Daily Rate	Weekly Rate	Annual Tuition	Weekly Payment
Infant	\$56	\$280	\$14,560	\$280
Wobblers (1 Year Olds)	\$50	\$250	\$13,000	\$250
2-Year-Olds	\$48	\$240	\$12,480	\$240
3-Year-Olds	\$46	\$230	\$11,960	\$230
Pre-K & Kindergarten (Wrap-Around Care)	\$32	\$160	\$8,320	\$160
K-2nd Financial Breakdown given by Finance				
Non VPK days				
\$42				

#### UMCS Student Enrollment Form

(For Finance Department Use)

#### Student Information:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F

Address \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Age Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Program: \_\_\_\_\_ (teacher name)  
(e.g., infant, Wobbler, 2-Year-Old, 3-Year-Old, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten)

Parents name \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Enrollment Status:**

- **New Student / Current Student:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Self-Pay or ELC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees Breakdown:**

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Enrollment Fee</b>	\$ _____
<b>Re-Enrollment Fee</b> <i>(if applicable for current students)</i>	\$ _____
<b>Class Tuition</b>	\$ _____
<b>ELC Reimbursement</b> <i>(if applicable)</i>	\$ _____
<b>Co-Pay</b> <i>(if applicable for ELC students)</i>	\$ _____
<b>ELC Differential Cost</b> <i>(if applicable)</i>	\$ _____

**3.2.1 Additional Before/After Care Fees**

Should your family need Before and/or After Care for students at the school, please know that there is an additional fee payable.

- VPK After Care
- Toddler Wrap Around
- Kindergarten - See agreement

This extended-care program is implemented and executed by UMCS as a convenience for our UMCS families. Only UMCS students are eligible to participate.

See price sheet

**3.2.2 Late Departure Fee**

There is an additional fee of \$1 for each 1 minute for late departure from After Care. This fee must be paid with the next tuition payment and will automatically add on to the weekly tuition payment without notice. The school clock will be the official clock in all Before or After Care situations. Should you have any questions, please contact the financial manager. Families who are habitually late for after-care pick-up (or drop off) may be dropped from the program.

**3.2.3 Refund & Withdrawal Policy**

Tuition and enrollment fees are non-refundable.

Families are required to provide a **minimum of two (2) weeks written notice** prior to withdrawing their child from the program. Tuition for the two-week notice period is required and will not be refunded, regardless of attendance.

Tuition is based on enrollment, not attendance. No refunds or credits will be given for absences due to illness, vacation, school closure, or any other reason.

No tuition will be charged beyond the required two-week notice period.

If a family has prepaid tuition (monthly or annually), any potential refund will be considered **only under the following circumstances**:

- Relocation outside a 50-mile radius due to employment (with written documentation), or
- Prolonged medical condition preventing attendance (with physician documentation)

Any approved refund will be prorated and issued at the discretion of the school.

All tuition must remain current during the notice period, regardless of attendance.

## United Methodist Christian School

### Temporary

#### Student Withdrawal Form (not intended for VPK graduates)

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**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Classroom/Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of Withdrawal:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of Return (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

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#### Reason for Temporary Withdrawal (check one):

- Summer Withdrawal (registration fee due upon re-registration)  
 Extended Illness  
 Family Hardship  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Important Information Regarding Temporary Withdrawal

United Methodist Christian School operates a **year-round program**, with **weekly tuition billed via Tuition Express each Friday**.

This form is intended for **temporary withdrawals** due to **summer break, extended illness, family hardship, or other special circumstances**.

- If a **return date is not provided**, the standard **permanent withdrawal policy** in the Parent Handbook will apply.
- This form must be submitted **at least two (2) weeks before** the intended last day of attendance.
- If proper notice is **not given**, parents remain responsible for the upcoming tuition charges, as:
  - Tuition is automatically processed weekly.
  - Staffing and classroom ratios are based on active enrollment.
  - Late notice impacts scheduling and operations.

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## Parent/Guardian Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the temporary withdrawal policy. I agree to provide two weeks' notice and understand that failure to do so may result in continued tuition charges.

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Submitted:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Please return this form to the office or email it to [joy.rinaldi@palmcoastumcs.org](mailto:joy.rinaldi@palmcoastumcs.org) at least two weeks before your child's last day to avoid additional charges.

### 3.2.4 Returned Checks / Declined ACH

There will be a \$25 charge imposed for all declined transactions or returned checks from the bank, for any reason. After this occurs, UMCS reserves the right to request that all future payments be made in the form of cash, money order, or credit card.

### 3.2.6 Late Fee Policy

Since the School is counting on the tuition monies to meet operational needs, parents are expected to pay on time.

A \$50.00 fee will be added after two late payments, without notice.

We will work with you to prevent this from happening, however termination of enrollment may be a result with tuition not being met. We have students often waiting to enroll. Any student that has an overdue balance will not be permitted to re enroll in the next class including VPK.

## **Section 4.0 – General Information**

### **4.1 School Administration Office**

The School Admin office is the main place of business for the School. All visitors and students who are tardy or leaving early must sign in or out through the School Admin office. Due to our heightened security procedures, no delivery personnel will be admitted other than those for school business such as UPS and FedEx. The prohibited entries include the food deliveries for students and/or staff.

#### **4.1.1 Student Sign In/Out**

Please use the office to sign your child in/out on Procure.

#### **4.1.2 Visitor Sign In/Out**

Due to our heightened security measures, all visitors must identify themselves prior to entry to the building and may be required to show photo ID and be listed on the pick up form when doing so if they are not provided a Procure pin.. Additional security checks may happen upon entry. Once admitted, all visitors must sign in and out at the School office. All visitors are to sign in with their name and destination. Upon completion of their visit, all visitors must return to the School office and sign out listing their time of departure; and exit the School through the front door.

### **4.2 Extended Care / Class**

#### **Start of school**

Students will not be allowed to enter the school after 9:00a.m. unless a phone call/Procure message is made, and/or a doctor's note is provided.

#### **Dismissal of School**

Students are to be sent only to the office when called for. Parents will pick up their child in the office. Before and After Care is designed for toddlers through VPK only.

For before and after care, your child will need a crib sheet and blanket for naptime. At the end of your child's week, your child's nap belongings will be sent home to be washed and returned the following week. Your child's nap belongings must be stored in a closed bag and labeled with your child's first and last name.

#### **Please see contract**

#### **4.2.1 Before Care**

**7:30 a.m**

#### **4.2.2 After Care**

**5:00 PM**

### **Medical Administration**

1. **Doctor's Note:** A current written statement from the child's healthcare provider is required. This note must specify the name of the medication, dosage, route of administration, frequency, and any special instructions.
2. **Medical Authorization Form:** A completed and signed medical authorization form must be on file. This form must be signed by both the child's parent/guardian and the prescribing physician.
3. **Original Packaging:** All medication must be in its original container with a legible pharmacy label that includes the child's name, name of the medication, dosage, and instructions for administration. This included diaper ointment / bug spray and sunscreen.

4. **Storage & Handling:** Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet or container, out of the reach of children, and refrigerated if required.
5. **Documentation:** Each time medication is administered, staff will document the date, time, dosage, and name of the staff member administering it. This log will be available to parents upon request.
6. **Trained Staff Only:** Only staff members who have received proper training in medication administration, per DCF regulations, are permitted to administer medication.

**NOTE:** For the safety of our students with food allergies or diabetes, UMCS requests that there be no sharing of food or utensils between students. Families wishing to provide food for classroom events are encouraged to check with the teacher regarding special dietary needs of students in the class. In addition, all food brought from home for class sharing must be store bought, not homemade. See food allergy participation authorization form.

#### **4.8 Sick Policy**

UMCS desires to maintain a healthy environment by instituting controls designed to limit the spread of communicable diseases. The term “communicable disease” shall mean any illness which arises because of a specific infectious agent which may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a susceptible host or infected person or animal to another person.

*To comply with Florida Health Department regulations, all doctor’s notes must clearly specify the reason for treatment for each child. This information is essential for maintaining accurate records. These records are kept confidential.*

*If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted so that he/she can be picked up. They must stay home the following day, Your child may not return to school until symptom free for at least 24 hours.*

**In the event your child is diagnosed with a confirmed case of an infectious disease—such as Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease, COVID-19, Influenza, or other communicable illnesses—a note from your child’s healthcare provider is required. This doctor’s note must:**

- *Confirm the specific diagnosis.*
- *Include the recommended date your child may safely return to school.*

Please note that confirmed cases of certain infectious diseases must be reported to the local health department, as required by public health regulations.

#### **Why This Policy Matters:**

- **Health & Safety:** Tracking communicable illnesses allows us to respond quickly to potential outbreaks and take necessary precautions to protect all students, staff, and families.
- **Public Health Compliance:** Reporting helps public health officials monitor disease trends and enact appropriate control measures.
- **Community Awareness:** Notifying exposed classrooms or groups (while protecting individual privacy) allows families to watch for symptoms early and seek timely medical care.
- **Educational Continuity:** Ensuring students return to school only when they are no longer contagious helps prevent further spread and minimizes disruptions to learning.

**Self-Pay Students:** Tuition will still be charged, as tuition is based on enrollment, not attendance. (Please email the school for extenuating circumstances)

**ELC Sick Days & Absences:** For families receiving Early Learning Coalition (ELC) assistance, the ELC covers the tuition for up to 10 excused absences per year with a doctor's note and 3 unexcused absences. These absences will not result in additional charges for the family, as the ELC continues to pay the school for these days.

**VPK Attendance Policy:**

Our center follows an attendance policy in accordance with Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program rules and statutes.

**Monthly Attendance Verification:**

Parents/guardians are required to verify their child's attendance each month by signing the official VPK Attendance Verification Form, as mandated by Rule 6M-8.305, F.A.C.

*Please note:* Forms may not be signed in advance. Signatures must reflect actual attendance for the completed month.

**Importance of Regular Attendance:**

Regular attendance is critical for your child's growth and success in the VPK program. Excessive unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the program, per state guidelines.

**Symptoms:**

- Fever of 100.4 or greater
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Positive Covid, Flu, Strep or other communicable disease test.
- Unexplained rash or hives.
- Persistent cough
- Mucus - excessive and/or persistent from mouth, nose, eyes
- Ear drainage or severe ear ache, suspected ear infection
- Eye infection or suspected eye infection
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Oozing sores or cuts
- Headache, moderate or severe
- Head lice, ringworm (until treated)
- Unexplained fatigue

**Medications:** We require that a medical authorization form be completed by a parent or guardian for any medication to be given to a child while in our facility. The authorization form must be dated and signed by the custodial parent or legal guardian and must include the child's name, the name of the medication, and the date, time, and amount of the correct dosage.

For medications that are used on an "as needed" basis, whether prescription or non-prescription, the parent or legal guardian must provide additional documentation on the authorization form. This documentation should describe the specific symptoms or situations that would require the medication to be administered.

**Closures:**

Any scheduled or emergency closure will result in a cancellation in all classes, and Before and After Care as well.

In the event of inclement weather, UMCS will make decisions regarding school closures based on the safety of our students, staff, and families. Should school be closed due to weather conditions, normal tuition rates will still apply, as tuition is based on your child's spot in the program and not the days of their attendance.

Please note that the center will cover the cost of 11 federal holidays, please see the attached sheet for the days covered. and you will not be required to pay for those days. The weekly tuition you pay is developed based on an annual tuition rate, which accounts for all scheduled closed dates throughout the year. This means that your weekly tuition already reflects these closures, ensuring that the overall financial commitment remains consistent.

### **4.11.1 Federal Holidays**

For a schedule of holiday closings, be sure to consult the current School Calendar.

Please note that the center will not charge for federal holidays; however, other closure days throughout the year, including holiday breaks and weather-related closures, will incur charges.

For parents in the Early Learning Coalition (ELC), the policy allows for 3 unexcused days. This policy is set by the ELC.

Charging for non-holiday closure days is essential for maintaining operational stability, including staff salaries and benefits, facility upkeep, and ensuring your child's spot is secured during these times.

### **4.11.2 Early Closings**

The more typical schedule would be a closing or delay, but periodic weather conditions may necessitate an early closing of school or a change in pickup procedures. In case of weather-related changes, UMCS Administration will make the decision and will communicate these changes via the classroom app or phone call.

### **4.12 Fundraisers**

All requests for fundraisers will need to have Administrative approval before the fundraiser can be planned and implemented.

### **4.13 Security/ Parent Access**

All doors will remain locked during school operation. All parents and guests must enter through the **front door**. Due to our heightened security measures, all visitors must identify themselves prior to entry to the building and may be required to show photo ID when doing so. Additional security checks may happen upon entry. All visitors will need to sign in and wear an appropriate ID while in the building. Parents are asked to limit their office visits and length of stay. Parents may get ahold of the school through our number at 386-445-2344, or they are able to message their child's teacher throughout the day on our Procure app.

For liability reasons, guests are not permitted to hang out in the office or on the grounds for play or socializing. We want all guests to feel welcome, but for safety and legal reasons, we must ask that they refrain from lingering in these areas. Thank you for understanding.

**Custody Arrangements:** The safety and well-being of the children in our care is our utmost priority. We understand that family situations can vary, and we strive to respect the rights of all parents and guardians. Unless we have custody paperwork on file stating that one party has full custody, we are legally unable to prevent a biological mother or father from picking up their child. This policy ensures that we comply with the law and uphold the rights of parents regarding their children.

If there are specific custody arrangements or concerns regarding child pickup, we encourage you to provide the necessary documentation to our office as well as update your "parentage" paper in our enrollment book.

At **UMCS**, we are committed to protecting the privacy of all enrolled children and their families. All personal and developmental information is kept strictly confidential and is only shared with authorized staff or agencies as required by law or with written parental consent.

### **4.14 Electronic Device Usage**

#### **4.14.1 Cell Phones**

UMCS values every minute of instruction time with our students during the day please refrain from texting or calling your teacher directly. All calls should be made to the office and/or message the teachers directly using Procure.

### **4.15 Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of UMCS that the highest standards of morality are maintained. Therefore, any inappropriate behavior of this nature by faculty, students, parents or family members is unwelcomed,

personally offensive, and interferes with a Christ-like spirit and is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. Instances of suspected sexual harassment should be reported immediately to the School administration.

## **4.6 Media**

Media plays an important role in the modern classroom and can enhance teaching and learning experiences. However, it is essential that teachers use the media responsibly and appropriately. The following guidelines are in place for teachers regarding the use of media in the classroom:

1. **Prioritize educational content:** When using media in the classroom, teachers should ensure that the content is relevant to the curriculum and supports student learning objectives.
2. **Obtain appropriate permissions:** Teachers should only use media that they have the legal right to use, whether through purchase, licensing, or fair use guidelines.
3. **Monitor content:** Teachers should preview all media before showing it to students to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students.
4. **Provide context:** When using media, teachers should provide context and guidance to help students understand and interpret the content.
5. **Encourage critical thinking:** Teachers should use media as a tool to encourage critical thinking and media literacy skills in students.
6. **Respect copyright laws:** Teachers should be mindful of copyright laws when using media in the classroom and should educate students on the importance of respecting intellectual property rights.
7. **Monitor student use:** Teachers should monitor and supervise student use of media devices in the classroom to ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

By following these guidelines, teachers can effectively integrate media into their teaching practice while also ensuring that students benefit from engaging and valuable learning experiences.

## **Section 5.0 – Attendance**

### **5.1 Absentee Policy**

Consistent attendance is crucial for your child's academic success and overall development. Being present and on time allows your child to fully participate in lessons, activities, and social interactions, and helps to create a sense of routine and stability in their daily lives. It also fosters a sense of responsibility and discipline, setting a positive foundation for future success. We ask that parents prioritize their child's attendance and punctuality, as it greatly impacts their educational experiences and growth.

#### **5.1.2 Early Dismissal**

**please see pick up policy sheet**

#### **5.2 Tardy Policy**

**Please see attached attendance / pick up sheet**

## **Section 6.0 – School Communication**

### **Family Communication and Engagement**

We believe that strong communication between families and our program is essential for supporting each child's development and success. Our program uses a variety of methods to maintain ongoing, open communication with families. These include the Procure app, which provides real-time updates, messages, and important reminders; email communication for sharing more detailed information or documents; the office is equipped to leave messages as well as an office personnel will answer the phone upon availability and our open-door policy, which welcomes families to connect with us at any time during operating hours. To ensure a safe environment for all children, all visitors — including family members — must sign in upon arrival and present a valid photo ID. We are committed to fostering a

collaborative and secure partnership with families through consistent, transparent, and respectful communication.

## **6.1 Family Involvement**

We value and encourage family involvement as a vital part of each child's growth and learning experience. Families are welcome to participate in a variety of ways, both in the classroom and throughout the program. Opportunities for involvement include volunteering during classroom activities, attending special events or celebrations, participating in family-teacher conferences, and contributing to classroom materials or projects. We also invite families to share their cultures, traditions, or special skills with the class to enrich our learning environment ( per teacher ) as well as join weekly chapel. Whether through hands-on participation or regular communication, we strive to build a strong, respectful partnership with every family.

Families are encouraged to contribute to the assessment process by sharing observations, completing developmental questionnaires, and participating in regular conferences to support a comprehensive understanding of their child's growth and learning.

## **6.2 Parent-Teacher Conferences / Assessment**

Parents may request a private conference at any time throughout the school year. Parents seeking to meet with a teacher should coordinate a meeting time with the individual teacher on their own. UMCS does set aside evenings designated for parent/teacher conferences at the close of the first quarter for VPK.

Testing will be administered through our curriculum FunnyDaffer for our VPK Students 3 times a year. ASQ Screenings will be completed on a case by case basis through requests from ELC.

Observation-based assessments are also used to inform program improvements by helping staff reflect on teaching practices, curriculum planning, and overall classroom effectiveness.

Our program uses observation-based assessments to monitor each child's development and learning, allowing educators to plan meaningful, individualized experiences that support growth across all developmental domains.

## **6.3 Family Resources**

### **Family Resources**

Our program is committed to supporting the well-being of not just our students, but their families as well. We maintain strong partnerships with organizations such as the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) of Flagler and Volusia Counties to ensure families have access to essential services, support programs, and early learning resources.

We understand that families may face challenges, and we are here to help connect you with local assistance when needed. Below are some key community resources available in the Palm Coast area:

- DCF (Department of Children and Families) – Provides support for child welfare, mental health services, and assistance programs. [www.myffamilies.com](http://www.myffamilies.com)
- Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia (ELC) – Offers child care assistance, VPK (Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten), parenting resources, and early intervention services. [www.elcfv.org](http://www.elcfv.org)
- Family Life Center (Flagler County) – Shelter and advocacy services for families experiencing domestic violence or abuse. 24/7 Helpline: (386) 437-3505  
[www.familylifecenterflagler.org](http://www.familylifecenterflagler.org)
- Flagler Cares – Local nonprofit helping families navigate housing, healthcare, behavioral health, and social services. [www.flaglercares.org](http://www.flaglercares.org)
- Grace Community Food Pantry – Provides food assistance to families in need.  
[www.gracecommunityfoodpantry.com](http://www.gracecommunityfoodpantry.com)

- Flagler County Schools Student & Family Support Services – Resources for school-aged children and family needs. <https://flaglerschools.com>

We encourage families to reach out to our administrative team if they need help accessing any of these resources. We're here to support your family every step of the way.

## 6.4 Commitment to Playful Learning

At United Methodist Christian School, we believe that play is essential to children's development and is the foundation of all meaningful learning. As part of our commitment to developmentally appropriate practice, we intentionally incorporate **playful learning** into every part of the day.

### What Is Playful Learning?

"Playful learning" is a learning approach in which children acquire knowledge and skills through play—either **freely chosen** by the child (free play), **guided** by a teacher (guided play), or through **structured games**. This approach is supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2022), and reflects what research tells us about how young children learn best.

### How Children Learn Through Play

When children play, they explore ideas, test their thinking, build relationships, and solve problems. Whether they're building with blocks, pretending to be chefs, painting, or playing a counting game, they're also learning:

- Communication and language skills
- Social and emotional understanding
- Problem-solving and critical thinking
- Early math, science, and literacy concepts
- Fine and gross motor skills

### How We Integrate Play Into Learning

We design our environment and schedule to promote learning through play every day:

- **Free Play:** Children choose activities and materials that interest them, encouraging independence and creativity.
- **Guided Play:** Teachers gently scaffold children's learning during play, asking questions or introducing materials to deepen exploration.
- **Structured Play:** Educators lead games or planned activities with specific learning goals that feel fun and engaging for children.

Our goal is to create a joyful, rich environment where children feel safe to explore, imagine, and grow—because **play is how children learn**.

## 6.5 Active Supervision Policy

At **UMCS**, we are committed to keeping children safe through **active supervision**—the focused, intentional, and continuous observation of children by staff at all times. Our educators are strategically positioned, alert, and fully engaged with the children to ensure they can safely explore their environment while learning and playing.

Supervision is tailored to meet the needs of each age group:

- **Infants (0–12 months):** Teachers remain within arm’s reach at all times and maintain constant visual contact, including during sleep and diapering.
- **Toddlers (1–2 years):** Educators stay close, supervise through sight and sound, and move with toddlers as they explore.
- **Preschoolers (3–5 years):** Staff actively scan the classroom and playground, position themselves to observe all areas, and engage children while monitoring the group.
- **School-Age Children (5+ years):** Staff provide appropriate independence while maintaining consistent monitoring through check-ins, transitions, and supervision of both structured and free play.

At UMCS, active supervision is an essential part of our daily practice, ensuring every child is safe, supported, and nurtured in all environments.

## Infant Room Guidelines and Parent Responsibilities

*United Methodist Christian School*

We are excited to welcome families into our Infant Program, which is licensed and accredited to provide care from birth through VPK. The information below outlines what you can expect, what we require, and how our procedures are designed to ensure a safe, consistent, and nurturing environment for your child.

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### **What Parents Provide**

For your child’s comfort and safety, families are required to supply the following items, clearly labeled with your child’s full name:

- Bottles (pre-filled with formula or breast milk) labeled with name and date each day
- Diapers
- Wipes
- A **Pack ‘n Play or crib** that meets current safety standards
- Two to three changes of clothing
- Any comfort items (e.g., pacifiers, sleep sacks, if allowed)

Please replenish supplies as needed. Teachers will notify you via Procure when items are running low.

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## **Infant Room Location & Campus Use**

Our Infant Room is located in a designated space within the **church building**, directly connected to our school campus. While this space is separate from our main classrooms, it meets all DCF safety and licensing standards and is an integrated part of our early learning environment.

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## **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures 7:30- 4:30- summer hours (subject to change based on program needs)**

For the safety of all children and consistency across our school, we ask infant families to follow these arrival and departure procedures:

### **Drop-Off**

- All parents must **enter through the school's front entrance** and check in via **Procure**.
- After check-in, you will be let in by front office staff and may **escort your child to the infant room**.
- Once drop-off is complete, **you must exit through the infant room's dedicated exterior door** and not walk back through the school.

### **Pick-Up**

- Parents will again check in at the **front entrance** using Procure.
- Office staff will let you in to walk to the infant room.
- After signing your child out, you will **exit through the infant room door**, not through the school hallways.

These steps help us maintain a secure campus while allowing our youngest learners to transition in and out of their classroom with the comfort of a parent.

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## **Communication & Updates**

- We use **Procure** for all communications with teachers, daily reports, and updates.
  - Please use the app to message teachers or request a meeting.
  - For urgent needs, speak to the front office and they will assist with communication or arranging a conference during nap time.
-

## **Infant Room Standards**

Our Infant Room follows DCF guidelines for health, safety, and developmental care, including:

- One crib per child, safely spaced and sanitized daily
- Proper diapering and handwashing procedures
- Direct supervision at all times — including during sleep
- Bottles never propped; infants are always held or positioned safely during feedings
- Toys and materials that are safe, age-appropriate, and sanitized regularly

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We are committed to providing a warm, secure, and developmentally supportive environment for your child. If you have any questions, we are always happy to speak with you.

### **Termination:**

**UNITED METHODIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

**PALM COAST School**

**TERMINATION & EXPULSION**

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent/Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_

Unfortunately, there are reasons for asking that a child be removed from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) to prevent this policy from being enforced.

When a child is having a problem in the classroom the staff will try to redirect your child from the negative behavior in the following manner:

- Staff will reassess the classroom environment, the appropriateness of activities, and its supervision.
  - Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
  - Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
  - Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules. Child will be given verbal warnings.
  - Child will be given time to regain control of him/herself (self-regulate).
  - Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality. Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
  - Parents/guardians will be given written copies of the disruptive behavior that might lead to expulsion and will meet with the Director or Superintendent of the program.
  - The Director or Superintendent, teacher, and parent/guardian will have conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
  - The Parents will be provided resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendations for evaluation by professional consultants and/or an evaluation by the Flagler School district's Child Study Team.

United Methodist Christian School (UMCS) reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any time, with or without cause, at the sole discretion of the administration, subject to applicable laws.

Grounds for termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to pay tuition or fees
- Failure to comply with school policies
- Disruptive, unsafe, or inappropriate behavior by the child or parent/guardian
- Failure to provide required documentation
- Actions that threaten the safety, well-being, or operations of the school

When possible, UMCS will provide reasonable notice; however, immediate termination may occur if deemed necessary for the safety of students or staff.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon adherence to all school policies.

### **SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION & TERMINATION**

If, after the above remedial actions have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior that warrants a termination.

### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD' EXPULSION**

- Failure to pay fees/habitual lateness in making tuition payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including providing the child's immunization records.
- Verbal abuse of Superintendent, Directors, Teachers, and Educational assistants and staff.
- Parent/Family members threaten physical or intimidating actions toward the staff.

### **CHILD'S ACTION FOR EXPULSION**

- Failure of the child to adjust after a reasonable length of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical abuse of children and staff
- Unable to toilet train in our three-year-old program.

### **A CHILD WILL NOT BE EXPELLED:**

- If the child's parent questions the school regarding policies and procedures or without giving the parents 1 week notice to make other childcare arrangements.

## **Biting Policy**

**UMCS** recognizes that it is not out of the ordinary for young children between the ages of 10 and 30 months of age to go through a period of biting. Biting occurs for a variety of reasons. Some of the most common reasons young children bite are due to: teething, a lack of ability to communicate,

frustration, being overly tired or overly hungry, and/or a need for more attention. It is highly likely that all children between these age ranges will either bite or be bitten at some point (often more than once) while in the child care setting.

Our teachers and administration work closely and quickly to extinguish this undesirable behavior by the following these guidelines for children who have been identified as having a biting habit:

If a child bites two (2) times within a four (4) hour time frame, the parents will be called and required to remove the child from the center for a day.

If a child has been required to leave the facility for the aforementioned reason twice within a five (5) day period, a parent/ teacher/ director conference will be held. During this conference, a formal plan of action will be developed.

After the parent/ teacher/ director conference, if improvement is not seen, the parent will be required to temporarily withdraw the child from the center.

After a temporarily withdrawn child returns, if improvement is not seen, the child will be required to be taken out of our center permanently.

**Pickup/Drop-off Policy:**

Center Hours: 7:30am-5:00pm

Drop-Offs (7:30am-9:00am):

During this time frame, parents can drop off their children directly in the office. This will be where children are signed in/out of. To maintain the integrity of the learning environment all drop-offs occur between 7:30- 9:00 AM. Parents/guardians are not permitted in the school building unless they are signed in as a visitor. Parents/guardians must utilize Procure when signing in/out using their Procure code. Procure codes are confidential and should only be shared with people you give permission to pick up your child. Please keep your child's pick-up list updated in their enrollment packet.

**Pick-up Times:**

Half Days: For the well-being of our students and to avoid disruptions during naptime, half-day pickups are required by 12:00 PM. We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise, so please let us know if there are any changes.

Full Days: Full day pick-ups may happen anytime from 3:30-5:00.

Late Pickups:

A late fee of \$1 per minute will be applicable for pickups after 5:00 PM. We appreciate your promptness in picking up your child.

**VPK:**

**Wrap-Around Drop-Offs (7:30am-9:00am):**

During this time frame, parents can drop off their children directly in the office. This will be where children are signed in/out of. To maintain the integrity of the learning environment, all drop-offs occur

between 7:30- 9:00 AM. Parents/guardians are not permitted in the school building unless they are signed in as a visitor, and a reason given.

VPK-only students must be dropped off from 8:45am-9:00am.

**Pick-up Times:**

VPK ONLY: VPK only students must be picked up by 12:00 PM. The late fee will also apply to VPK-only students who are picked up after 12:00 PM.

Wrap Around: Wrap around pick-ups may happen anytime from 3:30-5:00.

**Late Pickups:**

A late fee of \$1 per minute will be applicable for pickups after 5:00 PM or VPK- only students after 12:00 PM. We appreciate your promptness in picking up your child.

**Fire/Fire Drills**

Per DCF requirements the school will have one fire drill per month. It is required that these times are varied to ensure that teachers are able to get the students out safely and in a timely manner regardless of the activity going on ( such as nap and lunch).

**Evacuation**

Refer to Officer Lutz training guidelines

**Nap Time:**

Each child staying for naptime must have their own nap supplies. Nap mats are supplied by the school.

All nap supplies must be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Nap supplies must be stored in a closed bag to maintain cleanliness.

The closed bag should be brought home weekly for washing.

Parents/guardians are responsible for sending the nap supplies home at the end of each week to be washed.

Clean nap supplies must be returned to school at the beginning of each week to ensure the child is prepared for naptime.

**Hours of Operation Change:** Operational Hours are subject to change at any time with a 30 day or more notice.

**Harassment:** UMCS is committed to providing a school environment that is free of harassment. In keeping with this commitment, we maintain a strict policy prohibiting any kind of harassment. Racial harassment may include ethnic slurs and insults. Sexual harassment can take the form of verbal innuendo, physical gestures, name-calling, and touching.

**Bullying:** Bullying is any unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. After investigation, and the allegations are verified, appropriate corrective actions will be taken and documented. Conduct not normally considered bullying would include teasing in a one-time incident, trading insults, or accidentally hurting someone. UMCS recognizes that not all behaviors should be considered bullying or as willful violations of this policy.

**IDEA Notice: Individuals with Disabilities Act**

“A parentally placed private school student with a disability does not have an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that the student would receive if enrolled in a public school under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.”

## **United Methodist Christian School Food Service Declaration - FES Compliance Binder**

This letter serves to confirm that **United Methodist Christian School does not provide food services** of any kind. All meals and snacks are provided by parents or guardians and brought from home daily. There is no onsite meal preparation or participation in any food program.

### **Parent Responsibility and Meal Expectations:**

Parents are required to provide the following each day for their child:

- A **clean, labeled water bottle** (refilled as needed throughout the day)
- A **morning snack** and an **afternoon snack**
- A **well-balanced lunch** sent in a **lunch pail or insulated bag**

Lunches and snacks are stored in the classroom refrigerator when necessary to ensure food safety.

To support healthy eating habits, we ask that families **limit overly sugary snacks and drinks**, such as candy, soda, or snack cakes. Healthier alternatives like fruit, granola bars, applesauce, or yogurt are encouraged.

## **Our Biblical Worldview Statement**

### **Grounded in God's Truth**

At United Methodist Christian School, we believe that God is the Creator of all things and that every person is made in His image with unique purpose and worth. We recognize the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the ultimate source of truth, guiding all that we teach, learn, and practice.

### **Centered on Jesus Christ**

We believe that salvation is found through Jesus Christ alone and that we are called to live lives that reflect His love, grace, and truth. In every subject, activity, and interaction, we seek to help students view the world through a biblical lens—understanding that their gifts and knowledge are to be used to glorify God and serve others.

### **Equipping for Kingdom Impact**

Our goal is to partner with families in nurturing students' faith, character, and intellect so that they grow as disciples of Christ, equipped to impact the world for His Kingdom.

## What is Influenza (Flu)?

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and may lead to serious complications.

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## Symptoms of the Flu

Symptoms often come on suddenly and may include:

- Fever (not all individuals will have a fever)
  - Cough
  - Sore throat
  - Runny or stuffy nose
  - Body aches
  - Headache
  - Chills
  - Fatigue
  - Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children)
- 

## How the Flu Spreads

The flu spreads mainly through droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. It may also spread by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and then touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.

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## Additional Official Information

For more information about influenza, including prevention and vaccination recommendations, please visit:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/flu>
- Florida Department of Health:  
<https://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/influenza/>
-

# HEAT STROKE & HOT VEHICLE SAFETY

*(DCF Required Parent Information for Handbook)*

## Heat-Related Illness & Hot Vehicle Safety

Children are at high risk for heat-related illness, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke, especially in Florida's climate. Temperatures inside a vehicle can rise to dangerous levels within minutes, even with windows cracked.

### Hot Car Safety Facts

- A car can heat up **20°F in just 10 minutes**
- Cracking windows does **NOT** significantly reduce heat
- Children's bodies heat up **3–5 times faster than adults**
- Heat stroke can occur when body temperature reaches **104°F**

### Signs of Heat Exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Pale, cool, or clammy skin
- Weakness or fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness

### Signs of Heat Stroke (Medical Emergency)

- Hot, dry, or flushed skin
- Rapid pulse
- Confusion or disorientation
- Loss of consciousness
- Body temperature above 104°F

 **If heat stroke is suspected, call 911 immediately.**

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## Prevention Guidelines

- Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle for any reason
- Always check the back seat before locking your car
- Keep vehicles locked when not in use

- Ensure children are hydrated throughout the day
- Dress children in lightweight, breathable clothing
- Limit outdoor exposure during extreme heat
- Staff will monitor outdoor play times in accordance with DCF guidelines

## School Commitment

Our school follows all Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulations regarding child safety, including:

- Active supervision at all times
- Safe outdoor play practices
- Immediate response to signs of heat-related illness
- 

# Rilya Wilson Act

Pursuant to s. 39.604, Florida Statutes, a child from birth to the age of school entry, who is under court-ordered protective supervision or in out-of-home care and is enrolled in an early education or child care program must attend the program 5 days a week unless the court grants an exemption. A child enrolled in an early education or child care program who meets the requirements of this act may not be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of the Department or community-based care **lead agency**. If a child covered by this act is absent, the program shall report any unexcused absence or seven excused absences to the Department or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business **day** following the unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence.

Educational stability and transition are key components of this act to minimize disruptions, secure attachments and maintain stable relationships with supportive caregivers of children from birth to school age. Successful partnerships are imperative to ensure **that** these attachments are not disrupted due to placement in out-of-home care or subsequent changes in out-of-home placement. A child must be allowed to remain in the child care or early education setting that he/she attended before entry into out-of-home care, unless the program is not in the best interest of the child. If a child from birth to school-age leaves a child care or early education program, a transition plan needs to be developed that involves cooperation and sharing of information among all persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage **and** associated psychological needs, and allows for a gradual transition from one setting to another.

This law provides priority for child care services for specified children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. *These children are also known as Protective Services children.*

### **Rilya Wilson Act Requirements:**

1. Protective services children **MUST** be enrolled to participate 5 days per week.

2. Protective services children **MAY NOT** be withdrawn without prior written approval from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Community Based Care (CBC).
3. If a Protective Services child has 7 consecutive excused or any unexcused absence, the child care provider **MUST** notify the appropriate community based care staff.
4. The Department and child care providers **MUST** follow local protocols set up by the CBC to ensure continuity.
5. If it is not in the best interest of the child to remain at the child care or early education program, the caregiver **MUST** work with the Case Manager, Guardian Ad litem, child care and educational staff, and educational surrogate, if one **has been** appointed, to determine the best setting for the child.

Community-Based Care Lead Agencies Contact Information:

<http://www.sjc.ttJJ.1!s./J?rQg@m'dc;c:fcicq:s./Ji.IQ091COntac ts.pgf>

\*\* If you have concerns regarding any child that you may care for, please contact the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE\*\*

**Scripture Foundation:** *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”*

— **Colossians 3:17**

**This handbook has been provided in an effort to answer as many of your questions as possible. If you have any additional questions, please contact our School office or any of our staff members.**

## United Methodist Christian School Media & Technology Permission Form

We recognize that technology and educational media can enhance learning. At times, our teachers may use videos, music, websites, or apps from outside our core curriculum to support instruction.

**Please indicate your permission below:**

**Yes, I give permission for my child to view and/or interact with teacher-selected media and technology that has been approved by school administration.**

**No, I do not give permission. I understand that alternate materials may be provided.**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**All media will be screened to ensure it is age-appropriate, educational, and consistent with Christian values.**