

MOTHER'S MORNING OUT PARENT HANDBOOK

2016-2017

Director's office phone - 662-234-3371

OUUMC office fax - 662-234-4202

424 South Tenth Street

Mother's Morning Out, a ministry of Oxford-University United Methodist Church, is designed to provide quality child care in a nurturing environment thus giving mothers and other caregivers a regular block of time to meet personal and family needs. Mother's Morning Out provides opportunities for toddlers and preschoolers to interact with a small group of children their own age on a regular basis and to enjoy happy learning experiences at church. Children of all nationalities and religions are accepted and welcome.

OBJECTIVES

The Mother's Morning Out program is designed to provide opportunities for children to:

- 1) Grow in understanding and love for themselves, their families and others in their world.
- 2) Grow in awareness that God loves them and that Jesus is a special friend.
- 3) Grow in the ability to think, solve problems, and develop language skills.
- 4) Enjoy creative expression in music, art and play.
- 5) Develop age-appropriate social skills by playing with the same group of children and adults on an ongoing basis.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD DO AT OUUMC MOTHER'S MORNING OUT?

We believe in the value of play and child-directed activities, rather than teacher-directed, for the very young children in our Mother's Morning Out. Our toddlers and two-year-olds are busy each morning making friends, exploring how toys work, looking at books and being read to, making music and learning new songs and learning that important lesson of separation - Mommy leaves, but she always comes back!

Through group play experiences, young ones begin to learn the concept of sharing – even if it isn't easy. They expand their language abilities and learn to share adult attention. They develop the social skills needed to play games and make friends. Children use messy art materials in a space made for experimentation and try on different personalities with different costumes.

We adhere to Maria Montessori's philosophy. Play is the work of the child. What a lot of work our children do in a busy morning at Mother's Morning Out!

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

- A child must be 18 months old by September 1 to be admitted to the program. Mother's Morning Out offers classes for toddlers and two-year-olds.
- Immunization Form 121 and the \$175.00 registration fee must be submitted at the time of registration.
- Priority enrollment privileges are given to members of Oxford-University United Methodist Church and to returning students.
- When possible, special consideration is given to siblings of currently enrolled students.
- Any spaces not reserved by priority registrants by the February deadline are immediately available to new students.

2016-2017 CALENDAR

MMO begins with a **Parent Orientation Night** on Thursday, September 1 at 6:00 PM. Parent Orientation Night is for parents only. Each child and the child's parents have a designated appointment to meet the teacher and explore the classroom on **Classroom Visit Day** on Tuesday, September 5. The first school day for MMO students is Thursday, September 8. Due to summer 2017 plans to renovate our classrooms, MMO's last day of school will be April 27, 2017. An MMO school year calendar will be posted on the website. Hard copies are available for parents.

2016-2017 FEES

- The \$175.00 registration fee and \$165 September tuition prepayment are submitted with the registration form.
- The remaining \$165.00 tuition per month for October through April is due at the MMO Parent Orientation prior to Labor Day, and must be paid in one of three ways:
 - 1) One check for \$1,155.00 dated October 1, 2016
 - 2) Two semester checks – one check for \$495.00 dated October 1, 2016 and the other for \$660.00 dated January 1, 2017
 - 3) Eight monthly checks – eight checks for \$165.00 with each check post-dated for the first day of a month, October through April
- All checks are made payable to “OUUMC Preschool Programs”.
- Although some months have fewer school days than others, the yearly tuition is divided into equal monthly payments.
- Regardless of which payment plan is chosen, all tuition checks for the year are due at Parent Orientation Night.
- A \$25.00 fee is charged for checks returned for non-sufficient funds. If you change checking accounts, be sure to replace your monthly tuition checks.

DAILY ARRIVAL

- Please be prompt and arrive between 8:45 AM and 9:00 AM.
- Complete any cell phone calls before entering the parking lot.
- If you arrive prior to 8:45, please wait in your car or in the lobby area near the gym, until you see Discovery Day School teachers begin unloading cars.
- Give your child a quick, cheerful goodbye outside the room when you arrive, hang your child’s bag and any outerwear on the coat hook with his or her name.
- All students must be signed in and out each day. Sign the daily sign-in sheet posted outside the door, being sure to fill in all required information, and leave quickly.
- Pick-up plans must be made prior to drop-off. **WE WILL NOT RELEASE A CHILD TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.** Please note on the daily sign-in sheet the name of the person picking up your child at noon. We require a written note from a parent for any change in normal pick-up plans. Photo identification will be required for anyone unknown to the staff. Never send someone your child does not know to pick up your child.
- Leave additional numbers for a specific day that might help us contact you in an emergency (such as your hair salon on the morning you have an appointment).
- We have lots of experience handling separation difficulties. Please trust us to get the day started well.

WHAT TO SEND WITH YOUR CHILD EACH DAY

- Children in diapers must bring a labeled drinking cup with a lid, diapers, wipes and a full change of clothes to school each day.
- Children who are completely potty-trained must bring a labeled drinking cup with a lid, and a full change of clothes including underwear and socks every day. Dress your potty-trained child in clothes which are easy to fasten and promote independence.
- Send these items in a backpack or diaper bag with your child’s name displayed.
- Send your child in playclothes, tennis shoes and socks every day. We enjoy finger-painting, play-doh and washable markers as well as playing in the gym and on the playground each day.
- We will play outside even on cold days, so please send appropriate layers. Outer wraps and extra clothes should be labeled.

WHAT NOT TO SEND WITH YOUR CHILD

- **TOYS :** We will provide toys, games, and art materials for the children. Personal toys should stay at home. Such personal items generally present a “sharing” problem with young children and are likely to get lost or broken as well.
- **SHOES OTHER THAN TENNIS SHOES :** Cowboy boots, flip flops, sandals and crocs are not allowed.
- Clothing with skull logos, skeletons, ghosts, vampires and “sassy” quotes are not appropriate, nor are Halloween costumes.
- **PACIFIERS :** Pacifiers may be part of your child’s nap routine, but children do not nap at MMO. Overuse of pacifiers delays speech development as a child does not talk with a pacifier in his/her mouth. In a group setting, germs and illness can spread quickly when a child drops a pacifier and another child picks it up.

SEPARATION - HOW TO MAKE GOOD-BYES EASIER

Prepare your child for the first day - Children like to know what to expect. Talk about the names of your child’s teacher, and the children in the class.

Expect some anxiety

- Adjusting to a new situation is difficult. Children may express their anxiety by whining, clinging to you or being irritable.
- Be calm and don’t add to the anxiety. If your child senses you are unsure about leaving, the child will certainly not feel secure about being left!
- Occasionally, children who initially had no trouble separating go through a period of anxiety during transitions. This is especially prevalent when children have been out sick or after holidays and vacations.
- Children feel secure with routines so being consistent with attendance is helpful.
- We have lots of experience at helping children with separation anxiety and are experts at helping children transition and engage in activities to distract them.

Be prompt for arrivals and departures

- Often when children are experiencing separation anxiety and see another child’s mother coming in late or arriving early for pick-up, they wonder why their own mother isn’t there and get upset all over again.

When it’s time to leave, don’t prolong it

- We cannot over-emphasize this tip! If your child senses you are uncertain about leaving, they surely won’t feel secure about being left.
- Most children quit crying and are playing happily within 5 to 15 minutes of separation. If your child remains inconsolable after a reasonable length of time, we will call you.
- If you leave with your child unhappy, you may call the director at 234-3371 and ask her to check on your child.
- Bringing your child to the classroom door and allowing the teacher to greet the child and bring them into the classroom without a parent works best.
- Sign the child in quickly, say good-bye and leave without lingering. Teachers will engage your child in a toy or activity.
- If your child cries, feel free to stand in the hallway, out of the children’s sight, and wait to make sure your child settles happily.

DAILY DISMISSAL

- Mother’s Morning Out is over at 11:45 AM. Children must be picked up by 12:00 noon.
- All students must be signed in and out each day.
- To avoid worrying your child or inconveniencing teachers, do not arrive early or pick up late.
- Beginning at 12:01, a late charge of \$1.00 per minute for the first five minutes and \$2.00 per minute thereafter will be assessed for any child not picked up on time. Late fees are due and payable at the time which late pickup occurs.
- Pick-up plans must be made prior to drop-off. **WE WILL NOT RELEASE A CHILD TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.** Please note on the daily sign-in sheet the name of the person picking up your child at noon. We must have a written note from a parent for any change in normal pick-up plans. The note must be sent that day in the child’s DDS bag. Photo identification will be required for anyone unknown to the staff.

STAFF

- Our MMO staff includes certified teachers, experienced mothers and occasionally a college student majoring in education or a related field.
- OUUMC Preschool Programs staff members are certified in child CPR and first aid on an annual rotation so that currently certified adults are always available.
- Staff members receive 15 hours of continuing education each year.

NEW STAFF

- We hope to not have changes in staff during a school year. If a change occurs we will make the transition as smooth as possible. When possible, we allow the children to say good-bye and bring in the new teacher to meet the class before the previous teacher leaves.

NUTRITION

- In accordance with state licensing regulations, children are not allowed to bring breakfast, drinks, or personal snacks into the building.
- Although snacks vary to accommodate the food allergies in a particular class, snacks such as cheese, crackers, yogurt, cereal or fruit with water will be provided.
- We make a concerted effort to introduce our students to healthy eating habits and encourage them to try nutritious foods in a variety of colors and textures.
- Parents are welcome to send a special snack for the class and are asked to talk with the teacher in advance about what you plan to send and when.
- Due to the prevalence of peanut allergies, we do not allow peanut or tree nut products.

BIRTHDAYS

- Celebrating a birthday is important to preschool children and we encourage you to celebrate your child's birthday by bringing special refreshments.
- Talk with your teacher to set a date and for refreshment ideas which allow for any food allergies of classmates. We are a peanut-free, tree-nut free facility.
- Please do not send candy, gum, balloons, gifts, treat bags or party favors for birthdays or other special days.
- Invitations to birthday parties outside of school may only be given out at school if each boy and girl in the class is included.
- Invitations will not be given to individual children in other classes.

HOLIDAY PARTIES

- We encourage you to provide special treats for holiday celebrations.
- Check with your child's teacher for snack ideas and avoid snacks with peanuts or other tree nut products.
- Please don't bring party favors, balloons, favors, gifts or treat bags to take home.
- Avoid monsters, witches, skeletons, and music or activities which might be scary.
- No costumes or masks.

CHAPEL

- On Tuesdays, Mother's Morning Out students attend Chapel, a 15 minute time for songs, Bible stories and Bible verses led by a Director of Children's Ministries, Kara Howland.
- At Chapel, we seek to give our students a non-denominational foundation of well-known Bible stories and parables from the Old and New Testament. We believe this foundation in scripture and understanding of Christ's teachings will provide a model for a life-time of decision-making and respect for others.

FIELD TRIPS

- For safety and logistical reasons, due to the very young age of our MMO little ones, we wait until children are in Discovery Day School to take field trips.

SUN SAFETY

- MMO observes sun-safe practices in the location and length of outdoor activities.
- Parents with concerns about sun exposure are encouraged to apply sunscreen before school.

HEALTH

- Keep your child home if your child is listless or cranky, has no energy or has no appetite.
- For the health and safety of all our children and their families, we will err on the side of caution and send home any child who is not feeling well or shows signs of sickness.
- No medications will be administered to children.
- Please notify the teacher and director if your child contracts any contagious diseases, such as chicken pox, so that we may alert other parents of possible exposure.

Keep your child home if he or she has had:

Note: Some illness are contagious for 48 hours following fever, vomiting or diarrhea.

Please use your best judgment before sending your child to school following illness.

- **Fever** – A temperature of 100 or greater in the last 24-48 hours. A child must be fever-free for a full 24 - 48 hours without the aid of Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- **Runny nose / Congestion** – If your child's nose needs to be wiped frequently, regardless of whether the discharge is clear or thick.
- **Coughing** – If a cough occurs more than once every five minutes. Children are not old enough to cover their mouths and spread germs easily.
- **Vomiting/Diarrhea** – Either within the last 24-48 hours.
- **Eye Discharge** – If discharge returns after wiping or if there is redness of the sclera, the white of the eye.
- **Ear infections** – Viruses and bacterial infections that cause ear infections can be contagious.
- **Rash** - If you do not know the cause of the rash or you know it to be contagious.
- **Biting** – For the safety of others, a child who bites repeatedly must be kept at home until the biting phase has passed.
- Although biting is not an illness, it is a physical hazard to other children that can require medical treatment and cause scarring.
- If your child is at a stage in which the child's bite is bruising or breaking the skin or biting repeatedly (not a one-time bite causing a temporary pink mark) your child will stay home until the stage is passed.
- Our purpose is not to punish the biter. Just as keeping a sick child at home is to protect others, not to punish the sick child, keeping a biter at home is to protect the other children in the class.
- Tuition cannot be prorated or refunded for a child kept at home for biting or illness.

DISCIPLINE

- Discipline is not a synonym for punishment. At MMO, we focus on preventative discipline by re-directing children and teaching positive behaviors. We emphasize logical consequences as opposed to general "time-outs". For instance, if a child throws blocks, the teacher would remind the child that blocks are for building, not throwing and direct the child to another play area or learning center.
- We believe classroom management works best when a teacher works with an individual child privately and respectfully. Behavior charts, such as stoplight systems, are not in line with our philosophy.
- We believe through gentle guidance, a child's sense of pride and confidence grows and the child begins building a foundation for intrinsic motivation and self-discipline. We do not use rewards such as stickers and treats to reinforce target behaviors.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

- Aggressive behavior includes, but is not limited to, biting, pushing, kicking and hitting, which is not in retaliation or response to another student's actions and which results in physical injury to any other student or teacher.
- We understand children are growing, learning, and experimenting with many emotions and ways to handle them, but for the safety of our children, we do not allow continued, aggressive behavior.
- Generally, if a very young child bites or injures another child, it is not intended to harm, but often an experiment in "cause and effect" - "I wonder if Maybelle will drop the toy I want if I bite her..."

- The first incident will be dealt with in the classroom. The teacher will talk with the child, explain why biting(or kicking or hitting) is wrong(it hurts our friends) and offer other ways to handle the problem (Use words - Ask Marvin if you can have a turn with the truck) The parents of both parties involved will be notified of the incident by the teacher and with a copy of a written accident report form.
- Upon the second aggressive incident, the child will be removed from playing with playmates in a manner appropriate to the child's age. The child may play in an area without other children nearby, sit briefly in time-out or visit the directors office. The parents will be notified.
- If the behavior occurs a third time in the day, the parents will be contacted immediately to take the child home for the remainder of the day.
- If the aggressive behavior becomes a pattern, parents, the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the director will meet to establish a plan to correct the behavior.
- At any time during the process, the director reserves the right to have the child stay at home until the phase has passed.
- Our purpose is not to punish the child. Just as keeping a sick child at home is to protect others, not to punish the sick child, keeping at home a child whose behavior compromises the safety and security of the other children in the class is to protect the other children in the class.
- Tuition cannot be prorated or refunded for a child kept at home.
- If the behavior occurs upon return to the program, the director reserves the right to remove the child from the program permanently.

SOLICITATIONS

- MMO does not send home solicitations such as advertisements for fundraisers, parent businesses or invitations to home parties such as Kelly's Kids or Pampered Chef.

PRIVACY POLICY

- All contact information (names of students, parents and faculty, phone numbers, email addresses and physical addresses) is distributed to parents only for MMO - related information and events such as play-dates and birthday parties.
- This information may not be used for marketing purposes.
- Please do not send teachers or parents commercial solicitations, "forwards" of e-mails, jokes or chain letters to our staff or parents.
- No advertising, trading of goods or services, or solicitations of any kind is allowed, including "invitations" or ads for private school fundraisers, festivals or open houses.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- For the safety of our students, with the wide-ranging and sometimes uncontrollable aspects of social media, it is our policy not to allow photos of our students or names of our students to be posted on the internet.
- No photos taken on school property may be posted Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Instagram or via any other type of social network or website.
- Teachers and parents are welcome to e-mail school photos to each other. Some teachers choose to post photos on a dedicated site which requires password access.

CONFERENCES

- Parent/teacher communication is a vital component of a quality preschool experience.
- If you wish to have a conference with the teacher, please send a note or call the preschool office. A mutually convenient time will be arranged.
- As a teacher's first responsibility during school hours is to the students in the classroom, conferences will be set outside of school hours.

EVALUATION AND SPECIAL SERVICES

- Our intention is to be in close communication with you. If we have concerns about your child's development we will discuss our observations with you.
- We are not experts in diagnosing problems, but we are sensitive to emerging concerns. We can help you search for answers and guide you to appropriate specialists. We always want to partner with you for the good of your child.

DISMISSAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Our program will be dismissed for severe weather if the Oxford City Schools suspend classes or if weather conditions are determined to be unsafe for transporting young children or requiring teachers to be present. We will often close if Lafayette County Schools are closed as we have children and teachers in the county district as well.
- You will receive a text or email from your child's teachers regarding school closing as soon as a decision is made, but generally prior to 7:00 AM.
- We cannot offer make-up days as the building is used for many other ministries, nor do we give refunds for days missed. This policy is standard for local preschools.

MMO HANDBOOK SIGNATURE FORM

You must complete this form and turn it in, along with your post-dated tuition checks, on September 1, 2016 at Parent Orientation.

I have carefully read the MMO Parent Handbook and understand the guidelines, policies and procedures. I will seek additional information from the director or teachers if I have questions or concerns.

Parent's Name (printed) _____

Parent's Signature _____

Child's Name _____

Child's Teacher and Class _____

Date _____

OUUMC PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS
Student Information Update, 2016-2017
Please complete and return at Parent Orientation

Student's Name _____ Teacher _____

With whom does the student reside? _____

Primary E-mail Address _____

Primary Phone for Emergencies – A parent's cell number, or the number at which school personnel are most likely to reach a parent or guardian

Name _____

Relationship to student _____ Phone _____

List other contacts, should we be unable to reach your primary phone contact. These contacts **MUST RESIDE** within Lafayette County.

1. Name _____

Relationship to student _____ Phone _____

2. Name _____

Relationship to student _____ Phone _____

Please list people who have permission to pick up your child throughout the school year. Include regular carpools, frequent babysitters, local relatives or anyone who may frequently pick up your child and has your ongoing permission to do so.

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Other Information – Please attach a sheet listing any medical, developmental or other information which has changed since registration to help us provide the best care for your child.

Signed _____ Date _____

Mother's Morning Out Student Introduction

2016-2017

Please help our MMO staff prepare for your child's first days of MMO by answering the following questions. You may attach an additional sheet.

Child's name _____ Class _____
(first and last)

Please tell us a little about your child's personality.

How much previous experience does your child have in social situations (Sunday School, Library story times, visiting cousins, etc.) with other toddlers/preschoolers?

What do you anticipate will be your child's first reaction to our MMO setting on Thursday, Sept. 8 when your child first stays at school without you? (Does your child enter new situations easily, feel somewhat reluctant or experience significant separation anxiety?)

How does your child soothe himself? How do you soothe your child?

Does your child have specific dislikes or fears?

What are your child's favorite games (peek-a-boo) and toys (kitchen, trucks)?

We serve primarily fruit, cheese and crackers and healthy dry cereal for snacks. What are your child's favorite snacks?

MMO children are not required to be potty-trained, but some children will begin potty-training during the year. What best describes your child's current potty-training stage?

- ☐ Not at all ☐ Showing interest ☐ Sometimes uses potty
☐ Sometimes uses potty and wears underwear at home.
☐ Done- Is wearing underwear with rare accidents!!!

What additional information will help our staff provide the best possible MMO experience for your child?