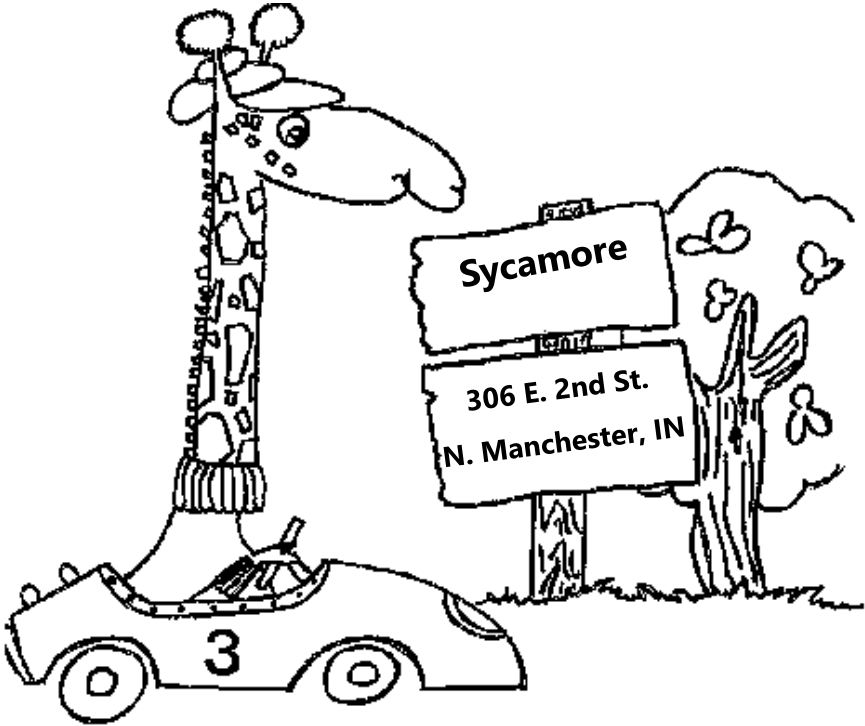


# Parents' Handbook

## 2024 - 2025



Phone: 260.982.7537

**PLEASE READ THIS AND KEEP FOR YOUR REFERENCE**



# Goals

The Sycamore Preschool will strive to be a school in Christian Living. As the children learn to live within and outside the home, through sharing, group play and peer relationships, they are learning to respond to Christian ideals. Your children will have an opportunity to associate regularly with other children the same age in an environment designed and equipped for them. It is our hope that your child will grow spiritually, emotionally, mentally, socially, and physically through this preschool experience.

Your child's spiritual growth and response should be:

1. Awareness of God and His love and goodness
2. Wonder and appreciation of God's creations
3. Discovery of the Bible as a special book which tells of God and Jesus
4. Habits of Christian living, awareness of right and wrong, appreciating and respecting others, and a desire to help

The goals for growth in emotional, physical, social, and mental development will be:

1. To get along with the teacher and other children, accepting change gracefully, being cheerful, cooperative, courteous, and fair
2. To develop health and safety habits
3. To develop the ability to relax
4. To learn to understand themselves and be tolerant of others

5. To get along happily with other in work and play
6. To accept group and individual responsibility
7. To listen attentively and follow directions
8. To help them learn to be self-reliant and develop self-discipline
9. To increase vocabulary
10. To become familiar with traditional nursery rhymes, songs, and stories
11. To express ideas in art, music, and language
12. To discover and understand the world around them through science, literature, art, and music
13. To learn to use craft materials such as crayons, scissors, clay, finger paint, and glue
14. To appreciate music, rhythm band, and rhythmic movements
15. To play vigorously in the outside to develop muscles, taking turns, and learning the rules
16. To learn meanings of the seasons and the holidays
17. To understand his/her role in the family
18. To accept himself/herself as the important person that he/she is

# ***Goals for Christian Preschool Community***

This includes parents, caregivers, teachers, staff, board members and volunteers. The goals for these adults will be:

1. To exhibit respect to each other through behavior, actions, speech, and attitude
2. To set a Christian example of tolerance, as a representative of the Sycamore Preschool Community

As a Christian preschool community, we consciously strive to set a positive example for the children we serve.

# ***General Information***

- 1. Location:** The Sycamore Preschool is sponsored by the North Manchester United Methodist Church for the benefit of the community. The preschool is non-denominational and open for everyone to attend. The school is located in the NM United Methodist Church at 306 E Second Street. Our classrooms are in the lower level along with our restrooms. The church office is on the main floor inside the west door. During nice weather, we rope off part of the parking lot and play on the outside playground during recess. In winter months, recess is held in the large room on the top level of the church.
- 2. Registration:** For a child to be registered in one of our three year old classes, they must be three by August 1<sup>st</sup>. To be registered in one of our four & five year old classes, they must be four by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Registration begins the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January for the following fall's classes. Registration forms are available from our teachers, the church office, or the church website ([www.northmanchesterumc.com](http://www.northmanchesterumc.com)). The completed form along with a \$40 non-refundable registration fee (with a \$10 discount if registered by May 15<sup>th</sup>) turned into the office or director will enroll your child for the next year. You will then receive a handbook with the information you need to know about our program.
- 3. Class Times:** If your child is enrolled in a three year old class, he/she will be assigned to one of the following classes that meet 2 times each week.

Monday & Wednesday morning 9:00 - 11:20 am

Tuesday & Thursday morning 9:00 - 11:20 am

If your child is enrolled in a four year old class, he/she will be assigned to one of the following classes that meet 4 times each week.

Monday thru Thursday morning 9:00 - 11:30 am

The number of classes we have depends upon our enrollment.

4. **Dropping off your children:** Children are to enter and exit the building by using the Fellowship Hall door under the green canopy in the north parking lot. Parents are asked to bring children down to their room each day. You may bring your child to class **five minutes before school begins**. Our doors will not be open prior to that time and adult supervision will not be available.
5. **Picking up your children:** You may pick your child up by coming down to their classroom and waiting outside their classroom door. The teacher will be dismissing children one at a time to their parent/caregiver. You will be filling out a driving schedule prior to the start of school to let us know who you authorize to pick up your child. If during the year, one of these authorized people **will not** be picking up your child, a phone call to the office (982-7537) or a note from the parent is required for us to release your child to someone else.

It is the policy of the Sycamore Preschool that any parent whose child has not been picked up within 15 minutes after the close of school, shall be subject to a written warning. After the first written warning, a fine may be imposed by the school of \$5 for each 15 minutes that the child remains in school, with the fine to be assessed to the parent of the child. If violations continue, the director may give a second written warning after which the child can be dismissed from the school for any subsequent violation. The director and/or teacher shall use their discretion to determine when such tardiness is excusable under the circumstances, and shall not be required to refer the matter to the board. All decisions of the teachers, as approved by the director, shall be considered final.

**6. Tuition:** Tuition for the school year is due and payable in advance at the beginning of the school year on September 1<sup>st</sup>. For your convenience, we do offer a payment plan consisting of 9 equal monthly payments. The first monthly payment is due September 1<sup>st</sup>. The following 8 payments are due on the first day of each month thereafter, with the final payment due May 1<sup>st</sup>. Please contact us if there is a problem. Tuition may be paid directly to your child's teacher by cash or check. You will be responsible for any charges we incur due to a returned check. Checks need to be made out to NMUMC. During the year, your teacher will inform you of extra nominal expenses such as class pictures, field trips, etc.

- If it becomes necessary for parents to withdraw a child during the year, we ask the earliest possible notification with a conference. After the notification of withdrawal, parents are responsible for the child's tuition for the month in which they withdraw the child.
- **Late payments and unpaid tuition:** Tuition for the previous month must be paid in full in order for your student to attend class on the beginning date of the next month. If the previous month's tuition is unpaid, your student may not return to class until it is caught up. *Example: If September tuition is not paid on or before October 1, your student may only return in October when September tuition is paid in full.*

**7. Vacations:** You will receive a school calendar at the beginning of the school year. Keep this posted to know when school will not be in session. Our vacations primarily coincide with the Manchester Community Schools. If you are taking your child out of school for a family vacation, please let us know in advance. There is no refund on days your child is absent from school.



- 8. School delays:** If Manchester Community Schools are closed due to weather, Sycamore Preschool is closed. If Manchester Community Schools are on a two hour delay, we will begin at 10:00 am. If a three hour delay is announced, Sycamore Preschool will be closed for the morning session.
- 9. Make-up Days:** If your child is absent due to illness or family vacations, no refund is made and the days are not made up.
- 10. Illness:** We encourage regular attendance at preschool. It is important that children begin this routine to prepare for public school. Preschool is fun, so hopefully getting up in the morning and coming to school will be something they **want** to do!
- Please do not send your child to school if he/she is not feeling well. In case of contagious disease, please notify us immediately so that other parents can be notified and proper precautions taken. We would like to keep colds and other infections to a minimum; we urge parents to exercise careful judgement in sending your child to school where there has been exposure or when the child seems overly tired or in any other way not quite "normal." We ask that children remain at home for the first three days of a cold which is the period generally thought to be contagious. Parents will be called to pick the child up whenever symptoms arise. If your child will be absent, please place a call to the teacher or office.
  - Head lice: At the first sign of head lice, please notify your teacher. After the child is treated properly, you must have the child checked by one of the local clinics or the Manchester Community School's nurse before the child can return to class. Written proof must be provided at the time of return stating that the child is lice free.

10. **Medical information:** We require a physical examination by your child's doctor and immunizations must be up to date before entering school in the fall. We follow the state of Indiana's required immunizations, which do not include a requirement for the influenza or COVID-19 vaccines. Medical forms will be given to you at the time of registration. This will be due before your child may start school. You will need only one form filled out while attending Sycamore Preschool. If your child attends as a three year old, their medical form will stay on file. This means that you will not need to fill another form out if they attend as a four year old. If a change does occur in your child's health, please let us know.

11. **Status Changes:** Please notify us of any change in your household such as the loss of a pet, sickness in the family, birth of a baby or emergencies occurring which may temporarily affect your child. Let us know if there are any significant changes occurring in your family. All of this may have an effect.

Please notify us if there is a change on our class roster or registration form. These types of changes include your address, phone, marital status, babysitter, etc. We need to keep updated to be able to get in touch with you, if needed.

13. **Dress Code:** Please dress your child in comfortable, washable, play clothes. We play hard and we spill! The learning process is broken if your child is upset and concerned that they will be in trouble at home because their clothes are soiled. Outside play is important in our program, so jackets, hats, etc. should be worn when needed. All removable items should have names on each piece! It is amazing how many jeans jackets or hot pink mittens one class may have! We will have recess inside on bad weather days and during the winter.

14. **Daily Routine:** A typical morning for our school would go as follows (afternoon is the same - use equivalent times).

- **9:00 - 9:25 Free play:** Develop skills in making choices, decisions, socializing as they play house or farm, build with blocks, paint, color, cut, play table games, sand play, etc.
- **9:25 - 9:45 Clean-up/ Circle Time:** Develop speaking and listening skills with roll call, devotions, songs or finger plays, and story time.
- **9:45 - 10:15 Exercise/ Recess:** Group exercise and recess to help develop those larger muscles and our coordination.
- **10:15 - 10:30 Restroom/ Rest:** Quiet time for looking at books, resting, listening to music and stories as our helpers set the tables for snack. Rest equipment is provided by the school.
- **10:30 - 10:40 Snack Time:** Each month you will receive a snack calendar. This will tell which day you are responsible for the snack. You may bring any snacks such as cheese and crackers, cookies, or fruit. We prefer nutritious snacks. There is a refrigerator located on the basement level for refrigerated snacks. Every child (including summer birthdays) gets a day to celebrate his/her birthday at school! We love birthdays! You will be responsible for the snack that day. Cupcakes are allowed only on birthdays. The school furnishes the drink for children each day. However, parents may bring juice boxes, etc. along with their child's snack. Parents are asked to furnish the cups and napkins at the beginning of the school year. Your teacher will inform you regarding food allergies,



holiday snacks, and how many snacks you need to provide.

- **10:40 - 11:00 Art Time:** Developing fine motor and creative skills as well as learning colors, shapes, textures and self-confidence. We do this as we color, paint, cut, roll, shape, design and create wonderful projects! The school provides a paint smock for your child.
- **11:00 - 11:10 Show and Tell:** Your child's snack day is also their show and tell day. We encourage sharing of toys, books, pictures, vacation memorabilia, pets, baby sisters or brothers . . . even rocks, shells, and other fun things we find outside! Sharing offers a reluctant child an opportunity to be at ease in front of the group and the outside resources enrich our program! We ask that only **ONE** item be brought each time and we **DO NOT ALLOW** play weapons or toys that promote violence to be a part of our program. Please do not send these to school. Your child should have a school bag of some kind with their name on it in which to bring their Show and Tell item. Send this bag **every day** so they can use it for art projects and parent notes!
- **11:10 Closing - Music:** A time for more finger plays, instruments and singing (We also sing as we play, paint and pick-up throughout the day!). We pass out papers, projects, bags, coats, and then we dismiss to parents and caregivers!
- We incorporate field trips, programs, holiday parties, etc. into our daily schedules also! WE are flexible, but follow a routine which children find comfortable because of its consistency.



**15. Conferences:** In the fall, a Progress Report will be sent to parents. Parent-Teacher conferences will be held in the springtime. Sign-up sheets will be available outside the classrooms and you will be notified in advance to have ample time to sign-up.

**16. Parties/ Programs:** We celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter by having class parties. These are held during our school time and are for the children only (unless you hear otherwise from a teacher). You will receive information in the newsletters as the dates get closer.

**For the whole family we do have:**

- **Open House:** An informal open house will be held in the fall for families to come look at our decorated rooms, have refreshments and visit with other families. The children **do not** perform at this time.
- **Fall Fundraiser:** A fundraiser will be held. More details to come.
- **Winter Wonderland:** A short program in the church sanctuary with the children singing and sharing the magic of snow at the end of January.
- **Spring Fundraiser:** A fundraiser will be held. More details to come.

**15. End of Year Celebration:** We will celebrate our students being promoted from the three year olds class to the four year old class, and four year olds graduating from our program.

**16. Adult Helpers:** Everyone dealing with children, even those people driving for a field trip, must view the NMUMC child protection video each calendar year, and complete a background check with the church.

**17. Fire drills:** Each class will practice fire and severe weather drills twice each year.

# ***End Notes***

- Prior to Manchester Community Schools Kindergarten Round-up, we will have a meeting for parents of our 4 year olds to come and talk with a kindergarten teacher regarding preparation for the public schools; student readiness for kindergarten will also be discussed.
- Your attitude towards preschool reflects on your child's adjustment. Promptness and good attendance is also very important. A casual, positive, reassuring approach to the new adventure of preschool will be most beneficial to your child. Before school starts, let your child know you are sure he/she will enjoy being part of its activities.
- Please show an active interest in everything your child brings home. Ask him/her to tell you about the pictures. They will appreciate the few moments of your time necessary for this sharing together. Always say something kind about their efforts. Never laugh at their efforts unless it is meant to be funny.
- Don't expect your child to want to get up every morning to come to school. Unless they are ill, be sure to bring your child to school even if they do not want to come. Do this as pleasantly as possible, because we all have days we do not want to go through the routine of getting ready and starting our day of work.
- Thank you again for choosing Sycamore Preschool for your child's preschool years. Our program, based on your child's development, will provide wholesome attitudes toward routine discipline, normal social and emotional adjustments and give him/her a good foundation on which to build future learning experiences.
- Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to be a service to you and your child. Our wish is for you to have a wonderful experience here at Sycamore Preschool.

# ***Our Teaching Staff***



*The Sycamore Preschool Staff value each and every student and believe that every student can learn and achieve.*

## **Sycamore Preschool Staff**

Lisa Booher - Director

LaTasha Music - 4 & 5 year old teacher

Sarah Longanecker - 3 year old teacher

## **Sycamore Preschool Board**

The board is made up of our teachers, our director, a member of the public schools, the pastor, representatives from the church and parents of preschool students. This board meets at least three times yearly acting as the Advisory Council for the preschool.

