

Welcome to Walnut Street Children's School. This handbook contains information regarding our preschool program. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy as long as your child is enrolled in the program. It will answer many of the questions you have about Walnut Street Children's School.

### **Philosophy and Goals**

WSCS was established to provide quality, loving care for children ages 3 to 5 years old. The staff recognizes the importance of balanced growth so they provide opportunities for mental, physical, and emotional growth through a variety of creative experiences in a Christian environment. Children are encouraged to learn and explore at their own speed in areas that interest them. We are pleased that you have chosen to include us in the growth and development of your children.

### **License**

At the end of the handbook you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take the time to read this information.

### **Admissions**

A child is considered to be enrolled in the center only after the registration fee has been received, the administrator confirms the availability of space and the required paperwork is received. This includes basic enrollment and health information. Any change to this information must be communicated to the office immediately so that current information is always on file. This is for the safety of your child. A medical form signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner is required to be submitted within 30 days of admission. This medical must be updated every 13 months.

### **Hours and Days of Operation**

The center will be in operation Monday (8:45-11:45) and Tuesday through Wednesday (8:45-2:45). WSCS will close to observe the following holidays: Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day and President's Day. Full tuition is due for the weeks in which these fall, as staff is given them as paid holidays.

### **Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size**

WSCS will not exceed the following state required ratios:

- 1:12      Preschoolers (3years-4years)
- 1:14      Preschoolers (4years until eligible for kindergarten)

Because we desire to provide a higher level of quality care, we will strive to maintain a 1:7 ratio in the 3 year old room and a 1:8 ratio in the 4 and 5 year old rooms. The maximum group size will be 14 children in the 3 year old classes and 18 children for the four year old and Pre-K classes. Maximum group size is defined by the number of children in one group that may be cared for at any time. Limitations do not include snack

time, outdoor play or special activities.

### **Daily Schedules**

The children's daily schedule is flexible enough to provide adaptability when necessary but structured enough to provide predictability for the children. We want them to view their school as a safe and comforting place, where they know what to expect and when to expect it.

#### **3 year old class schedule (A.M and P.M.)**

9:00-9:15/12:00-12:15 Free Play  
9:15-9:45/12:15-12:45 Music and Motion  
9:45-10:35/12:45-1:35 Centers  
10:35-10:45/1:35-1:45 Clean up/Bathroom  
10:45-11:05/1:45-2:05 Snack  
11:05-11:25/2:05-2:25 Circle time  
11:25-11:30/2:25-2:30 Dismiss

#### **4 year old class schedule (A.M. and P.M.)**

9:00-9:15/12:00-12:15 Free Play  
9:15-9:30/12:15-12:30 Circle time (AM) and Music and Motion (PM)  
9:30-9:45/12:45-1:05 Clean up (AM) and Circle time (PM)  
9:45-10:15/1:05-1:25 Music and Motion (AM) and Wash hands/snack (PM)  
10:15-10:40/1:25-2:00 Wash hands/snack (AM) and Centers (PM)  
10:40-11:10/2:00-2:10 Centers (AM) and Clean up (PM)  
11:10-11:20/2:10-2:20 Story time  
11:20-11:25/2:20-2:25 Get ready to go home  
11:25-11:30/2:25-2:30 Dismiss

#### **Pre-K class schedule (A.M. and P.M.)**

9:00-9:15/12:00-12:15 Arrival and Free Play  
9:15-9:20/12:15-12:20 Clean up and prepare for the day  
9:20-9:40/12:20-12:45 Group meeting/Circle time  
9:40-10:15/12:45-1:15 Small groups (AM) and Music and Motion (PM)  
10:15-10:45/1:15-1:30 Music and Motion (AM) and Snack (PM)  
10:45-11:00/1:30-2:10 Bathroom bread/snack (AM) and small groups (PM)  
11:00-11:25/2:10-2:25 Story time  
11:25-11:30/2:25-2:30 Dismiss

### **Tuition/Fees and Payment Policies**

Tuition may be paid in monthly, 3 quarterly payments, or paid in full at any time during the year. **Payment is expected by the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month.** The monthly fee for the 3 year olds is \$83.00 for the two day a week classes and \$114.00 per month for the 3 day morning class. Tuition for the 4 year old and Pre-K classes are \$114.00 for 3 days a week and \$145.00 for the 4 day a week classes. If payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, the account will be considered delinquent. (See delinquent payments below). In the event of an illness, full payment is expected, except for an extended illness. An extended illness is considered to be an illness that keeps the child out of the center for more than 5 **consecutive** weekdays. Half payment is required for extended illnesses to

maintain the child's space.

All checks are to be made payable to: Walnut Street Children's School or WSCS. Tuition should be given to the director in the preschool office or placed in the tuition payment box located on the front of the director's desk.

**Holidays:** Full tuition is due during Christmas break, Easter break, and any holidays. Staff receives these days as paid holidays. Christmas and Easter break are in part determined by the city school calendar.

**Delinquent Accounts/Returned Checks:** A fee of \$10 will be charged to the account if payment is not received by the designated date. (The 10<sup>th</sup> of every month). A \$25.00 fee will be charged for any returned checks due to insufficient funds. The parents will be required to pay in cash until all account balances are settled.

**Late Pick-up:** If a parent realizes that circumstances beyond their control are going to delay pick-up, a phone call is requested. This is important as many children fear they have been forgotten when parents do not arrive at their usual time.

**Withdrawals:** Parents wishing to withdrawal their child(ren) may do so at any time. A two week notice, in writing, is appreciated in order for us to fill the vacancy.

**Inclement Weather:** If Chillicothe City Schools are closed due to bad weather, Walnut St. Preschool will also be closed. There may be days, however, that the city schools are open but we feel the weather conditions are too bad to bring preschoolers out. If the city schools are on a two-hour delay, we will use the following schedule:

10:00-12:00 A.M. classes

12:30-2:30 P.M. classes

If these circumstances should arise, please listen to WKKJ (FM) or watch ABC-CH6 for closing information. You can also find closing and delays listed on WKKJ's website. On these occasions, regular payment is expected. The preschool will allow five calamity days. If more than five days are used, we will do our best to make up days that exceed our five day policy.

### **Supervision Policy**

A major responsibility of the staff is to ensure the health and safety of each child entrusted in our care. Staff persons are alert to the safety needs of their children, anticipate possible hazards, and take necessary appropriate precautionary and preventable measures.

**Arrival/Departure:** Parents are required to bring their children into the classroom and to sign the child in on the clipboard hanging outside the door. Any special messages, medications, special pickup notes, etc. are to be given to the teacher. Children may not be dropped off at the entrance of the building or be sent inside alone. Staff must be made aware of each child's presence before the parent departs. At the time of pick-up, parents are to remain in the hall while the teacher dismisses the children to the parent's one at a time. **Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child before and after sign-in/out.**

**Supervision of Preschoolers:** At no time will a child be left unattended. Staff will supervise children at all times. If a child becomes ill, they may be isolated in a section of the room not in use, but within the sight and hearing of a staff member.

**Release of a child:** Staff will release children only to persons on the release form provided by the parent. If an emergency arises, the parent must provide a written, signed note giving the person permission to pick-up their child. Staff will check ID's of anyone they do not recognize. Please let people know about this ahead of time so they can bring a picture ID with them and not offended. The children's safety is our priority! Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

**Custody Agreements:** If there is custody issues involved with your child, you must provide the preschool with court papers indicating who had permission to pick up the child. The preschool may not deny a parent's access to their child without proper documentation.

**Child Abuse Reporting:** All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staffs have suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST** make a report to the local children's services agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

### **Fieldtrips/Transportation of children:**

WSCS will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, the parent or the emergency squad will be contacted. The preschool will not provide transportation to field trips. Parents will be responsible for the transportation to field trip destinations unless they are local and are within walking distance of the preschool. Before any child participates in a field trip, the preschool will obtain written permission from the parent or guardian. We also ask that your child wears his/her Walnut St. Preschool t-shirt that he/she receives at the beginning of the school year on the day of the field trip. This makes it easier to keep track of our children. Upon parent and child arrival to the field trip, parents must sign-in their child as they would do on a normal day of school. Before the field trip activities begin, the teachers will take a head count of all children. Parents must also sign their child out before departing from the field trip.

### **Guidance Policy**

WSCS staff believes that helping children learn self-control is very important. Our hope is that each child will learn self discipline through careful guidance. Your child will be treated with love and respect. If children are treated with respect, they in turn learn to respect the teachers and their friends. Our expectations will be kept within the child's capabilities and the child will be made aware of these expectations. Positive reinforcement (commenting on children doing the "right" thing) and positive redirection (removing the child and giving them an appropriate activity) will be used. A child may be asked to sit for a short period of time to give them a chance to regain control if they are having a difficult time. Time outs will be age appropriate in length and done within

the classroom. Staff will not impose punishments for failure to eat or toileting accidents. This discipline policy applies to all staff and parents while they are at the preschool.

If a situation arises where a child is consistently endangering himself, peers, or staff, it may become necessary to disenroll the child. Every attempt will be made to work together with the parents and the child to correct the behavior. However, the safety of children is always our primary concern. The director would be in communication with the parents prior to this occurring.

If the child demonstrates behavior that requires frequent “extra attention” from the staff member, we may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan. This plan would be developed in consultation with the parents and would be consistent with the requirements of Rule 5101:2-12-22 OAC.

### **Snacks**

As a general rule, we try to keep our snacks simple and nutritious. Your child will receive a snack everyday he/she attends. Please let us know ahead of time if your child is not permitted to have any type of foods due to allergies or religious beliefs.

### **Accidents/Emergencies**

WSCS has devised several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is in the preschool’s care. In the event of a fire, or tornado, staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the preschool does conduct monthly fire drills, and periodic tornado drills. Should we need to evacuate due to fire or weather conditions, or the loss of power or heat, or water to the center, our emergency destination is the house next to Elliott Mathis florist that the church owns. A sign will be posted on the front door of the preschool indicating that we have been evacuated and the location of where you can pick up your child. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to come and pick up their child. If a parent can’t be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on the child’s enrollment information.

In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will: secure the children in the safest location possible, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents.

There is always one staff member present that has had received training in First Aid, Communicable Diseases, and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid and TLC. If the injury/illness would be more serious, first aid would be administered and the parents would be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury/illness is life threatening, the EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all the available health records. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or EMS will transport.

An incident/injury report will be completed and given to the person picking up the child on the day of the incident/injury if any of the following occur: the child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; the child has to be transported by emergency squad; or an unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child. If a child requires

emergency transportation, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours after the incident occurs. The preschool shall also contact licensing personnel from the appropriate ODJFS office within 24 hours when there is a “general emergency” or “serious incident, injury, or illness”. The report will be provided to licensing staff within 3 days of the incident.

### **Management of Illness**

WSCS provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. If this is your child’s first preschool experience, it is possible that they may experience more frequent illnesses at the beginning before their immune system becomes more active. We observe all children as they enter the program to quickly assess their general health. We ask that you do not bring a sick child to the preschool. They will be sent home! Please also plan ahead and have a back up care plan in place if you are not able to take time off work/school.

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent of emergency contact:

- \* Temperature of 100 degree F - in combination with any other signs of illness
- \* Diarrhea (more than three abnormally loose stools within a 24 hour period)
- \* Severe coughing (causing the child to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound)
- \* Difficult or rapid breathing
- \* Yellowish skin or eyes
- \* Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- \* Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- \* Unusually dark urine or grey or white stools
- \* Stiff neck with an elevating temperature
- \* Vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign of illness
- \* Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in preschool activities, the parent will be called to pick-up the child. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member. The cot and any linen used will be washed and disinfected before used again.

Parents will be notified by a sign on the door if children have been exposed to a communicable illness. Children will be readmitted to the same preschool after at least 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If they are not symptom free, a doctor’s note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

**Medications:** The preschool will administer medications to a child only after the parent completes a Request for Medication form. All proper sections must be completed and the medication handed to the teacher each day. Medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. Medications may NOT be stored in a child’s cubbie or book bag.

**Prescription medications:** must be in their original container and administered in accordance to instructions on the label. Over the counter medications must also be administered in accordance to label instructions. If parents request any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication

form. Over the counter medications will not be administered for more than three days without written instructions from a physician.

**Food Supplements or Modified Diets:** If your child requires a food supplement or a modified diet, you must secure written information from your physician regarding this. Please speak with the director for more details regarding this.

### **Outdoor Play**

Research had shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Although we do not have outside play equipment, we make every attempt to try to take the children outside during their Music and Motion time during the warmer months. We do not take them outside during the winter months. We also ask that you send your child to school in tennis shoes everyday. They are very active while participating in Music and Motion and we don't want anyone to get hurt. Cowboy boots and girls dress can be slippery and hard to jump, run, and play in.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible in the activities at the center. Parents have unlimited access to all areas of the building used for child care during hours of operation. Parents may wish to attend field trips, class parties, or simply stop in to join the daily fun. Teachers are available to discuss a child's progress or needs at anytime. However, due to staff responsibilities and schedules, parents are asked to make appointments with staff when it's necessary to engage in any lengthy conversations. Teachers want to be able to focus on you and your child at these times. If parents have any concerns or questions at any time it is recommended that the following chain of command be used until an answer or solution is found:

1. Child's teacher
2. Director
3. Preschool Board

Please feel free to bring concerns up when they occur. Often they can be addressed when they are little problems, before they grow into bigger problems. The staff fully realizes that you are trusting us with your little ones and we want our relationship to be a good one.

### **Additional Policies**

**Birthdays:** We feel a preschooler's birthday should be very special for them. You are welcome to bring in a special snack for the class. Please check with your child's teacher first to make sure there aren't children with certain food allergies. Children are also very sensitive at this age and their feelings are easily hurt. Therefore, birthday party invitations are **not** to be brought to school and passed out unless EVERYONE is invited. A parent roster is available upon request with parent's name and phone numbers only. You may use this to contact parents of children who you would like to send invitations to.

**Conferences:** The teachers are available any time throughout the year if you wish to discuss your child's progress or if you discover any problems. There will be one

conference per year scheduled between parent/guardian and teacher in order that the child's behavior, progress, social and physical needs may be discussed. Telephone conferences occur only when an in-person conference is not practical.

**Show and Tell or Sharing:** The individual teacher, according to her schedule will determine show and tell or sharing time. The teachers will send a note home in the first few days of school explaining their schedules. We ask that children do not bring toys to school unless it is show and tell or share day.

**Drop-off Lane:** The city of Chillicothe has called our attention to cars sometimes parking too long in the "drop-off" lane on Walnut Street. This is restricted to a 15 minute parking area. This lane is to be only for dropping off and picking up passengers at the church. We continue to encourage the use of this lane, especially for preschoolers, the elderly, and the physically handicapped. If longer times are needed, please use the parking lot across the street. We only ask that you don't park in the first row marked "reserved" that faces the back of the Elliot Mathis flower shop. These spots are reserved for their employees and owners. Fifth Third Bank also requests that you do not use their parking facilities when bringing or picking up your child. **The back doors are locked from the outside at all times for the safety of your child.** Please always use the front entrance to drop-off and pick-up your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

Parents, after reading the handbook, please sign and return the following page to the director. This is due before the child attends the center. Please feel free to ask the director questions about any of the policies in the handbook.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the parent handbook for Walnut Street Children's School and have had the policies reviewed with me. I agree to follow all policies outlined within

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Signature of parent/guardian

Date