



# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

2023/2024

## Table of Contents

MISSION STATEMENT .....	3
RELIGION .....	3
PHILOSOPHY .....	3
GENERAL INFORMATION .....	4
ADMINISTRATION .....	4
PROGRAMS .....	4
TUITION.....	5
ADDITIONAL REQUIRED FEES.....	5
WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS.....	6
CURRICULUM .....	6
DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES.....	6
THEME.....	7
FREE PLAY.....	7
OUTDOOR PLAY.....	7
WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY .....	8
FIELD TRIPS.....	8
MEALS AND SNACKS .....	8
FOOD ALLERGIES.....	8
ONE & TWO YEAR OLD PROGRAMS.....	9
SICK POLICY .....	9
COVID-19.....	10
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	11
ARRIVAL.....	11
DEPARTURE.....	11
LATE PICKUP POLICY .....	12
DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR.....	12
DISCIPLINE.....	12
BEHAVIOR .....	13
BITING POLICY.....	13
SPECIAL NEEDS.....	14
POTTY TRAINING.....	14
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION .....	14
PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE.....	15

## MISSION STATEMENT

*“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*  
Proverbs 22:6

## RELIGION

As a Christian based school, we incorporate and teach regular, non-denominational teachings. We teach the children that God is a vital part of each aspect of their lives, in good times and bad, for comfort and guidance. We use Bible stories and songs throughout our programs. A short prayer is said before snack each day. In addition, Chapel is held once a week. The goal of our Chapel time is to help children gain an understanding of who God is and how to develop a relationship with Him. Our Pastors participate in Chapel whenever their schedule permits. Christian songs and stories are a part of our holidays and other celebrations as well as Chapel time.

## PHILOSOPHY

St. Andrews Academy is an outreach ministry of St. Andrews United Methodist Church. We believe it is the responsibility of the Christian Community to reach out to all children in the name of Christ. It is our goal to help children develop a strong, positive self-image and cultivate the skills necessary for them to grow and develop to their full potential. Through both teaching and example, we will help each student understand what it means to live as a Christian. The teachings at St. Andrews Academy will, at all times, reflect the love, acceptance, and grace exemplified by Jesus Christ.

At St. Andrews Academy we remain committed to:

- **Always put the interest of the children first.** Early childhood education recognizes the importance of play in the development of young children. During preschool years, play is the most important way children learn. Children need to explore and discover the wonderful world around them to make sense of it.
- **Provide children with many different experiences.** Children need to experience activities using their senses to gain an interest in learning. A typical day in our classrooms provides our students with a variety of activities including painting, imaginative play, building with blocks, working with puzzles, looking at books, playing musical instruments, dancing, using and creating patterns, science, discovery, outdoor activities, and much more.
- **Encourage children to explore and discover.** Our classrooms are full of things for children to explore and discover through self-directed play. At this age, it is more important to get our children excited about learning than to memorize the alphabet or count to 100. Our curriculum encourages students to learn through opportunities and discoveries about themselves and God’s world.

- **Enhance learning opportunities.** St. Andrews Academy encourages children to reach their full potential. Your children will grow in many different areas- language, physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual. Our teachers enhance the learning environment by asking open-ended questions that expand the thinking, reasoning, and language skills of the children.
- **Teach, by example, Christian principles in everyday activities.** It is important that all of us not just talk the talk, but walk the Christian walk on a daily basis. Leading by example, by God’s example, is the best way to teach a child.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**ADMINISTRATION**

**DIRECTOR:** Rachel Burrows  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:** Courtney Giddens

St. Andrews Academy is governed by the SAUMC School Board

[academy@standrewsfayetteville.org](mailto:academy@standrewsfayetteville.org)  
 Office: (910) 488-5961

To contact a member of the School Board please call (910) 488-4648

**PROGRAMS**

All children must be of class age by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Required Medical Documentation:

All required paperwork listed below is due before the first day of school. Failure to submit the required paperwork on time could delay your child’s start into the program.

1. Child’s physical form signed by a doctor (form provided to parents at registration)
2. Immunization records

There are 10 preschool classes offered at St Andrews Academy.

AGE	DAYS of CLASS
1	Fri
2	Mon/Wed
2	Tues/ Thurs
3	Tues/Wed/Thurs (2 CLASSES)
3	Mon - Thurs
4	Tues/Wed/ Thurs
4	Mon - Thurs
4	Tues - Fri
4	Mon - Fri

**\*\* ALL THREE-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO BE POTTY TRAINED BY THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS \*\***

Our school hours are 9:00am until 12:00pm Mondays through Fridays. Our staff is only scheduled to be at the Academy 30 minutes before our academic time and 30 minutes after the end of our academic time.

**TUITION**

Registration fee: \$100.00 per child

This is a non-refundable fee unless the Academy is forced to cancel the class for which your child is registered.

1 day/week class: \$100.00/month

2 day/week class: \$175.00/month

3 day/week class: \$235.00/month

4 day/week class: \$280.00/month

5 day/week class: \$325.00/month

The Academy operates as a non-profit organization and relies on tuition payments, almost exclusively, for funding. Tuition is based on the total number of sessions in the school year. This figure is divided into 9 equal installments; therefore, tuition is not reduced for the months including Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break, or other scheduled days off. Tuition is required regardless of absenteeism for any length of time.

Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month. A \$20 late fee will be added to any tuition that is not paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Any returned checks will need to be repaid by cash and a \$35 service fee will be assessed. After two returned checks, tuition will be required in cash for the remainder of the school year.

**To withdraw from the program, a written notice must be given no later than two weeks prior to the date of withdrawal.**

*Tuition will not be reimbursed for closures due to COVID-19 related illness within the program.*

If the Governor orders a closing due to increased COVID-19 cases and the preschool closes for more than a month, you will not be required to pay tuition while we are closed. Resource fee will not be reimbursed.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIRED FEES**

**Resource fee is a one-time payment equal to one month's tuition and is due by August 1<sup>st</sup>.** This fee covers the cost of classroom supplies for our students. Should this fee not be paid by the due date, your child's place may be forfeited to the next child on the wait list.

In the event a student must withdraw from the program, a prorated amount consisting of the unused portion of the resource fee will be refunded.

## **WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS**

St. Andrews Academy will remain open during most weather. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the academy early or cancel school for the following day. In the event that St Andrews Academy closes early or cancels for the following day, parents will be contacted by a SAA staff member. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children and staff can travel safely home. Families will still be responsible for tuition during weather closings and no make-up days will be scheduled.

## **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum at St. Andrews Academy includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. St. Andrews Academy uses the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms.

Each classroom has weekly lesson plans. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans should be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up into centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in the schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES**

Every class has a teacher and assistant teacher

The Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines should be maintained

whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

Monthly calendars and the daily schedule are posted in the classroom and a copy is sent home with each child.

## THEME

The use of themes is a practical and logical way to begin curriculum planning. The themes should be based upon what the children know and see every day, as well as the children's interests. The themes must be age-appropriate and may span the length of one week, or one month depending on the interest level.

## FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection, or centers) activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe indoors. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors. Our teachers refer to the [Child Care Weather Watch](#) poster to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, gloves, etc.). **Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name.** St Andrews Academy has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to remain inside in the Academy Office. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

## WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at St. Andrews Academy. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, sticks, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to St. Andrews Academy, the weapon will be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others

## FIELD TRIPS

St. Andrews Academy offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the center. Parents will be notified at least one week in advance of all field trips. If you do not wish for your child to attend a particular field trip, please find alternative childcare arrangements for that day, as we will not have staff available to stay behind with children not participating in the field trip. It is necessary for parents to participate fully in order to make the field trips possible. Carpooling is encouraged; however, each child must have an adult responsible for him/her. Teachers are not permitted to transport a child other than their own, or be responsible for them.

## MEALS AND SNACKS

St. Andrews Academy will provide water for each child every day. Parents are responsible for providing snack in their child's class on a rotating basis. Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered, but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide your child's own snack.

## FOOD ALLERGIES

**Based on the needs of the children attending during a given school year, St. Andrew's Academy may be peanut/ egg free.** If that is the case you will be given as much notice and direction as possible. In the case that the Academy is peanut/egg free, no food containing, or processed in a facility with peanuts/eggs, are allowed in the center. Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Depending on the severity of the allergy, it may be just certain class(es) that have certain restrictions which will not affect the school as a whole. If that is the case you will be made aware promptly by your child's teacher.

If your child has a food allergy, please alert the Director immediately and complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form. This form will be posted in your child's classroom. If medication for an allergic



reaction is needed, please provide the medication along with specific instructions on how much and at what point to administer.

## ONE & TWO YEAR OLD PROGRAMS

The following information is specific to our one & two-year-old classes:

- Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream (if necessary), extra clothing, and a sippy cup with water or juice, not milk.
- Parents should label all supplies left at the school, including diapers and wipe cases.
- Children are not permitted to use pacifiers while at the Academy.

## SICK POLICY

Our priority at St. Andrews Academy is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. Children/staff will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Fever** of 100.4 or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medications) (two instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not to be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- **Blood in stools** not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- **Vomiting** (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- **Mouth sores** with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- **Rash** until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- **Head lice** be free of live lice and nits
- **Scabies** until after treatment has been completed
- **Tuberculosis** until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend school
- **Impetigo** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated

- **Hand Foot and Mouth** sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- **Strep throat** until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- **Chicken pox** until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- **Pertussis** until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- **Mumps** until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- **Hepatitis A virus** until 1 week after onset of illness
- **Measles** until 4 days after onset of rash
- **Rubella** until 6 days after onset of rash
- **Unspecified respiratory tract illness** accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- **Herpes simplex** with uncontrollable drooling
- **COVID-19** tests positive (see policy below)

A child who becomes ill while at St. Andrews Academy must be removed from the classroom to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent/guardian to arrive.

St. Andrews Academy reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

Random head checks for lice may be conducted. Children must be free of lice and nits before returning to school. Upon return, children will be inspected for lice and nits before going into the classroom.

## **COVID-19**

The safety and wellbeing of your child has been and remains our single-highest priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to follow the latest guidance from medical advisors, state and local health departments, and the CDC. This 2024-2025 school year our COVID-19 procedures are as follows:

- We continue to ask every member of our staff to attest to their wellness before they can enter our building. Staff members should continue to monitor symptoms of illness and take a careful approach when deciding whether to stay out for a sick day.
- All staff will continue to maintain our cleaning and hygiene standards, follow the guidelines of the CDC and local health departments.
- For members of our community that test positive for COVID-19 this year, we will follow the protocol of 5 full days required at home (day zero is the first day of symptoms or the day of the positive test, whichever is earlier) followed by five additional days when a mask **must** be worn while at school. If the staff member/student is unable to wear a mask while at school the individual must remain at home for 10 full days.

There will no longer be full classroom closures for COVID exposure for any age group. COVID will be treated just as the flu or hand, foot, and mouth where the person who is affected will be out of work or school.

If the Governor orders a closing due to increased COVID-19 cases and the preschool closes for more than a month you will not be required to pay tuition for the months we are closed. **Resource fee will not be reimbursed.**

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

### ARRIVAL

Classes begin at 9:00 am. The main entrance will be open at 8:55 am for parents/guardians to bring student to be checked in. **We would like to stress that this is a structured program and it is extremely important to have your child here no later than 9:00 am so that your child can participate fully in all scheduled activities. School doors will be secured no later than 9:05 am so our teachers and students can begin the day.** Please do not leave your child in the room without a teacher present. Our centers area is set up daily as an extension of your child's classroom. Please do not let siblings and other children play in this area while you are dropping off or picking up your child/children. Please help us offer all our children the best experience possible.

Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- **Establish a regular, predictable routine.** What often makes separating stressful for children is the uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation will not be as difficult.
- **Be reliable.** Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or after school.

### DEPARTURE

Each family will be given 2 car tags. Please place the car tag in the front window every day. If a car tag is not present in window, the adult picking up the child will be asked to present ID and must be listed on the Authorized Friends and Family form.



The above photo shows the flow for our departures. Our 2-year old's release first at 11:50 am, therefore those parents need to be the first ones through the pick-up area. We ask that our 3 and 4-year old's hold back by the trash cans to allow the 2-year old's to be picked up first. The Director or Assistant Director will signal for our 3 and 4-year-old pick up to start.

Our 1-year olds will be picked up at the main preschool entrance. Pick up is at 11:50 am. Parents will wait at the door until a staff member brings the child to the door for dismissal.

## **LATE PICKUP POLICY**

If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. Anything after 12:15pm for our 3's and 4's is considered a late pick up. Anything after 12:05pm for our 1's and 2's is considered late pickup.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the Academy, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Registration form. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons listed on the Registration form. If staff members are unable to reach emergency contacts and the student is not picked up by 12:30pm, the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Fayetteville Police Department.

### **Late Pickup Fees:**

If you are more than 15 minutes late picking up your child you will be charged a late fee. You must be present to pick up your child before 12:15pm for 3's and 4's and 12:05pm for 1's and 2's.

**1<sup>st</sup> offense:** Written warning will be given and kept in your child's file.

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> offense:** \$5.00 late pick fee and an additional \$5.00 fee for every 15 minutes after.

**4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> offense:** Fees increase to \$10.

**\*\*** After the fifth late pick up your child could be subject to removal from program **\*\***

## **DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR**

### **DISCIPLINE**

Redirection and encouragement of appropriate behavior are ways the teachers eliminate potential problems. We encourage children to solve problems on their own; however, teachers offer guidance when necessary. Our goal with discipline is not to punish your child, but rather teach appropriate behaviors. We want to educate our children on the importance of respecting themselves and others. We encourage children to learn self-control instead of being under our control.

## **BEHAVIOR**

We aim to create a safe and nurturing environment that provides positive social interactions and learning. We understand that at times defiant, disruptive and mildly aggressive behaviors in young children are a normal part of the developmental process of growing. Our teachers will help children develop self-control over those feelings while still helping to build positive self-esteem. When possible, teachers will intervene before a disruption takes place. However, these behaviors can jeopardize the safety of all children. When disruptive or aggressive behavior occurs, the preschool staff will communicate with parents through verbal conversations, class dojo or an "incident" report. If the behavior continues, we will initiate a discussion with parents regarding the inappropriate behavior, redirection that has been effective at home, and agreed upon procedures for when the child is at school.

Continued occurrences may necessitate picking up your child from school immediately following an incident. If, after efforts between home and school are exhausted and the pattern of behavior continues, it may become necessary to discuss dismissal from the academy.

## **BITING POLICY**

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children is our primary concern. This biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

For safety and health concerns, we take biting seriously. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement, attention. Knowing that the effect of their biting will hurt another person is not yet a part of a child of this ages' mindset, so the "cause-effect" relationship is not internalized. Our teachers supervise carefully to prevent biting incidents from happening. There are times, however, when teachers cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child is comforted and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not allowed to return to play and is talked to on a level that he/she can understand, and then redirected.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for a pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- We work with each child to resolve conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.

Continued occurrences may necessitate picking up your child from school immediately following an incident. If, after efforts between home and school are exhausted and the pattern of behavior continues, it may become necessary to discuss dismissal from the academy.

**\*\* Biting incidents will be handled on a case by case basis. \*\***

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Our goal is to ensure that each child in our program can be successful. We understand that each child's measure of success is going to look different because every child grows and develops at a different pace. While we do our best to accommodate children at different stages of development, it is important that every child should be ready for the type of group experience that we provide. Children with special needs will be accepted on a case by case basis if it is determined that they will benefit from our program and that our staff will be able to meet their needs in addition to the needs of the other children in the class. We will continually assess your child's needs to ensure teachers and staff are fully equipped to meet both their individual needs and the needs of their classmates. If we determine that we do not possess these resources, it may be necessary to discuss withdrawal from the academy.

## **POTTY TRAINING**

It is a requirement that all three and four year old students are bathroom independent by the start of school. This is essential because we do not possess the resources for diapering. Each classroom has several restroom breaks built into the daily schedule and children can use the bathroom any time they express a need to go.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

St. Andrews Academy is an outreach of St. Andrews United Methodist Church. On occasion it may be necessary to close school for a day due to unforeseen events at the church. We apologize for any inconvenience they may cause; however, it is our desire to fully support the mission of the church.

The Academy School Board reserves the right to amend or change policies at any time with or without written notification. This handbook is not a contract.

**PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE**

My signature below indicates that I have received and read the policies contained in the St. Andrews Academy Parent Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Class

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date