

## Table of Contents

Birthday Party Policy.....	3
Calendar.....	3
Communication.....	3
Clothing and Personal Items.....	9
Discipline Policy.....	8
Drop off and Pick up Procedures.....	6
Enrichment Activities.....	8-9
Fundraisers.....	5
Health Policy.....	7
Lunch.....	9
Registration and Acceptance.....	4
Sick Child Policy.....	7-8
Tuition.....	5
Weather.....	4

### **Avondale United Methodist Church**

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## **Introduction**

### **Avondale United Methodist Church Parents' Day Out Purpose**

The purpose of the AUMC Parents' Day Out program is to provide quality childcare three half days a week to the children in our church and community. Our commitment is to provide a safe and happy environment where children ages 6 weeks to 5 years can learn with the help of teachers who plan and implement learning activities appropriate for each class including opportunities for cognitive, physical, spiritual and social development.

### **Regulatory Agencies**

The Parents' Day Out program observes the rules and regulations of the following agencies: Department of Human Resources, Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control.

Avondale UMC PDO conducts regular fire drills.

A background check has been conducted on all AUMC Parents' Day Out staff members.

### **A Letter from the Director**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Avondale United Methodist Church Parents' Day Out Program. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child. Our commitment is to provide a loving, learning atmosphere for your child to grow. We also intend to provide your child with the highest quality of care possible within a Christian environment.

Our Parents' Day Out program is constantly growing and changing to better meet the needs of your child. We will be counting on your support, feedback and suggestions to help us as we grow. We know this year will be a positive experience for your child and your family as we grow together in God's love.

Thank you for sharing your child with us. We promise to give the best of ourselves to care for your child. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any questions or concerns you might have.

Sincerely,  
Alison L. Jenkins  
Director

## Typical Holiday Schedule

The following days are the days the PDO is typically not in session. Note that the specific no-school days for floating holidays (e.g., Christmas) will depend on the day of the week on which the holiday falls.

Veterans' Day  
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday of Thanksgiving Week  
Week of Christmas  
Week Following Christmas  
Spring Break (aligned with Birmingham City Schools)

## Communication

It is a priority of our staff to provide open communication between the parents and ourselves. Therefore, we have planned several ways in which exchanges can take place between staff and the parents:

- This handbook
- Newsletters
- Daily or weekly class hand outs
- Informational signs located in the hallway outside the classrooms
- Time for daily conversations between staff and parents
- Informal or formal talks with the director
- Church website [www.avonumc.net](http://www.avonumc.net)
- Avondale UMC PDO Facebook Page

In the event you have a suggestion or complaint regarding the PDO program, please contact the director first. You can also contact the following people (please see the church secretary to arrange an appointment:

- Pastor Brandon Harris, AUMC Minister
- Therese Leager, PDO Board Chairperson
- David Sharp, PDO Treasurer
- Agya Pudner, PDO Board Member and AUMC PDO Teacher and Parent

## Birthday Party Policy

Please speak with your child's teacher before bringing refreshments, decorations or favors to PDO. Some students have specific allergies therefore accommodations must be made so that all children can celebrate.

## Weather

In case of inclement weather, refer to your local broadcast or radio for announcements of school closings. **If Birmingham City Schools system closes because of weather conditions, the AUMC PDO program will be closed.** If this occurs during school

hours, parents should come immediately to pick up their children in the same manner as usual.

You do not need to come to the school during a tornado warning. As advised by the National Weather Service, we do not allow children to leave during a tornado warning. We will follow approved procedures for the safety of all. If you come to pick up your child during a tornado warning, you will be asked to wait at the church until the warning has expired.

### **Registration and Acceptance**

Registration will begin in February for the following school year (2013-2014). Open enrollment will continue until maximum enrollment is reached. A waiting list will be formed as needed.

Priority Enrollment: Two-week period in February for current students.

Request for enrollment will be filled according to the following priority categories:

1. Children of Avondale UMC members and staff.
2. Children currently enrolled in PDO and enrolled during priority enrollment.
3. Children who have siblings currently enrolled in PDO and enrolled during priority enrollment.
4. Children who are currently enrolled in PDO but did not register during priority enrollment.
5. Siblings of alumni students of PDO.
6. All others.

Registration forms may be mailed to Avondale UMC or delivered in person to the church secretary or PDO Director. Applications must be received by the appropriate deadline. However, please note that the order in which the applications are received does not play a role in how applicants are accepted.

A waiting list will be kept during the school year and additions will be made to the list as parents request to be added. The same priority will be followed in filling spaces that come available.

**\*\*NO application will be accepted unless accompanied by the designated registration fee (\$125). Acceptance of the registration fee will ensure a space for your child for the upcoming school year. The registration fee is non-applicable to tuition and non-refundable unless the family moves out of the Birmingham metropolitan area.**

### **Tuition**

Tuition is a yearly fee which is payable by the month for your convenience. If you prefer, you may pay by the year or semester. There is no reduction in tuition for days that

the school is closed due to holidays, inclement weather, or for prolonged absence of child.

A \$15 per month discount will be given on tuition of the second and subsequent children enrolled from one family. A \$15 per month discount for children or grandchildren of AUMC church members also applies. There is no discount on the registration and supply fee.

Tuition is due the first Tuesday of each month. There is a \$15.00 penalty for late payments made after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Checks should be payable to AUMC PDO. If a child is withdrawn after school begins, the parent is responsible for tuition for the entire month in which the child withdraws. There is a \$25.00 handling fee on all checks returned to the program for insufficient funds. The \$25.00 fee plus the amount of any check returned to the program for insufficient funds must be paid to the PDO program by cash, money order or cashiers check within 4 business days.

### **Fundraisers**

In order to keep tuition as low as possible while providing a high quality program with curriculum enhancements, it is necessary for our program to sponsor fund-raising activities each year. Our primary fundraiser for the past 9 years has been an early spring Garage Sale which has netted \$1800-\$3500 per year. At least two other fundraisers will be required in addition to the Garage Sale.

As a parent, your help is vital to the success of any fund-raising efforts. Your suggestions and comments are welcome.

Avondale United Methodist Church Parents' Day Out program is a non-profit organization; therefore any contributions above tuition are tax deductible.

### **Drop off and Pick Up Procedures**

#### **Drop Off**

You may bring your child to their classroom NO earlier than 9:00am. Please enter the building on the 40<sup>th</sup> Street lobby entrance. If the stairs hinder your accessibility to the building please see the director for an alternate arrangement. We will begin our daily routine of activities promptly at 9:15AM. PLEASE have your child in the classroom at this time. You are fee to help your child engage in an activity before you leave, but remember it is easier on the child if you make a quick exit.

Please have your child finish all breakfast or snack items before he/she enters the classroom. Children should not bring these items into the classroom. The only food items to be brought to the school are the child's sack lunch and cup for snack time.

A sign in/out sheet is located just inside each classroom. Please sign your child in and out on this sheet each day. If not on record, please list the phone number and who will be

picking your child up that day. If someone besides a parent is picking up the child please inform the teacher or director.

Do not leave your child in a classroom without a teacher.

### **Pick Up**

Pick up will begin at 12:50. Parents are asked to initial the pick up form next to your child's name. Children will only be allowed to leave with their parents or a person named in the child's registration file in the office and indicated on drop off form. If someone else must pick up your child, that person must show positive identification as well as be listed on drop off form.

It is VERY important that you pick up your child by 1:00 pm every day. It can be distressing for your child to see all the other children leave with their parents while he or she is still waiting for you. The following guidelines will be used in an event of late pick up.

1. Parents are expected to pick up their child/children by 1:00 pm.
2. Children may stay until 1:05 pm without incurring any charges.
3. \$1.00 per minute will be charged from 1:05 until the child is picked up. This late charge must be paid before the child can return to PDO.
4. Exceptions can be made in the case of emergency at the discretion of the director.
5. Abuse of this policy may result in further action taken at the discretion of the director and PDO Board.

### **Health Policy**

As required by state law, a blue immunization certificate for each child must be submitted to AUMC PDO before a child is permitted to attend classes. A current form is required for each child to continue the PDO program. Once notified by the director your form has expired you have one month to obtain a current form. These forms are available from your physician. The form will be kept on file until your child leaves AUMC PDO.

Parents are asked to fill out a Health Form and a Child Information Card. Please note any health conditions your child may have (allergies, dietary restrictions or any other pertinent information our staff should know about your child.)

AUMC PDO staff members will not give children medicine. If your child requires medicine during the times that we meet, you will be asked to return to the church to give medicine.

Please do not send your child to school when they are ill. A child who shows signs of a fresh cold, fever, diarrhea or any other contagious condition must not be brought to school. Please help us prevent the spread of infectious diseases by using your good, cautious judgment before sending a marginally well child to school. Consideration of this policy is appreciated.

Every precaution is taken to ensure a safe environment for the children at AUMC. In case of a serious injury, the staff will notify the parents immediately. If the parents cannot be reached, we will attempt to notify the other person(s) listed as emergency contacts on the registration. Medical treatment will be sought if deemed necessary. Children's Hospital of Alabama will be used if a child needs to be transported to a medical facility. A member of the staff will remain with the child until a parent arrives at the hospital. Avondale United Methodist Church PDO, and staff will not assume any liability for any illness or injury to a child.

### **Sick Child Policy**

The good health of the children is one of the most important aspects of shared responsibility that exists between the parents and the staff of the Parents' Day Out program and is also one of the most difficult. In the interest of protecting the health of the children we are issuing this policy statement regarding sick children and our procedures.

One of the most difficult decisions parents face early some mornings is whether the child should attend the center that day. This is the guide that should be followed:

- **Fever:** Temperature should be normal without medications for 24 hours before the child is brought to the center. If your child has a fever in the evening he should not be brought to the center the following morning even if his temperature is normal. Temperatures are lowing in the morning and fever may occur again in the afternoon. Fever is defined as 99.6 auxiliary, 100.6 oral or 101.6 rectal.
- **Vomiting:** If your child vomits during the night he or she should not be brought to the center the next day.
- **Diarrhea:** Loose stools have many causes. Children should not return to the center until bowel movements have normal consistency.
- **Colds:** Colds and runny noses are rampant in the winter. If there is no fever or discomfort the child may come to the center.
- **Earache:** Hearing is an important sense for learning. Keep your child at home and contact your pediatrician. In case of ear discharge, even without pain or fever, contact your physician.
- **Contagious Conditions:** Such as lice, ringworm and rashes must be deemed non-contagious by your pediatrician before the child returns to the center. A doctor's slip explaining the condition is not contagious is required.
- **Conjunctivitis:** eyes must be completely clear of any irritation or discharge before returning to school.

The director will contact parents if any of the above mentioned symptoms are present while your child is at AUMC. Parents are expected to make prompt arrangements for pickup of their child.

### **Discipline**

Positive guidance is used and expectations of the children are developmentally appropriate.

- A kind, firm voice shall be used
- Boundaries will be clear and expressed at the child's level
- No cruel or harsh punishment will be used
- Physical punishment, including spanking, "biting back, or pinching will NOT be used
- No child shall be confined to an enclosed area
- No child shall be subjected to humiliating, shaming or frightening discipline, nor will verbal abuse or derogatory remarks be used
- Discipline will never be used for failure to eat or potty accidents

### **Enrichments Activities**

Avondale UMC PDO offers several enrichments activities in our weekly schedule.

- Kindermusik: All children age 18 months and older will participate in weekly Kindermusik classes taught by Ms. Ramona of The Pink House.
- Library Time: The 3K and 4K classes will go the Avondale Public Library for story time on Thursday mornings. Ms. Cass is a remarkable storyteller.
- Chapel: Reverend Brandon Harris, pastor of Avondale United Methodist Church, will share with the 3K and 4K classes an age appropriate religious lesson based on scripture and/or life lessons during a 20 minute chapel time weekly.

### **Clothing and Personal Belongings**

Despite our best efforts your child will get dirty at school. Children should wear play clothes that are comfortable and washable so they can fully participate in the hands on activities. Clothes should also be easy to put on and take off so to not hinder learning self-help skills (such as potty training). Children should wear safe, comfortable walking shoes. Each child should have a complete change of clothes to be kept at the school.

Please mark all personal belongings with permanent marker or strong sticker. This includes all lunch boxes, coats, cups, Tupperware, ect.

### **Lunch**

Avondale UMC PDO is a peanut free facility. Please refrain from packing microwavable lunches, juice boxes and candy.