FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026-2027

UPPER DUBLIN CHRISTIAN NURSERY SCHOOL
411 Susquehanna Road
Ambler, PA 19002
215-646-7812

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ELCA Schools and Learning Centers

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UDCNS Family Handbook

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Upper Dublin Christian Nursery School provides an environment where each child is nurtured emotionally, educationally, physically and spiritually. Through play and exploration, we educate the whole child while preparing them for future learning experiences.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Upper Dublin Christian Nursery School welcomes students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship program, and other school-administered programs. A diverse environment enriches the learning experience for children by providing exposure to unique cultures and backgrounds. A parent/guardian, who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following:

Department of Public Welfare Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health and Welfare Bldg.
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

U S Dept of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

SCHOOL HOURS ***Please be prompt!***

Morning Classes	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Two Year old Classes	9:15 am – 12:15 pm
Lunch Bunch	12:00 pm – 2:30 pm Monday -Friday
Pre-K Wonder Kids	12:00 pm – 2:30 pm Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday

If you need to contact the school during school operating hours, please call 215-646-7812. If you are calling with an emergency and can't reach us, please call the church office at 215-646-7999. If your call is not an emergency, please leave us a message.

PLEASE INFORM RELATIVES, AND OR THOSE IN PRIMARY CARE OF YOUR CHILD OF OUR POLICIES. PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT AND ONE PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE, AND TO UPDATE ALL STUDENT INFORMATION WHENEVER CHANGES OCCUR OR EVERY SIX MONTHS AT A MINIMUM.

TUITION and PAYMENTS

Tuition is an annual amount collected over **10 months for your convenience. Tuition is due on the first of each month and any other fees incurred on your account are due in full monthly. All outstanding balances must be paid in full, and all accounts must be current, by the last day of school.** Payments are accepted online through Breeze. Tuition statements can be provided monthly or quarterly as requested.
Late Payments: If payment is not made for the current month, and arrangements have not been made with the Director, a meeting will be scheduled to determine the next course of action with the director. Scholarship money is available for families in need of assistance. Please contact the Director.

The tuition payment is due on the first of each month, beginning in September. Subsequent payments are due on the first of each month, September through June. Enrollment is for the school year, September to June. Parents are responsible for tuition due regardless of absence. **MONEY WILL NOT BE REFUNDED OR WAIVED** for absences due to illness, vacation (including extended leave), snow days, or closings due to funerals, etc. Please notify the Director if an alternate due date or financial arrangement needs to be established.

All payments must be made through Breeze, our online payment program. When using the Breeze management system, if possible, please opt to cover the processing fees when paying. The fees add up quickly and put a strain on our already very tight budget.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL-CAR LINE ONLY

The Pre-K will drop off and pick up on the church side of the **parking lot at 9:00 am and 12noon.**
The Three Year old students will have drop off and pick up at the main entrance at **9am and 12noon.**
The Two Year old students will have drop off and pick up at the main entrance at **9:15am and 12:15pm.**

All lunch bunch students will be picked up PROMPTLY at the main entrance at **1pm or 2:30pm.**

Please remember that drop-off and pick-up times are very busy. ***Teachers are not available for conferences during these times.***

Please be prompt! A late fee will be charged if a child is consistently picked up over 5 minutes late. In the event of an emergency, please notify the office and your teacher that your child will be picked up late.

Please only exit your car when you are one of the first 3 cars in line. Please wait for the first 3 cars to move and we have those children safely inside before moving up and allowing the next three cars to get their children out. This should be observed during pick up as well. In addition, **please do not go around cars that may be taking a bit longer; at this age children run for one last hug or may dart into the parking lot. Please be patient and share this information with nannies, grandparents, and anyone else who may be dropping off or picking up your child. This is to keep all children safe, thank you.**

CLOTHING

We know that your child wants to look nice for school, but PLEASE do not have them wear their best clothes to school. Our curriculum is based on exploration through play – sand, water, mud, paint, cooking, clay, etc. We expect to be MESSY, and we are! During the winter, please make sure that your child has a hat, gloves, and boots. We will still be going outside. **NO SANDALS OR FLIP FLOPS!**

Please be sure to label all your child's belongings.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential for you and your child to enjoy all the opportunities and happenings at UDCNS! How can you do this?

- Stay informed by confirming/providing your classroom teacher with current email address. Teachers will often email parents with weekly newsletters.
    - Please note: Teachers only email with parents or legal guardians, if you would like other members of your families to receive these emails, please forward the emails.
- Like us on Facebook!
- Check for our weekly emails from the Director with upcoming events and important dates, you can also check for up to date information on our website.
- Please let your child's teacher know if your child will be absent or coming in late. You can email your child's teacher or leave a message on the school answering machine.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

There are several places to access school-closing information:

- Teachers will text or email parents by 8 am if the school is closed.
- If Upper Dublin School District is closed for inclement weather, UDCNS is closed.
- If Upper Dublin School District is virtual for inclement weather UDCNS is closed.
- UDCNS will send a morning email message.

FOOD POLICY

UDCNS will provide a peanut free snack and water each day. Please note when packing lunch or sending in a special class snack, **our school is a peanut/tree nut free facility**.

LIBRARY

All classes visit the school library once a week. Our children's library circulation policy is 1 book per child, due back in 7 days. Parents are responsible for the replacement value of any lost or damaged books. Two Year Olds enjoy story time with our Librarian but do not take out books.

LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch is offered Monday through Friday 12:00 p.m. to 2:30pm. The cost is $25 a day. The two year- old students will have an option to stay from 12pm to 1pm for $10 an hour. Registration and Payments must be made ahead of time by clicking on the link on our website. You will then be directed to pay in Breeze.

WE STRIVE TO BE A PEANUT/TREENUT-FREE SCHOOL! Please, no peanut butter or Nutella. Check granola bars carefully. We are happy to warm up food for your child during lunch, such as mac and cheese, hotdogs, chicken nuggets, leftovers, etc. Please pack only items requiring 1 to 2 minutes in microwave. Be sure to send in 2 napkins and any necessary utensils with your child's lunch.

MEDIA POLICY

Throughout the year, school and church staff may be taking pictures of the children at school events in the Church or during classroom activities. These pictures may appear on the Nursery School website, Facebook page, brochures, and general marketing materials. No identification of the child will be provided. Please indicate on the Media Policy Permission Section of the emergency contact form, your preference regarding your child's participation in our marketing materials. Upper Dublin Lutheran Church upholds a Social Media Policy that governs staff and volunteers. If you would like to see a copy of this policy, please see the Director.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

As can be expected, the parking lot is crowded during drop off and pick up. Please take extreme caution! Parents should always be patient and obey the car line guidelines. This is for the safety of the children. Car line rules will be sent out prior to the start of school. **Be sure to share these rules with any other friends or family that help transport your child to school.** PLEASE be respectful of the Church's property. Children should not be permitted to climb trees or run on flower plant beds.

REGISTRATION/WITHDRAWAL

Registration for current Preschool families is held in January. A non-refundable registration fee must accompany each application. New Families may set up an appointment to visit the preschool beginning in January; applications are taken on a first come, first served basis. Enrollment is for the school year, September to June. If parents should choose to withdraw a child for any reason a 30-day written notification must be given to the Director. All parents are required to sign a tuition agreement on a yearly basis. In the case of separated or divorced parents, both parent/guardian signatures are required on all forms.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Parents/guardians will complete a Child Emergency Contact form that contains release authorizations for other people that may pick up your child. Only people listed on the form will have children released to them. At the beginning of the year (and as necessary) teachers may ask to see a photo identification. This is to ensure that your child is released only to people that you have authorized. Please make sure any person who might be picking up your child is aware of the photo ID requirement and give your teacher advance notice of the change in pick up person.

SECURITY

The front entrance to the nursery school is always locked. All visitors must be buzzed in for access to our building. The Church Staff unlocks the door and greets visitors throughout the day. Our school hallways and grounds are now equipped with 24/7 live cameras that are continuously recording.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL:

- A seasonal change of clothes, in a zippered plastic bag.
- Children who are not toilet trained must also provide diapers and wipes.
- The teachers may request additional items such as tissues and Clorox wipes.
- **BUCKETS OR BACKPACKS**
    - **Some teachers will** distribute buckets the first day of school in lieu of a backpack. Your teacher will let you know ahead of time which item your child will be using. Please help your child remember to take it home each day and to bring it back each school morning.

Please label EVERYTHING with your child's name.

WORSHIP

Each class will attend chapel weekly. This will be a special time as we sing songs, hear messages from the Bible, and grow in our love for God and each other.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

ALLERGIES

We strive to be peanut/tree nut free at UDCNS. No peanut butter or Nutella should be packed for lunch bunch or Wonder Bunch. Parents must alert teachers of any known allergies for their child. Any child with an allergy requiring Benadryl or an Epi-pen must have an *Allergy Action Plan* completed by his/her physician to attend school. The Epi-Pen and medication must be in the original prescribed box with the prescription label on it. It is the parent's responsibility to know when their child's Epi-Pen or medication expires. They must provide a new one once the Epi-Pen or medication expires.

ILLNESS

Every effort is made to keep the children healthy. **Please do not send a sick child to school!** We are sympathetic to issues of childcare; however, for the safety and well-being of all the children *and* staff, we cannot allow a child who is sick to attend school.

Please do not bring your child to school if he/she has any of the following:

- If your child has a fever, please do not bring them to school until he is fever-free for 24 hours **WITHOUT** having taken a fever–reducer (ibuprofen, acetaminophen or other)
- Diarrhea or vomiting or complaints of an upset stomach.
- Any undiagnosed rash on cheeks, arms, legs, chest or back.
- Complaints of a sore or irritated throat

If your child becomes sick with a contagious illness, please notify the director immediately so that we can alert other parents. If your child becomes sick at school, we will always try to reach a parent first. If a parent is unavailable, we will notify your emergency contact. Please list a local person as that contact.

Admission/Exclusion due to symptoms of illness

Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease, or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will **not be** admitted into school. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our facility. The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication. Your child must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning.

In the event your child is consistently sent home with one of the above health concerns, they will not be permitted to return to school without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because they are no longer contagious.

***If for any reason there is a resurgence of Covid-19, and we need to reinstate our Covid Policies, parents will be notified, and our guidelines will be distributed.

MEDICATIONS

No medication will be administered at school unless a written order from the physician is on file at school. The medication must be in the original container with instructions for administering it on the label. See **"ALLERGIES"** for children with known food allergies.

MEDICAL RECORDS

A Health Form must be completed by the child's pediatrician or family physician every year. The form must be returned to the preschool office by September 19th. Health forms for school files must be updated on an annual basis, with a signed medical form and listing of current immunizations. This form **MUST be signed and dated by the physician in order to be accepted by UDCNS as required by state regulations.** Please be sure that all immunizations are up to date and if there is an Allergy/Medical Action Plan needed that it is included with your health form. Please inform the office in writing if there are any changes to your child's health or information that is necessary to your child's wellbeing.

Exemption from Immunizations, regardless of Medical or Religious, still requires a Child Health Form being completed by the child's current physician. The report must include the child's health history, allergies, current medications, and immunization status. It also needs a statement from the health professional that the child appears free from contagious diseases and is able to participate in child care. If a child is exempt from any immunizations, the exemption must be documented and accompanied with the PA Exemption Form completed and signed by the child's parents/guardians.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONAL SUPPORT/DISCIPLINE

Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) is a schoolwide systems approach aimed at establishing positive student culture and individualized behavior supports necessary to create a safe and effective learning environment for all students. Discipline is handled with love and respect for the child. Behaviors that do not respond to these methods will be discussed with the parent, the teacher and /or the Director. The Director and if needed, a pastor, is always available to discuss these concerns.