

Parent/Caregiver Handbook 2023/2024



PARENT HANDBOOK
2023-2024

The Woodbrook Early Education Center

25 Stevenson Lane | Baltimore, Maryland 21212 | 410.377.8918

The Woodbrook Early Education (WEE) Center is a ministry of Woodbrook Baptist Church. It is licensed by the Maryland State Office of Child Care Administration and certified by the Maryland State Department of Education. The Center is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education and is also rated Maryland Excels Level 5. We are delighted to have your children in our care.

Accreditations:

- Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)
- Maryland Excels

Dear Families:

Welcome to the Woodbrook Early Education (WEE) Center at Woodbrook Baptist Church. It is our privilege to serve you and your child. Our staff and our Church community are committed to providing a program that will nurture and enrich your child in his or her development.

Please read this policy booklet carefully and keep it handy to use as a reference throughout the year. Although this booklet is not a contract, these guidelines help us to ensure a safe environment and provide the best possible care and most meaningful experiences for your child. The Director and the WEE Committee reserve the right to make final decisions regarding developmentally appropriate practices in every aspect of the WEE Center.

We are eager to serve you and to get to know you and your family better. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us. If you are looking for meaningful worship and a committed congregation, please consider a visit to our Worship Service on Sunday mornings, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

I look forward to the adventures ahead in the 2023-2024 school year.

Sincerely,
Angela Peterson
Director, Woodbrook Early Education Center
A Ministry of Woodbrook Baptist Church

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OUR MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

The WEE Center is a ministry of the Christian Education program at Woodbrook Baptist Church that welcomes children of all cultural and learning abilities. The WEE Center encourages the healthy growth of the whole child, through developmentally appropriate activities and experiences, in a warm and nurturing environment. Children are offered opportunities to choose their own work/play activities and to be a part of the larger group for teacher-directed activities; to learn to solve problems and to make decisions; to learn to resolve conflict peaceably; to gain a positive regard for themselves and others; and to hear about God as One who creates and One who loves children.

The WEE Center believes that a strong partnership between teacher and families is vital for a child's successful growth and development. We encourage strong communication between teachers and families concerning their child's individual development and needs.

The purpose of the WEE Center is to extend the ministry and mission of the Church by providing care, education and development opportunities for each child enrolled and teacher employed at the WEE Center to reach his/her greatest potential and by providing a program of ministry and outreach to the families of the children enrolled.

The WEE Center adopts a whole child approach to learning. We use developmentally appropriate practices to help our children grow and develop in all areas; social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Children two years through four years of age may be enrolled at the WEE Center. Children must be 2,3 or 4 by September 1st of the school year. The WEE Center welcomes the opportunity to meet all children at their developmental level and works with each family to help all children learn and grow through developmentally appropriate practices. If your child has disabilities or special health care needs, we welcome all and will work with families to ensure the best care and learning opportunities for each child.

Registration for the upcoming year is held in January of each year. Registration is on a first come, first served basis. All current families are encouraged to register on the first day of registration as classes fill up very quickly. A non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 (\$150.00 for two or more children) is due at the time of registration along with the registration form. In June, a packet is mailed out to all families that include the following:

1. Enrollment Questionnaire
2. Signed Parent Acknowledgement page at the end of the handbook
3. Emergency information card
4. Health Inventory/Lead screening/Immunization Record
5. Enrollment Request and Agreement form
6. Media Release form
7. Emergency Preparedness Plan signed by parent
8. Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care signed by parent
9. Medication authorization form, if applicable

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The Maryland State Office of Child Care Administration requires that these forms are to be on file before a child may attend. All forms for returning children also must be updated.

TUITION

In order to provide the highest quality educational experience for our students as well as to operate in a fiscally responsible manner, the WEE Center has established the following policy regarding registration and tuition:

On July 1st, one month's **advanced/non-refundable tuition payment** is due. This tuition payment will be applied toward your final payment of the school year (the June payment). The next tuition payment is due on September 1st. Tuition payments continue to be due on the first of each month through May 1st. **June's payment is based on the number of days registered per week as of July 1st. Please remember this is a non-refundable deposit.**

The tuition fees for the 2023-2024 school years are:

Woodbrook Early Education Center Tuition Packages 2023-2024

Two and Three-Year-Old Options (price per month):

Package	Hours	2 Days/Week	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 2A & 3A	9:00AM-2:30PM	\$485	\$660	\$835	\$945
Package 2B & 3B	7:30AM-2:30PM	\$515	\$705	\$945	\$1180
Package 2C & 3C	9:00AM-5:30PM	\$595	\$780	\$1045	\$1300
Package 2D & 3D	7:30AM-5:30PM	\$710	\$855	\$1140	\$1425

Pre-K Options (price per month/3 days a week minimum required):

Package	Hours	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 4A	9:00AM-2:30PM	\$595	\$780	\$890
Package 4B	7:30AM-2:30PM	\$640	\$860	\$1075
Package 4C	9:00AM-5:30PM	\$715	\$960	\$1195
Package 4D	7:30AM-5:30PM	\$790	\$1055	\$1315

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All payments are due on the 1st of each month.

We offer discounts if you pay for the full year on 8/1 (7%) or if you pay in two installments on 8/1 & 1/1 (5%). We also offer a 10% discount for siblings (discount is applied to the lower tuition amount). Only one tuition discount may be used.

Drop- In Rates and Extra Days:

Before Care: \$15 a day

After Care: \$30 a day

Extra Day: \$55 (9:00am-2:30pm)

Discount for paying entire year by August 1st (7%)

Two and Three-Year-Old Options:

Package	2 Days/Week	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 2A & 3A	\$4510	\$6140	\$7765	\$8790
Package 2B & 3B	\$4790	\$6560	\$8790	\$10,975
Package 2C & 3C	\$5535	\$7255	\$9720	\$12,090
Package 2D & 3D	\$6605	\$7950	\$10,600	\$13,255

Pre-K Options:

Package	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 4A	\$5535	\$7255	\$8280
Package 4B	\$5950	\$8000	\$10,000
Package 4C	\$6650	\$8930	\$10,185
Package 4D	\$7350	\$9810	\$12,230

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**Discount for paying in two installments by August 1st
and January 1st (5%)**

Two and Three-Year-Old Options:

Package	2 Days/Week	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 2A & 3A	\$2305	\$3135	\$3970	\$4490
Package 2B & 3B	\$2450	\$3350	\$4490	\$5605
Package 2C & 3C	\$2830	\$3705	\$4965	\$6175
Package 2D & 3D	\$3375	\$4060	\$5415	\$6770

Pre-K Options:

Package	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
Package 4A	\$2830	\$3705	\$4230
Package 4B	\$3040	\$4085	\$5110
Package 4C	\$3400	\$4560	\$5205
Package 4D	\$3755	\$5010	\$6250

Please make checks payable to WOODBROOK BAPTIST CHURCH and note your child's name in the memo section. **You will be assessed a \$30.00 fee for all returned checks.** In the event of three or more returned checks, all future payments must be made in cash, money order or cashier's check.

Tuition payments should **NOT** be sent with your child. Please place tuition payments in the black mailbox on the WEE Office door, or mail them to the school (indicate "WEE Center" on the envelope). Please do not give tuition checks to the teachers or leave any type of paperwork and/or checks in your child's backpack.

As stated earlier, tuition payments are due on the first of the month. If the monthly tuition payment is not paid by the tenth of the month, the following actions will be taken:

1. \$30.00 late fee assessed
2. The account will be considered delinquent, and
3. A letter from the WEE Center financial assistant will be sent, bringing this matter to the parent's attention.

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Should the overdue tuition payment not be made by the first of the next month, the WEE Center will have no choice but to drop the child from the roll, and a child on the waiting list will be given the vacant spot.

Please note that the WEE Center is fully staffed every day for enrolled children. Therefore, monthly tuition payments are due regardless of whether or not your child is in attendance.

Full tuition payments are not waived for any reason, other than a withdrawal, and then only if appropriate notice is given. Should you need to withdraw your child from the program, two weeks written advance notice is required. **This written notice must be given to the Assistant Director.** If the appropriate written notice is provided, the advanced tuition will be applied to your child's final month at WEE. If two weeks' notice is not given, the advanced tuition will be forfeited.

If a tuition payment cannot be made on time, due to special circumstances, please speak with the Assistant Director or Director immediately so that payment arrangements can be made.

IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY FOR THE WEE CENTER TO CLOSE FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, TUITION FOR THE CURRENT MONTH OF THE CLOSURE WILL REMAIN THE SAME. FOR ADDITIONAL WEEKS/MONTHS OF A CLOSURE, TUITION WILL BE BILLED AT 75%. THIS WILL PERMIT US TO CONTINUE PAYING OUR STAFF, MAINTAINING THE BUILDING, AND PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR OUR FAMILIES.

TEACHER/CHILD RATIO

In order to provide a quality environment and teacher/child ratio, the class sizes are generally projected as follows:

- Two Year Old Class 3 teachers/12 children
- Three Year Old Class 3 teachers/14 children
- Four Year Old Class 2 teachers/16 children

PRESCHOOL DAYS/HOURS

The Preschool Program operates weekdays from 9:00 AM until 2:30 PM. The school opens to children the Tuesday after Labor Day and closes mid-June.

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EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM (BEFORE AND AFTER CARE)

Our Extended Day Program runs from 7:30 AM-9:00 AM. and 2:30 PM.-5:30 PM.

Children may be enrolled as a **Drop-In**, and we would need notification by **1 PM for After Care or by 3 PM the preceding day for Before Care**. You will be charged the Drop-In rate.

Children may be enrolled on a **Regular Basis** and you will receive a significant discount. **Please see the tuition packages outlined on the “Tuition Packages 2023-2024” information sheet.**

Due to the generous discount of the monthly Extended Day fee, participants will not receive credit nor reimbursement for missed days, holidays or breaks. Enrolling in the Extended Day Program indicates acceptance of this policy.

Failure to notify the WEE Office by the above stated times will result in being charged the standard Before/After Care Fee, as applicable.

If you are interested in this program, please ask for the extended day program policy and procedures.

EXTRA SCHOOL DAYS

If there is space available, you may sign your child up for extra school days on a week to week basis. The tuition is \$55.00 per extra day, which will be added to your monthly statement. Please call the WEE office to inquire about the availability of extra days.

MISSED SCHOOL DAYS

If a child misses her/his scheduled/enrolled day(s), she/he may not attend on a different day to make-up for lost classroom time. The WEE Center only staff's personnel for the number of enrolled children per day as required by Maryland State law.

HOLIDAY AND CLOSINGS

Please refer to the calendar in the back of the Handbook for all WEE closures.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS

The WEE Center uses Baltimore County Schools as a **guideline** for closings and early dismissals due to snow or inclement weather. Closings, delayed openings and early dismissals are aired on local radio and TV stations. If Baltimore County announces a delayed opening of one (1) hour, WEE will open at 9:00AM. There will be NO Before Care on these days. If Baltimore County announces that they will close schools early, there will be no After Care. If Baltimore County announces that there is no after school or evening activities, it will be at the WEE Center's discretion if there is no After Care. If Baltimore County announces that schools are closed, WE WILL ASSESS THE WEATHER AT 7:00AM TO MAKE A DECISION IF WE WILL CLOSE OR OPEN LATE. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WE DO NOT TAKE THIS DECISION LIGHTLY AND WANT TO BE SURE EVERYONE (STAFF AND FAMILIES) CAN TRAVEL TO SCHOOL SAFELY FROM THE MANY DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE COUNTY.

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TYPICAL DAY AT THE WEE CENTER

Learning Through Activity Centers - art, blocks and construction, books, home living, science and nature, music and movement, sensory table, puzzles and language arts, writing and other manipulative play. **Children are given five and three-minute verbal cues that we are moving to another activity. Visual and individual cues are used as needed.

- Group Time – curriculum driven stories, songs, finger plays, games and conversation revolve around a weekly unit theme, such as seasons, animals, machines, friends, helpers and weather.
- Snack Time – Around 10:00 AM
- Outdoor Play – two-age appropriate separated areas with play structures, sandbox, riding toys.
- *Weather permitting; the WEE Center classes go outside every day. Therefore, we ask parents to send children in clothing appropriate to the weather and season of the year.
- Indoor playroom – tumbling mats, rings, parachute play, etc.
- Lunch – around noon.
- Story time/Bible Story
- Rest time
- Science, Music, Art, Little Lacrosse

*The WEE Center is keenly aware of developmentally appropriate practices as we meet the needs of each and every child. We use materials that are specific to their developmental needs and are within the guidelines of age appropriate, as well. We strive to create a climate that builds feelings of confidence as the whole child develops. We make every effort to support new skills being learned and to challenge children who are ready to move to the next level.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICIES

Maryland law requires that whoever drops/picks up a child from the WEE Center, **MUST** sign in and out daily. Teachers will greet you at the door and have you sign in before you drop off and you must see your child's teacher to sign your child out at the end of the day. **Whoever is authorized to pick up your child must be 18 years or older.**

ARRIVAL

You may park in the lower parking lot on the west side of the Church. Whenever you are driving on Church grounds, please **DO NOT** drive over 10 mph and use the utmost caution. We want all our children, as well as the children in the surrounding neighborhood, to be safe.

The WEE Center doors are unlocked from 8:55 AM-9:30 AM for admittance to the WEE Center. Children arriving after 9:30 AM need to ring the doorbell at the door with the decorative flag. When dropping off your child, please do not leave your child until a teacher has acknowledged his or her presence and be sure to sign him/her in.

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ARRIVING AT THE CLASSROOM DOOR

Teachers are busy preparing for the day and request that children not be allowed to knock on the classroom door until 9:00 AM. All children will be greeted individually by a teacher at the classroom door. Each child will find his or her name card, slide it under the door, and knock.

Teachers use this greeting time to nurture teacher-child relationships, build children's self-esteem and set the tone for the day. This procedure also helps ensure that teachers are aware at all times who is coming in and going out of classroom doors—a safety/security matter.

Please make every effort to arrive by 9:00AM. Children who regularly arrive late tend to feel they have missed something, and they have! A valuable portion of their activity area play (unit-related) takes place between 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM. **Please remain with your child until they have entered the classroom.**

If your child/children have a morning appointment, we request that children be at school by 11:00 AM unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please see Ms. Elise or Ms. Angela if you have any questions.

DEPARTURE

Please use the same parking and caution as for arrival. IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE PROMPT in picking up your child. Late fees will be assessed if your child is not picked up by 2:30 PM. The WEE Center doors are unlocked for pickup from 2:10 PM – 2:30 PM.

Families using Before or After Care should come to the Main WEE Center door, ring the doorbell, and be admitted by a teacher.

***Maryland State law states that no child can be left unattended in the car during drop-off or pick-up.**

LATE PICK-UP FEES

Failure to pick up a child promptly by 2:30pm will result in a \$1.00 per minute charge. After 5:30 PM, a late fee of \$5.00 per minute is charged. Lateness is calculated by the WEE Center clock. Late fees will be reflected on the next month's tuition bill. If you are late picking up your child, your child will be placed in aftercare (if there is room); however, you will be charged the \$1.00 per minute late fee, not the After Care fee.

RELEASING CHILDREN TO PARENTS AND OTHERS

The safety of your child/children is our utmost priority. The Center will not release a child to anyone other than the parent or guardian unless there is written permission (a picture ID will be required in order to release your child) on file from the parent or guardian. Whoever is authorized to pick up your child must be 18 years or older.

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It is your obligation as parent or guardian to ensure that we are aware of any restrictions on who may pick up your child. If there is a change in custody arrangements, it is your obligation to let us know, and to provide us with the appropriate court documents related to custody. If there is any restriction on who can pick up a child, it is absolutely essential that a parent inform the WEE Center Director and supply any relevant documents regarding such restrictions.

Parents are responsible for their children once they have picked them up. Please keep them with you at all times.

GOOD HEALTH POLICY

Please help us maintain a healthy environment for all children by not sending a child to the WEE Center who shows signs of illness or who has an infectious disease. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic it may be necessary for us to take children's temperatures on a more regular basis (possibly daily upon arrival), or to take additional steps to ensure the health and safety of all of our community. In regard to COVID-19 we will continue to follow the guidelines provided by the Maryland Department of Health.

The WEE Center is not liable for accidents or illnesses that occur when your child is at WEE. Parents/guardians are expected to obtain medical coverage/care for their children.

Children with any of the following symptoms must be kept at home:

- Fever of 100.0 degrees in the last 24 hours, without the use of Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- Symptoms of a fresh cold
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (not related to asthma)
- Chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Discharging eyes, nose or ears (i.e. virulent discharge of yellow or green mucus)
- Unidentified rash or contagious rash
- During incubation period of a contagious disease
- Unable to participate in outdoor play
- Head lice or nits

***If CDC or our local department of health release additional recommendations for child care centers we will follow their guidelines which could change our policies.**

Parents will be called immediately to pick up their child in the event he or she develops a fever or other symptoms during the school day. Should the parents be unavailable by phone, the emergency contact persons will be contacted. Please be certain that your

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emergency contacts are local and have agreed to accept this responsibility and have access to approved child safety seats. We cannot stress the importance of being able to reach parents at all times. Please make sure your child's emergency card is updated with cell phone, work, home numbers, and that you are readily available. Please also save the WEE Center's phone numbers in your cell phone for emergencies (410-377-8918 and 410-377-8935).

Please make every effort to pick your child up within one hour of being called. Minor injuries will be given simple first aid. In the event of other injuries, parents will be notified immediately. In case of illness or accident when a parent cannot be contacted by the Center and in the Center's judgment the illness or accident requires a physician, the child's physician will be called first.

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS

In the event of contagious illness, the parent shall notify the Center. The child cannot return to the Center until danger of the contagion is past, as certified by a doctor. The WEE Center will provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed. The Center will also advise families regarding any signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that will be implemented at the program and that families should implement at home.

MEDICATIONS

Center personnel will administer prescription and over the counter medications only when they are accompanied by an official medication order form completed by the child's parent for over the counter medication and the child's physician for prescription medication. These forms are available in the WEE office. Medications must be labeled with the child's first and last names, be in the original prescription labels that details the name, strength, expiration date or period of use of the medication and instructions on how to administer and store it. All medications will be kept in a locked container. Medications will be administered by a staff member who has had specific training by a health professional on the correct practices of medication administration.

DIAPERING POLICY

Children entering the WEE Center do not have to be potty-trained. Teachers will work with children and parents as they make an effort to begin this new skill. Parents will supply diapers and wipes, labeled with the child's name to the classroom.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Use of tobacco is prohibited at all times on the Woodbrook Baptist Church property.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Maryland Child Care Administration requires that the WEE Center maintain a written Emergency Preparedness Plan. The Plan covers emergency situations that require the need for evacuation or shelter. The Plan also provides our response to other circumstances, such as fire, natural disaster, or a threatening situation that may pose a hazard to the health or

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safety of children in our care, including those with disabilities. A copy of our plan is distributed to parents at the beginning of the school year. Each parent must sign an acknowledgement form indicating receipt of the Plan. The signed acknowledgement form is kept in each child's file.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

In accordance with Federal Requirement for Asbestos Management in school, the WEE Center has an extensive asbestos management plan. It is located in the office and available for parent review at any time.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, DETECTION & REPORTING

According to Family Law Article Sections 5-701 through 5-715, Annotated Code of Maryland, all staff who suspects child abuse or neglect are required to report it. The reporting procedure at the WEE Center is:

1. Report suspected physical abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse to the authorities. The phone numbers are posted near the office phone. (County-410-887-2800, City- 410-361-2235)
2. Contact the Director immediately.
3. Document:
 - a. Physical indicators
 - b. Behavioral indicators
 - c. Child's statements
 - d. Date/Time
 - e. Names of teacher's present
 - f. Parents' statements, if any
4. Complete the REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE form (form #3) and forward to the designated agencies listed on the form.

The Department of Human Resources has stated: In Maryland the Child Abuse Law requires that anyone who suspects a child is being mistreated report the matter to Protective Services or the police. In cases of child neglect anyone may report the suspected neglect but professionals are required to do so. And any person, who in good faith makes a report of abuse or neglect, is immune from any civil liability or criminal penalty.

VISITING PETS

Pets are not allowed in the WEE Center for any reason other than show and tell. In the event your child wishes to bring a pet to the classroom for show and tell, the animal must have documentation from a veterinarian or animal shelter to show that it is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Please notify your child's classroom teacher at least one day in advance of bringing a pet to the Center. Please notify WEE Center staff, particularly your child's classroom teacher, if your child is allergic to a type of animal so that we can ensure he or she is not exposed to that animal.

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ABSENCES

Please call The WEE Center at 410-377-8918 as soon as possible if your child will be absent. If no one is available at the time of your call, please leave a message. You may also send an email to edefilippis@woodbrook.org or apeterson@woodbrook.org.

CLOTHING

Children should wear play clothes that are comfortable and washable, and tennis shoes or other closed-toe shoes with rubber soles. Slick-soled shoes, sandals, jellies and cowboy boots can be dangerous and are not to be worn to school. In cold weather children should wear dry, layered clothing for warmth. Please be sure your child has mittens and a hat during winter.

A complete change of clothes (including socks) labeled with your child's name should be brought each day, in case of accidents or spills.

Please **LABEL** all coats, hats, sweaters, mittens, boots, gloves and change of clothes with your child's name. It is your responsibility to replenish this change of clothes as needed throughout the year.

What to Bring (LABEL EVERYTHING)

- Book bag/backpack to carry home diapers, sheets etc.
- Complete change of clothes, appropriate for the season
- Fitted crib sheet for cots and mats and if desired, a small blanket cover and/or small pillow
- Stuffed animal or "lovey" to sleep or rest with, if desired (helps with the home/school connection)
- Disposable diapers, wipes, as needed
- Lunch

What Not to Bring

- Play guns, knives or other weapons
- Gum, candy or unfinished breakfast

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Maryland's Department of Education and Maryland's Office of Child Care regulations require that, during snack and lunch time, children are provided with 1% milk or water to drink.

The regulations also require that all perishable items be refrigerated. Each room has designated space in our refrigerators. Please keep lunch containers as small as possible so that we can fit all of our children's lunches in our refrigerators. **Please note that we are not permitted to microwave lunch items.**

Menus are posted on our refrigerator, outside every classroom, and on our website. Parents may also request one by calling the WEE office.

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Whole grains are served whenever possible, and salt and sugar are limited. In an effort to promote nutritional education, lunches prepared at home should support these guidelines. The WEE Staff will monitor lunches based on the suggestions below. In keeping with our nutrition policy and to ensure a healthy, balanced lunch is available to all children, additional healthy supplements will be provided as needed. Please note: candy, gum, and soft drinks are not permitted to be served with/for children's lunches.

Families are encouraged to pack:

- 1) A protein source (cheese, meat, eggs, beans)
- 2) A grain product (whole grains preferably, bread, pasta, rice, crackers)
- 3) Two fruits and/or vegetables (example: 1/2 cup fruit salad or a celery stick and 1/2 banana)

Please send in foods that are ready to eat. Fruit (apples, oranges, etc.) should already be cut up and tuna, etc. pre-mixed. Teachers need to attend to their classes and are not able to prepare food, which includes the heating of any foods. To ensure meals are consistent, nutritious, and safe for all children, please do not send any foods that may present a choking hazard. Staff will return most uneaten foods in children's lunch boxes for parents to see the amount and what was eaten by their child. Due to potential allergies among classmates please be sensitive to what you pack your child for lunch as well as when treats are brought in for special events. We ask that you do not pack any items that have loose nuts in them such as trail mix, peanut M&Ms, etc.

In addition, the following foods may not be served at the Center because they present a choking hazard. If any of these foods are included in a child's lunch, they will be returned home or discarded:

- Hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds
- Whole grapes
- Nuts
- Hard candy
- Popcorn
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Spoonful's of peanut butter/Chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole

FOOD ALLERGIES

From time to time, the WEE Center is advised that certain children at the Center have moderate to severe food allergies. A peanut allergy is not unusual. To help ensure the safety of allergic children, we will have a lunch table at which the children with allergies sit. In extreme cases it may be necessary to have a "peanut free" room. During the school year, if

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your child is diagnosed with a food allergy, please have your pediatrician immediately update your child's medical records at the WEE Center. Please also remind teachers if your child is allergic to any food item. Thank you for helping us keep your children safe. *For milk allergies please see the Food and Nutrition section.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

At the WEE Center we have adapted the "Let's Move" Challenge for our children. There are 4 basic goals:

- Physical Activity-We provide organized physical education for ½ hour 3 times a week, in addition to our classrooms having large motor/outside play every day for 45 minutes in the morning and a ½ hour in the afternoon. Parents are encouraged to continue to give opportunities for physical activity at home.
- Screen time-The WEE center has a screen time policy that includes no more than 30 minutes of educational screen time. Parents are encouraged to limit screen time as well.
- Fruits and Vegetables-We serve fruits and vegetables two to three times a week. Families are encouraged to pack healthy lunches. We have created "Coupon Central" which is an area located in our kitchen in which we share coupons with our families to help with the high cost of eating healthy.
- Beverages-We serve 1% milk & water. Water is available throughout the day.

SCREEN TIME/TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Because we care about the health and well-being of the children in our care, we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations on screen time:

- Children under 2 have no screen time
- Children 2 and over watch less than 30 minutes a week while in our care.

EXCURSIONS AND FIELD TRIPS

Field trips coordinating with our learning units will be planned throughout the year for our 4-year old classes. When appropriate we will also invite the 3-year old class to join. In addition to these trips, special enrichment programs will be planned at the WEE Center throughout the year. These programs will be paid for by the WEE Center. Whenever you can assist us, please let the Director know. Children enjoy riding with their parents on the bus and having them meet their friends and share the field trip experience. Field trip transportation will be provided by a licensed school bus company. Parents will be informed in advance of all field trips and permission slips must be signed for a child to participate in the excursion. All Chaperones must ride the bus on any field trip.

POLICY FOR CHAPERONING ON FIELDTRIPS

Our policy for anyone who wishes to be a chaperon on a fieldtrip is as follows:

1. You must be able to chaperon your child and at least one other child from the class.
2. No siblings are allowed on the field trip as you need to be available to chaperon other children and we need you on the bus to chaperon.
3. You must ride the bus to help chaperon the children.

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BIRTHDAYS

Children's birthdays are special times and we encourage their celebration at the Center. You are welcome to send a birthday snack for your child to share with his/her classmates, and to spend part of the day with us if you would like. Please avoid snacks with popcorn, nuts or hard candy. Please let the teacher know before the beginning of the birthday month so that the birthday snack can be scheduled on the class snack menu. In the interest of equity, we ask that only food items be sent to share—no party favors, take home treats or gifts. We ask that you please mail invitations if celebrating a birthday outside the center. For summer birthdays, you might consider celebrating your child's ½ birthday during the school year. ***If sending an "Evite" or other form of electronic invitation, please refer to the WEE Center Directory that is provided via email at the beginning of the school year.***

SUPERVISION POLICY

Parents can be confident that all children are under constant supervision by the teachers. We maintain required teacher/pupil ratios inside the building and outside on the playground. Teachers position themselves so that they are able to hear and see every child at all times. Teachers carefully eliminate blind spots where children cannot be heard and seen. By doing this, teachers are better able to head off potential accidents as well as respond quickly when accidents and incidents do occur.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

At the WEE Center, we believe that discipline is lovingly guiding, understanding and accepting each child as a person of worth and a person created in the image of God. All discipline should help children resolve conflicts and enable them to make healthy, acceptable decisions regarding their behavior. Assisting each child in becoming self-disciplined as he or she matures is the goal of all discipline.

The WEE Center has adopted the following criteria recommended by NAEYC: Use positive techniques of guidance, including logical or natural consequences applied in problem situations, redirection, anticipation of an elimination of potential problems, offering choices, and encouragement of appropriate behavior rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Teachers also help children to find the words to use as we see behavior as a form of communication. Consistent, clear rules are developed in conjunction with the children and are discussed with them to make sure they understand. Staff does not force children to apologize or explain their behavior but help children to recognize another child's feelings. Staff abstains from corporal punishment or humiliating or frightening discipline techniques. Food or beverage is never withheld as a discipline method. Guidance techniques (must) be non-punitive and accompanied by rational explanations of expectations. After an incident between children, teachers sit with those involved to reflect on what happened, how it made the children feel, and how the situation could be handled more appropriately if a similar situation arises again. Limits are set for children but the environment is arranged so that a minimal number of no's are necessary, particularly for very young children. Teachers also have social stories in the classrooms to help children navigate a variety of social situations that could prove challenging to young children.

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Staff-child interactions are understood as opportunities for children to develop an understanding of self, God, and others and are characterized by warmth, personal respect, individuality, positive support and responsiveness. When a child's conduct is deemed to be a possible danger to themselves or others, actions will be taken to ensure that a safe environment exists for all members of the WEE community. If it is not possible to ensure a child's own safety or the safety of others due to the child's conduct, the WEE Center may determine that it is not the appropriate location for the child.

An example of how teachers might redirect a child, offer them choices, and facilitate social interactions could be: if a child is repeatedly knocking down other children's towers in blocks, teachers may join in to facilitate the child rebuilding what he/she knocked down, or they may offer the child the choice of staying in blocks and knocking down only what they build or choosing a different center. There are times that children who are engaging in behaviors may need a movement break. In these situations, teachers will offer a break to go jump on the trampoline, take a walk, get a drink of water, etc. With children who teachers are aware of having these needs, movement breaks are offered pre-emptively.

Another example is if a child is having trouble keeping their hands to themselves, a teacher could provide a fidget, give them more space, talk about how they might feel if a friend kept putting their hands/feet on them. We also can read a social story that can be personalized to each child as needed.

CURRICULUM

The WEE Center is a ministry of Woodbrook Baptist Church and thus the WEE Center uses a combination of the Creative Curriculum/Healthy Beginnings and the Weekday Early Education Curriculum. The WEE Center is a play based, hands on approach learning center.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Families are our most valuable resource! We welcome your interest and desire to be involved with us. We appreciate your help and support ANY TIME, and may occasionally be calling on you to assist with parties, field trips, fundraisers and class projects. Let us know any other ways you might like to be involved, or if you would just like to come visit for a while.

Each classroom would like to invite a caregiver or caregivers to become the "room parent." The job of the room parent is to assist with class events.

The WEE Center will send out family evaluations twice a year. In the fall we send out "How are We Doing?" to see how everyone is settling in. In the spring, families will receive a formal evaluation form. Feedback is vital in operating a quality center. Concerns should be brought to the Director's attention. The Director maintains an open-door policy at all times.

Please schedule an appointment to discuss any concerns you have about your child's experience at the WEE Center.

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RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

Parents who are in need of assistance of any type can stop by the WEE Center office as resource information is available for many things, including;

- Area faith communities
- Assistance Center of Towson Churches
- Ministerial Counseling
- Early intervention
- Maryland Infant and Toddlers
- Child Find
- Speech and language assessment and local speech pathologists
- Hearing and Vision screening
- Area Kindergarten registration
- Local Private school information
- Public school elementary magnet programs

WEE CENTER-FAMILY COMMUNICATION

The WEE Center will provide regular written reports regarding your child's activities, in addition to the daily informal contact in person at drop-off and pick-up. All classrooms send home a "WEE Note" daily. This will describe the activities and curriculum themes in your child's class. In addition to the WEE Note, each classroom has an iPad and the app "Class Dojo". This app is used to share pictures and for teachers to send home notes individually and to the entire class. Families can also use Class Dojo to communicate directly with the teachers. Class Dojo is not a public social media app as you must be invited by the WEE Center to join. A monthly newsletter containing center-wide news and upcoming events will be e-mailed. We also send out a school-wide weekly e-mail about upcoming events.

CONFERENCES

Formal parent conferences are held two times a year, in the fall and spring. In accordance with best practice, **our fall conferences will include parents/caregivers completing an age specific Ages and Stages Questionnaire.** Ages and Stages is an approved early childhood screening tool. It is recommended that all children ages Birth-5 are screened within the first 3-4 months of each school year. It is a quick way to look at how children are doing in important areas of development such as communication, physical ability, social skills, and problem solving. It is not a diagnostic tool but a tool for teachers and parents to identify children's strengths as well as any areas that need to be supported. As parents/caregivers you are our best source of information about your child. The child's teachers will review the completed Ages and Stages questionnaire and it will be discussed during the conferences. You will receive more information as the time approaches. Teachers will complete their age appropriate skills checklist and both will be discussed during conferences.

Teachers and/or the Director will arrange an additional conference with families anytime a special need arises. Families are invited and encouraged to request a conference when they feel it is needed.

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Families are encouraged to communicate at any time information relating to shared caregiving issues including routine separations, special needs, food, daily care and home life. Please notify a teacher if your child:

1. Is having special medical treatment or is going to the hospital
2. Is being professionally evaluated
3. Has had an unusual or frightening experience
4. Is going to be out of town for a lengthy time
5. Experiences any situation at the Center or at home which could affect his/her behavior

SPECIAL NEEDS/EARLY INTERVENTION

All children with identified special needs will have a written individual education plan (IEP) or an Individual Family Plan (IFSP), formulated by a team consisting of the child's parents, teachers and director, or other professional as deemed necessary or helpful. If a child enters the WEE Center with either of these already in place, the WEE Center will continue to implement the plan as written and may ask parents for further information to help them as they continue to work individually with the child. Teachers may also create an Individual Action Plan (this is a WEE Center plan) for children to be used solely in the classroom and with strategies that parents may implement at home as well.

FAMILY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

When a parent/caregiver of a child enrolled in the WEE Center has a concern regarding issues at the WEE Center, those concerns should be put in writing and submitted to the Director of the WEE Center. This document must be signed and dated by the parent, provide sufficient detail to explain the specific nature of the concerns, and submitted to the Center Director within five (5) calendar days of the event giving rise to the concern. In most cases, the Center Director will discuss the concerns with the family and conduct an inquiry to determine what, if any, action should be taken.

If the family is dissatisfied with the Center Director's decision on how the concerns are resolved, the parent/caregiver may request that the WEE Committee review the Center Director's decision. This request must be signed and dated by the parent and submitted to the WEE Committee within five (5) calendar days of being notified of the Center Director's decision.

A member of the WEE Committee will review the Center Director's decision. If appropriate, a member of the WEE Committee and the Pastor will meet with the family. The family will be informed of the WEE Committee's determination regarding the Center Director's decision.

FAMILY ISSUES POLICY

In order to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children enrolled at the WEE Center, it is the WEE Center's policy to refrain from participating in any legal or custody disputes regarding children enrolled at the WEE Center.

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BUILDING INSPECTIONS & EMERGENCY PLANS

The WEE Center, in accordance with the Department of the Environment, has been inspected and found free of any asbestos.

The WEE Center has implemented an Emergency Plan (a copy of which is in the WEE Office). Each year families will receive information concerning children's whereabouts in case the WEE Center needs to evacuate the building.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The program has written procedures that outline the health and safety information to be collected from families and to be maintained on file for each child in one central location in the facility. The files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to:

- administrators or teaching staff that have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records,
- the child's parents or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, on request.
- regulatory authorities, on request
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THE WEE COMMITTEE

The WEE Center is a ministry of the Woodbrook Baptist Church and comes under the supervision of the Church's WEE Committee. The duties of the WEE Committee are to:

- Work with the personnel committee in developing job descriptions and in enlisting persons to direct and lead the program.
- Lead in making arrangements to comply with necessary licensing requirements.
- Determine policies and procedures for the operation and administration of the program.
- Organize the involvement of church members and parents in the program.
- Serve as liaison between the program and the Church.
- Assist the Director in developing a workable budget.
- Make regular reports and bring recommendations to the Church concerning the work of the program.
- Conduct evaluation of the work of the Committee and assist with program evaluation when needed.

We look forward to working together with you as partners in your child's education.

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	John S. Ballenger
WEE Center Director	Angela Peterson
WEE Center Assistant Director	Elise DeFilippis

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2023-2024 Calendar*

***subject to change**

Thursday, August 31-----Parent Orientation (7pm – 8:30pm)
Friday, September 1-----Open House for Students (10am – 12pm)
Tuesday, September 5-----First Day of School
October-----Fall Evaluations: “How are we Doing?”
October TBD-----Picture Day: Individual + Class
Friday, October 20-----**Closed: Professional Day**
Week of October 23-----Fall Fun Fest Activities
Thursday, November 2-----**Closed: Student Conferences**
Tuesday, November 21-----Thankful Event
Wednesday, November 22-- Friday, November 24-----**Closed: Thanksgiving Observed**
Wednesday, December 13-----Christmas Program (9:30am)
Friday, December 15-----**Early Dismissal 12 Noon**
Friday, December 15 –Monday, January 1-----**Closed: Christmas Break**
Tuesday, January 2-----School Reopens
Monday, January 8-----2024-2025 Registration
Monday, January 15-----**Closed: Martin Luther King Observed**
Monday, February 19-----**Closed: President’s Day Observed**
Thursday, March 7-----**Closed: Staff Professional Day**
April-----Spring Parent Evaluation of WEE Center
March 25-April-1-----**Closed-Easter/Spring Break**
Tuesday, April 2-----School reopens
April/ Days TBD-----Picture Day: Individual + Class
April/Date TBD-----Family Fun Night/Ice Cream Social
Friday, May 10-----**Closed: Student Conferences**
Monday, May 27-----**Closed: Memorial Day Observed**
Friday, June 14-----**11 a.m.-Pre-K Graduation/12 noon Early Dismissal**

Summer Program Dates TBD

*Closed July 4th and August 3rd (statewide early childhood education conference)