

Zion Weekday Ministries Preschool Parent Handbook 2018-2019

209 North Pike Road
Sarver, PA 16055
(724) 316-6056

www.zionsarver.com

weekdayministries@zionsarver.com

All Checks Payable to Zion Weekday Ministries

Mission

Our mission at Zion is to:

Invite people to know Jesus

Grow those who respond into disciples

Serve ALL people in the name of Christ

While putting into action the fruits of the Spirit:

gentleness, kindness, patience, faithfulness, joy, goodness, self-control and LOVE!

Tuition Scale

Story Time for Twos	\$35/month
Preschool 3	\$95/month for all sessions
Preschool 4	\$115/month
Pre-K	\$ 175/month
Childcare for ages 3-6 and Half day K (South Butler)-	\$150/week or \$40/day
Childcare for ages 1 year to 3 years	\$42/day
Childcare for 6 weeks to 1 year	\$45/day

Before and after school- Freeport & South Butler School Districts

Before OR After ONLY - \$70/week Before AND After- \$90/week

**No additional fees for days off school, cancellations, delays or early dismissals*

Sibling Discounts

5% for second child

10% for third child

Late Fee/NSF Fee

A \$10 late fee will be assessed if your payment is not received by the last day of the month. A \$15 returned check fee will be assessed for any returned checks. This fee covers our bank fees. If you are continuously late in picking up your child from program, you will be charged the late fee as written in your agreement form.

Keystone STARS

We are a Keystone STARS participant. We have chosen to participate in this program in an effort to provide your child with the highest quality program. This is a quality assurance and resource program. We are currently a STAR 4, the highest rating any facility can receive. Quality learning experiences benefit not only the families involved but all community stakeholders, schools, businesses, and residents. In our commitment to Keystone STARS we have also made a commitment to continuous quality improvement. We believe firmly in small subtle changes over time that will create the best environment for your child. In an effort to best achieve this you will be asked to complete program evaluation each year (school year and summer camp).

Registration Policy

You must complete the enrollment packet including: Emergency Contact Form, Agreement Form, and Child Health Report (which will need to be completed by a physician), Ages & Stages evaluation, and Getting to know your child form.

Parent/Child Orientation

It is required that you meet with the teacher in the classroom prior to the first day to both allow the child to get acquainted in the new environment as well as to allow the parent and teacher to review your child's individual needs and your goal for your child in the coming year, as well as to discuss any concerns or question that there may be prior to the first day of care.

What to Bring to Childcare

Under 12 months

- several sets of extra clothes
- Diapers & wipes (one sleeve at a time)
- Bottle and sippy cup
- Formula or breast milk
- Comfort items (pacifier, plush toy, blanket)
- Sleep sack
- Lunch & snacks when transitioning to solid foods

Under 24 months

- A few sets of clothes
- Diapers & wipes (one sleeve at a time)
- Bottles & sippy cup
- Comfort items (pacifier, plush toy, blanket, ect)
- Fitted toddler bed sheet and blanket for nap
- Lunch

Under 36 months should bring

- Extra clothes
- Diapers & wipes, or whatever using for potty training (only one sleeve at a time)
- Sippy cup
- Fitted toddler bed sheet and blanket for nap or nap bed roll
- Lunch

36 months to 60 should bring

- Extra clothes in a Ziploc bag
- Fitted toddler bed sheet and blanket or a nap bed roll for naptime
- Lunch

You will be notified via the MyKidzDay app when your child is running low or needs something additional.

Arrival/Departure

In the interest of safety, all doors will be locked at all times. You will need to ring the bell at the front. The bell has a camera and microphone. We will greet you and a staff member will open the door for each family after ensuring your identity via the app. If you have trouble, please give us a call at 724-316-6056.

Curriculum

Our program provides a mix of child-directed activities to encourage creativity, thinking skills, and authentic problem solving skills. Teacher directed activities prepare students for the next transition and focus on the necessary skills for a jump start to school. We will use the Creative Curriculum to focus on the PA early learning standards through daily activities using language, math, science, physical skills and creative arts along with encouraging personal-social growth and learning while encouraging healthy lifestyles. Appropriate research-based approaches to learning will always be used. We will also focus on a monthly mission project, reaching out to help others as well as learn about the world around us. Each class level has its own goals based on developmental appropriateness. Bible stories will be introduced monthly in the classroom, but Christian values and language will always be used in our classrooms.

Assessment

Assessment drives instruction in our program. In order for our teachers to know what skills and content to teach next we will be evaluating students almost daily in various means. We will use observations and checklist primarily. We currently use Teaching Strategies Gold, an online assessment system. This system allows us to upload data directly from our classrooms via Ipad.

Music and Arts

Art and music education are very important parts of our programs. Our music program features hand bells, rhythm band, and songs. Students will have the opportunity at least once per year to put on a performance for families demonstrating these skills! Art is also a very important area in which we can cross curriculum. We will have an art show at least once each year highlighting our students' favorite pieces.

Outdoor Play

Research shows that children are healthier when they have daily outdoor play time. We will go outside everyday weather permitting. If we cannot go outside, we will have indoor gross motor play. Please dress your child for outside time every day.

Before & After school Care

South Butler will be transported ¼ mile from Zion UMC (438 Bear Creek road) the intersection of Ford Lane, Wetzel Road, and Bear Creek Road.

Freeport will meet the bus at the top of the driveway, under portico.

Each morning kids will enjoy free play in centers and our large motor area. Kids will have breakfast and get ready to leave for school. Each afternoon kids will enjoy some time outside, have a snack (with a few options), have the option of a teacher directed activity (game, craft, story or other adventure), homework time and free play in centers or large motor area until they are picked up for the day.

On scheduled days off school kids will have the opportunity to go on a field trip or other adventure. Some of our adventures include sled ridding, movie day, treasure hunts, or rails-to-trails.

We provide care for early dismissals, delays, and cancellations.

Attendance

Your child's presence is very important each day. Please alert your child's teacher in advance for planned absences. All absences should be emailed please.

Release of Children

Staff will only release to persons listed on Emergency Contact Forms. It is important to keep these documents up to date; you will be asked to update every six months. You will be required to show ID until staff become familiar with pick-up persons. All custody documents should be submitted to director upon enrollment. These will be followed as required by the state. Please alert director to any changes. Staff will NOT release to anyone who appears to be under the influence. Emergency Contacts will be called to transport the child home safely.

Communication

Communication between educators and families is crucial, especially at this early age. Teachers are always available for questions. In an effort to further support communications . It is our policy that conferences take place with at least two staff members or a Weekday Ministries Board representative. So please be patient as it may take a week or so to align schedules for this meeting. This meeting must be made through the director.

Families will be invited to participate on conference per year. These will be scheduled at the time of enrollment and usually take place annually in January/February in the following years.

Meals

We will provide breakfast before 8:00 AM, morning snack, and afternoon snack. We DO NOT provide lunch. You will need to send your child with a packed lunch each day. Lunches will have refrigeration and can be heated.

Discipline Policy

Many methods of classroom management will be used throughout the year. We believe in a positive reinforcement (complimenting the child doing the right things, instead of correcting the one doing the wrong thing) and redirection whenever possible. Stickers and sticker charts for behavior will be used at various times of the year especially when there are specific problems. We can use these to track students' progress to reach a goal. A strike system may be used, in which students will be reminded of a rule or behavior violations three times before utilizing the time out chair. If the time out chair is used, students will have to speak with their parents to explain that they had to be placed in the time out seat and the reason. Occasionally we will use a quiet spot to calm down if emotions or actions are out of control. This is used more often when kids are throwing temper tantrums or having problems sharing or taking turns. At the quiet spot, the teacher will sit with the child and talk them through their behavior and the appropriate responses to problems.

Children in these young years may enter more challenging behaviors such as biting, hitting, lying or difficulty sharing. Teachers will be in communication with you during these difficult times to work with you to resolve these behaviors. Sometimes it is beyond the scope of a classroom teacher to appropriately resolve these behaviors. In such cases, you will be referred to an outside agency (such as LifeSteps) to have your child evaluated for more specialized services. We will continue to work with your family throughout this process. However, should your child's behavior be considered a serious risk to other students, we reserve the right to remove your child from our program until proof of action to resolve the problem can be produced. The steps for managing difficult or serious risk behaviors are as follows:

1. Parent/Teacher meeting to discuss problem behavior
2. Referral of child to outside agency
3. If not action is taken by family (i.e. outside evaluation or assistance), removal of child from program.

Potty Training

It is not necessary that your child is potty trained in order to participate in preschool programs. We have appropriate materials to address these needs. However, parents must provide all diapers, pull-ups and wipes for your child. These items should be sent in your child's book bag daily. We will work with you throughout the process of potty training.

Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their child at any time. Written notice is required. You will be responsible for tuition for at least two weeks after written notice is given. You will be responsible for payment until this written notice is received, even if your child has not been in programming. Our program would be happy to copy all records for transfer to another facility; simply submit your request in writing and we will comply within a week.

Staff Requirements

Our staff consists of highly qualified, safe and reliable individuals. All staff must have an FBI background check, Mandated Reporter clearance, criminal record clearance and a child abuse history clearance. The lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree and at least 2 years experience working with children. Assistant teachers will have at least 30 credit hours in a child related field, along with at least 2 years of experience working with children. As we are a participant in PA Keystone STARS program, all staff must maintain 24-32 hours of professional development each year.

Illnesses

For everyone's safety and health, please keep your child home if they have had the following in the past 24 hours: vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and sore throat, severe coughing, evidence of lice, body rash with fever. Your child may not return until they have been symptom free without OTC medicines for 24 hours.

If your child becomes ill, please alert us. We will post all communicable diseases that children may have been exposed to outside each classroom in an effort to prevent the spread. This posting will include the name of the disease, signs and symptoms and care guidelines.

The parent or guardian is responsible for obtaining a physical from the child's doctor. We will follow the same physical schedule as the school systems, so get an extra copy when you take your child in for their wellness check-up. This must include documentation of immunizations. We are not responsible for the fee associated with the physical forms.

It is important that we have the most up-to-date information for each child. You should notify us in writing with any changes in address, phone number, work place, emergency contact or health information.

We are mandated reporters on child abuse or neglect. Therefore, due to legal requirements we will notify the PA State hotline if there is reasonable cause to suspect physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, or maltreatment of any children enrolled in our programs.

Health and Safety

In all of our best interests, Zion Weekday Ministries has adopted many policies and procedures to maintain a clean and safe facility. The first defense for every individual is proper hand washing. Due to this, we ask that you have your child use the restroom and wash their hands **before** dropping off for preschool. This will help each classroom keep germs out and maintain continuity as preschoolers are on a restroom schedule. Children must wash hands after toileting, before eating, and after playing outside. We encourage children to wash their hands often throughout the day.

For your child's safety, we conduct a monthly site safety checklist, checking over every individual classroom and piece of equipment. In addition to this, we clean restrooms twice daily and classroom sanitation weekly. Any toy that has been in a child's mouth is placed out of children's reach to be cleaned that day. Weekly, all cloth items are taken out of the center to be laundered. All classrooms are vacuumed at least once per day and garbage is removed at the end of each day. All tables and hard surfaces are sanitized with bleach before and after eating.

If your child is injured while in our care, we will follow our procedures for care. If there is a mark that lasts longer than 20 minutes, we will alert you of the injury. You will receive a "boo-boo" report that you will need to sign and return. If your child is hit in the head we will call to alert you, even if there is no mark or strange behavior. We log all injuries and illnesses to be vigilant of equipment or areas that may be a safety risk.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a severe emergency of accident, we will:

1. Administer first aid
2. Call emergency medical transportation
3. Contact parent and child's doctor

Emergency Plans

According to PA State regulations, the center has planned for emergency situations should they arise. Out of concern for safety of students and staff, not all plans will be released to the public. However, should there be a situation in which we need to leave the building; our meeting spot is located at the playground area. In the event that children are relocated, you will be contacted as early as possible using a phone tree system. All students and staff will be relocated to Zion UMC, 438 Bear Creek Road, Sarver (see map attached). In the event of a snow storm, you should look on WPXI or the website for information. All other weather emergencies will be handled with care and phone alerts to parents as necessary. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstances of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- *Immediate Evacuation:* Students are evacuated to a safe area on the ground of the facility in the event of a fire, etc

- *In-place Sheltering*: Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- *Evacuation*: Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to a relocation facility.
 - And Emergency Relocation Facility A at Zion United Methodist Church located at 438 Bear Creek Road.

If it ever becomes necessary to relocate, a sign will be posted on the door stating which facility we have relocated to.

If you're not sure how to get there, please ask for directions before there is an emergency.

- *Modified Operation*: May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children, but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

We will keep families updated about emergency situations via the MyKidzDay app notifications.

We ask that you not call during an emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information.

I realize that emergency circumstances may require changes to your plans, but I urge you to not attempt to make different arrangements if at all possible. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, I ask your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures, contact Amy Shick, Director.

Weekday Ministries Advisory Committee

All Zion Weekday Ministries programs are governed by a board that meets quarterly at 7:00 pm in Room 11. The board consists of Zion United Methodist Church leadership: pastors, director of education, board of trustees chair person, Administrative Board chair person and Council on Ministries chair person. The board also maintains a parent representative of each program.

The board is designed to represent the needs and desires of the church, balanced by the needs and desires of the families using the program. Board parents serve a 2 year term. If you are interested in serving on the board, speak with the director for further information.

Any concerns regarding programming that cannot be resolved first by speaking directly with classroom teachers or the director may be taken to the board. This must be done first in a letter to the board (signed and dated), then the board will meet with concerned parent/guardian during the first 20 minutes of the meeting.

Transition

Each year of preschool will begin with an orientation meeting with the director and/or preschool teacher to begin the transition process.