

The Learning Tree



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Fairview United Methodist Church
2508 Old Niles Ferry Road
Maryville, TN 37803
(865) 983-9066

learningtreeps@gmail.com

Director, Christy Wheeler
Revised February 2023

The Fruit of the Spirit

“The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 5:22

August – Kindness

September – Kindness

October – Gentleness

November – Faith

December – Joy

January – Self Control

February – Love

March – Peace

April –Patience

May - Goodness

WELCOME!

PURPOSE STATEMENT

At The Learning Tree, we are committed to academically preparing your child with kindergarten readiness skills while faithfully emphasizing Christian principles.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Learning Tree is a ministry to support families. Our program provides children with structured activities to meet their physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs, as well as artistic development in children through their own activity and discovery.

Children are encouraged to be creative; to work independently; to follow directions in order to complete a task; and to develop language and listening skills. These are goals, which help children establish a strong sense of self-worth and confidence. Our staff strives to nurture social development, as children learn to share, take turns, and enjoy the companionship of others. They observe God's creations to find the beauty in their world and in themselves.

OUR PROGRAM

The Learning Tree provides a balanced early childhood experience for children two years of age through five years of age by AUGUST 15th (exceptions may be made for birthdates up to September 30th on a child-to-child basis) Classes are divided by chronological age according to enrollment. We are staffed according to NAEYC guidelines. We use a Christian based curriculum that incorporates the skills necessary for beginning Kindergarten, as well as learning activities with age-appropriate Bible emphasis.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesdays & Thursdays OR Mondays & Wednesdays
9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

**Note: After 2:00, a late fee of \$5.00 will be charged for each additional 15 minutes*

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday 8:15 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

*Note: If you are unable to reach the director at 983-9066 during the times listed above, you may send an email to learningtreeps@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

Communication with classroom teachers will be primarily through electronic means. Your child's teacher will follow up with detailed information on this. The LTP administration will communicate through Class Dojo, email, and our Facebook page.

ENROLLMENT & WITHDRAWAL

In House Registration begins mid-February with current enrollment and families. Open registration follows using a first come/first serve basis. Children are considered enrolled for an entire school year (August through May). Registration is completed when the registration form is returned with the \$50.00 non-refundable fee. (\$50 for the first child and \$25 for children thereafter; not to exceed \$100/family)

We realize that certain circumstances arise making it necessary to withdraw your child from preschool. However, we do ask for a two-week notice to be given.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Fairview United Methodist Church and The Learning Tree do not discriminate against any student based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or other school-administered programs.

RECORDS

Although we are not state licensed, we do follow as many guidelines as possible. Therefore, since the Tennessee Department of Human Services requires health and emergency information on all children enrolled in preschool, we ask for a copy of your child's immunization record from your health care provider. Parents are responsible for completing all information on the registration form. It is also the parent's responsibility to update information on their child's records when changes occur.

Forms that are required to be complete are:

- Completed registration form
- Immunization record
- LTP Release Form including: receipt of Parent Handbook
knowledge of no state licensure
permission to photograph
pickup release and emergency contact information

*Note: If parents are divorced or separated, we will need to have a court certified copy of the custody arrangement for your child's file.

TUITION AND FEES

An annual registration fee of \$50.00 per child, which is non-refundable, is required.

Yearly tuition for one child is \$1800.00. This is divided up into monthly payments of \$180.00. (August through May - 10 months) Each additional child from the same family will receive a discount.

A special activity fee of \$40.00 per child (\$50 for the 4s and 5s classes) is required at the beginning of the school year to cover various parties/supplemental activities for the children.

Tuition is due during the first week of each month.

We are asking you to make payments this school year through an app titled: **“PushPay”** You may download the app, create a login and search for “Learning Tree Preschool” in Maryville. You will need to scroll down to make your donation to “LTP tuition”, “special event fee” or “fundraising”.

A \$5.00 per week late fee will be charged for all overdue accounts unless prior arrangements are made with the director.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Learning Tree and Fairview United Methodist Church may offer limited scholarships each school year. Application forms are available in the preschool office.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

SCHOOL YEAR

Our program operates from August through May. Breaks are scheduled in the Fall, Christmas, and Spring.

A current calendar is available online. Monthly newsletters will also include calendar information. Parents are encouraged to read this information since this is our best way of communicating to all parents collectively. Special activity information will also be communicated through Class Dojo and individual classrooms.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Learning Tree will follow the Blount County School’s policy for closings. If Blount County Schools are called off due to inclement weather or sickness, we will also be closed. We will inform through Class Dojo and Facebook in the case of a delay. School days missed in the LTP schedule because Blount County Schools have closed will not be made up or refunded.

*Note: Due to extenuating circumstances, the preschool calendar dates may change at the discretion of the Director and the Preschool Advisory Council. Every effort will be made to notify parents as far in advance as possible.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Your child is the most important person to consider as the day begins and ends. Under NO circumstances should any child be dropped off without an adult escort to the room. Drop off time is no earlier than 8:50 a.m. Classes will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Parents will not enter the building for drop off and will drop off at each outside classroom door in the morning.

Please leave the spaces closest to the building available for families who have younger children in their car so that they can comfortably walk their child to the classroom door. Hand sanitizer or washing hands will occur immediately upon arrival. Any student with a temperature of 99.5 degrees or above will not be permitted in the building.

Children will need to be signed in daily. A contact number for the day and the person designated to pick up the child must be included. If arrangements should change for the day, please call, and notify the director. Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the registration form without prior communication with the director. We will ask for identification in special circumstances.

For the security of your children, all outside doors will be locked after arrival time. Late arrivals must enter through the main hallway doors under the awning.

Parents will park and come to the back door of the classroom to get their child each day. Parents will initial that the child has been dismissed. Departure time is no earlier than 1:50 and all children MUST be picked up no later than 2:00. Please be courteous of our staff's personal time and understand that late fees will be enforced.

*If you need to speak to the director or to your child's teacher, please wait until the remaining children have been dismissed. Thank you for considering everyone's time and safety.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING

Children will be participating in active play during the day. Play clothes are best since we often work with glue, paint, and other messy materials. Although we make every effort to preserve clothing, sometimes paint will get on the children's clothes. Our paint is washable and should come out of clothing and off your child with soap and water.

It is also recommended that you send your child in clothes he/she can manage by himself/herself. More complicated clothing is difficult for them to handle when going to the restroom.

*Note: Please try to keep in mind any weather and/or temperature changes and dress your child accordingly, since we may play outdoors. If the temperature is above 40 degrees, we are likely to go outside.

LABELING

Please put your child's name on everything your child brings to school, (i.e., extra clothing, coats/jackets, diaper bags, school bags, food, etc.). Use a laundry pen or permanent marker.

EXTRA CLOTHING

All children should have a complete change of clothing including socks, underwear, shirt and pants for use in case of accidents. These can be put in your child's school bags and replaced easily for seasonal and/or growth changes.

*Note: Bathroom breaks are scheduled at least 2 times per day. However, children may ask to use the bathroom at any time during the day. We feel a child is toilet trained when they can verbally express their need for themselves. If your child cannot express him/herself by the age of 3, they cannot attend the program.

Children not yet toilet trained need to have enough diapers and wipes for the day.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

Due to our limited storage space and the difficulty of managing bulky backpacks, children will be provided with a school bag at Open House or on the first day of school. They may use this bag daily.

TOYS & PERSONAL ITEMS

We ask that the children leave special toys or personal items at home. The children often have trouble sharing special things, and there is always the chance of something getting broken or lost. If your child needs a special item to rest with, it will need to be kept in their school bag until rest time.

SNACK

Snacks will be provided to classrooms in one of two ways depending on the teacher's preference. Some will have parents provide snacks individually for each child. Please mark your child's snack with his/her name. In the case of a classroom allowing parents to take turns bringing snack for the entire class, the snack item must be purchased pre-packaged in individually sealed portions. Any children with specific allergies may speak to the lead teacher in the classroom about individual arrangements for snack. Please note the number of children in your child's class and pay attention to any allergy alerts!

LUNCH

Each child will need to bring his/her own lunch, including a drink. **Please be aware that nut products are also not permitted in individual lunches.** Please do not send foods that need to be heated or refrigerated. An insulated lunch bag with an ice pack is sufficient to keep food and/or drink cold.

**Note: Please make sure your child's teacher is aware of any food restrictions or allergies! These also need to be noted on the registration form.*

PROGRAM POLICIES

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

Children who display signs of illness should be kept at home, rather than running the risk of bringing them to school to infect others. Our staff is not permitted to administer medication except in the case of an Epi-pen or Benadryl for a life-threatening situation. If your child has a special need, please talk to the director to work out the best solution.

ILLNESS POLICY

This policy has been designed to attend to the needs of the sick child, protect well children, satisfy state regulations, and accommodate parents to the best extent possible.

These guidelines have been developed to help parents better understand when their child may or may not attend the preschool. They follow those developed for preschools by the Tennessee Department of Human Services and the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, GA.

Keep your child home if he/she is experiencing one or more of the following:

- Oral or rectal temperature ABOVE 99.5°
- Sore throat with fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Impetigo
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Head lice (until treated and nits removed)
- When known to have an illness readily communicated to children or staff
- When advised by a doctor to remain isolated
- Yellow or green discharge from nose, WITH OR WITHOUT FEVER

****A child who has a fever of 99.5° or above should remain home fever free unmedicated for 48 hours before returning to The Learning Tree.**

COVID -19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

If your **CHILD** tests positive for Covid-19 it must be reported to The Learning Tree immediately. The child enrolled will be required to stay home for 5 days from the first day of symptoms and may only return after that point if symptom free.

INJURY POLICY

We make every effort to make sure the children are safe while in our care. Despite our best efforts, injuries may occur, just as they sometimes do at home. Minor injuries, such as scrapes, bruises, and small cuts, can be treated at the preschool. If we administer first aid to your child, we will inform you of the method we used. If your child is injured and requires professional care, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the person(s) you have designated on the registration form for emergency care.

*Note: Staff members are trained bi-annually in First Aid/CPR by a qualified trainer.

POLICY ON DISCIPLINE

At The Learning Tree we view discipline as a positive learning experience, and handle such situations in a loving, gentle way. Rules for behavior are clear and developmentally appropriate and are frequently explained to the children.

Reinforcing positive behavior develops a child's self-esteem, sense of responsibility, and cooperation. Children learn to be responsible for their behaviors. Consequences are administered in order and according to the number of times a rule is broken. If a behavior is harmful to that child or to other children, the teacher may find it necessary to begin with the second consequence. Consequences are as follows:

1st Verbal Warning (teacher talks privately with the child and a redirection of choices is offered, if available)

2nd Removal from situation

3rd "Sit and Watch" area for child to observe (one minute per year of age)

4th Parent notification

5th Parent/Director Conference

***If the inappropriate behavior persists after these options are exhausted, dismissal from our program will result.**

POLICY ON TOILET TRAINING

We understand that accidents will happen. However, a child that is not toilet trained by the age of 3 will not be admitted into the program.

POLICY FOR REPORTING GRIEVANCES

Parents are asked to address their concerns first with the teacher. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, parents are asked to bring their concern to the director.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Special events will be scheduled in each classroom. Details will come from your classroom teacher and in newsletters as the school year progresses.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our policies and procedures may change. We will attempt to keep everyone updated with the most current information as it occurs. You will receive all policy changes in writing, in Class Dojo or via email.

**Calendar of Special Events
2023-2024**

September 27/28 – Tailgate Party

October 25/ 26 – Dress Up Day

November 8/9– First Responder’s Parade

November 22 /23 – Thanksgiving Feasts

December 8– Christmas in Bethlehem (Friday)

December 6-14– Fall Art Fundraiser*

December 13/14 – Early Dismissal **

January 24 /25 – Snow Day

February 6 –15 – In House Registration

February 14 /15 – Valentine’s Celebration

March 6/7 – Dr. Seuss Day

March 20-28– Spring Art Fundraiser*

March 27/28 – Classroom Easter Celebration

May 13/14 – Graduation (11:30 dismissal)**

***FUNDRAISERS**

**** SPECIAL SCHEDULE – dismissal at 11:30am**

