



Established 1947

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Revised 8/2024

**The Children's Circle
Myers Park United Methodist Church
1501 Queens Road
Charlotte, NC 28207
www.thechildrenscircle.org**

Children's Circle Office: 704-376-5208

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Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Tax ID # 56-0529960

Statement of Philosophy and Purpose

The Children's Circle is a ministry of Myers Park United Methodist Church. Our purpose is to develop a community that reflects Christ's presence in our daily thoughts, words, and actions. We will help each child grow through the love of Christ.

Mission Statement

The Children's Circle is a safe, nurturing child-centered environment. It is a place where parents and teachers build partnerships to empower children to develop spiritually, physically, socially and intellectually

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Our curriculum is designed to encourage children to develop to their maximum potential.

Opportunities for the child to develop SPIRITUALLY through...the nurture of loving guidance of adults using the Bible as a source of telling the stories and music of faith and Christian teachings, daily prayers and blessings, communicating God's love in verbal ways through monthly **Faith** themes, feeling at home in the church, visits with the church staff in the chapel, awareness of God in nature, a growing realization of God's love from others.

Opportunities for the child to develop SOCIALLY and EMOTIONALLY will be provided in a safe, nurturing environment that will facilitate...personal uniqueness, inclusiveness, resilience, and adaptability. Through play each child will begin to develop communication and executive function skills. Preschool will give each child the opportunity to learn to navigate a group experience in a structured environment.

Opportunities for the child to develop COGNITIVELY through...developmentally appropriate teaching methods which encourage inquiry, experimentation and discovery. The classroom and outdoor environments will provide opportunities to learn skills and facts; stories, finger plays, poems, nursery rhymes and music which naturally introduce letters, numbers, shapes and sizes. Teacher interactions will encourage children to think, reason, question, experiment and analyze. Sensory and motor activities; interest centers and activities will encourage creativity and self-expression.

Opportunities for the child to develop PHYSICALLY through...indoor and outdoor activities to develop large muscular control, coordination and balance; music and movement; use of manipulatives and learning centers that encourage use of small motor muscles; lessons on self-awareness, health, nutrition, wellness and safety.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

ADVISORY BOARD - The Children's Circle Board advises preschool leadership on matters of policy, operations, classroom offerings, and budget. This leadership group meets monthly. Board is composed of 10-14 voting members who are members of Myers Park UMC and/or the preschool community. Members are invited to join the board by the preschool director. Board members are asked to submit suggestions for new members each spring. Members usually serve a three-year term, according to the school calendar. Other members include TCC Director, TCC Assistant Director, Clergy members, Children's Ministries Liaison and a Teacher Representative.

Board members agree to serve by signing a pledge of professionalism. They commit to serving with a positive attitude, loyalty, confidentiality, support and advocacy for the preschool and delivering positive, united messaging to the church and preschool community.

STAFF - The Preschool Director and Assistant Director lead the teaching staff in day to day operations of the school. Each class will have 2 teachers. Teaching teams may be co-teachers or lead/assistant teacher teams. As the budget allows there may also be floaters and enrichment teachers (art, literacy, music, science, etc.) on staff.

PARENT COUNCIL - The Children's Circle Parent Council is the volunteer support body for the preschool. The council's leadership consists of two volunteers who serve as co-chairpersons. Each co-chair serves a 2 year term, plus a third year on as an at-large board member. These terms will stagger so that each co-chair will serve as 1st year and then lead chair. They will provide guidance and leadership for volunteers serving on a variety of subcommittees. The goal of the Parent Council is to actively involve parents in the CC community in a meaningful way.

- **PARENT VOLUNTEERS** - Parents are encouraged to become involved. Opportunities include; room parents, volunteering in the classroom, missions and outreach, event planning, fundraising, and a variety of committees that provide service to our preschool. Committees are determined depending on the needs of the preschool by the Parent Council, TCC Board and Director.
- **ROOM PARENTS** - Room Parents serve in each classroom to assist teachers in various ways throughout the year. They serve as the liaison between classroom teachers, Parent Council, TCC Board and classroom families. They are organized by the Parent Council.

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

ADMISSION POLICY - The Children's Circle preschool admits children without regard to race, color, creed, sex or national origin.

STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO - Class size is determined by the child's developmental age, room size and required square footage recommended by NAEYC.

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT INFORMATION - Registration takes place each January/February. Informational meetings are held for interested families prior to the enrollment deadline.

Placement will be offered in this order of priority;

- Currently enrolled students/Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Church members who are not currently enrolled
- Families from the community

A lottery is held for the various class options, if necessary.

CLASS PLACEMENT - Class placement is a careful and thoughtful process. Individual needs, special needs, boy/girl ratio, birthdates and the developmental age and stage of each child are considered. TCC staff also makes observations and recommendations for consideration of class placement. Based on these important criteria, parents' requests for classes and specific teachers cannot be accepted.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY - The Children's Circle promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children based on three primary goals.

1. Our first priority is to keep everyone safe.
2. We strive to find a solution to the current situation.
3. We attempt to help the child process feelings, recognize consequences, explore alternative solutions and outcomes, and develop internal self-control.

To accomplish these goals, we use the following techniques on a daily basis:

- **Prevention** - A well-designed and well-equipped classroom tailored to the developmental level of the children prevents frustration, interruption, and hazards. It offers privacy, independence, and easy adult supervision. In addition, the daily routine provides enough time for play, a sense of security, limited waiting, and age appropriate transitions.
- **Positive Redirection** - The basic procedure used in all classrooms is positive redirection, which is redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative, using positive verbal reinforcement.
- **Modeling** - Teacher-modeled appropriate behavior and communication, as well as positive peer models, are provided to help children learn appropriate behavior.
- **Limit Setting** - Teachers set clear, simple rules that vary according to the developmental level of the children. In establishing rules, each teacher follows these guidelines:
 1. Tell children what they are to do in a positive tone.
 2. Post guidelines (pictures for young children) prominently throughout the classroom for children, parents, and staff.
 3. Explain guidelines to children and follow up consistently.
- **Problem Solving** - Teachers appeal to the preschooler's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences and asking questions to encourage problem-solving. Teachers help children identify their needs, feelings, causes, alternatives, and choices.
- **Managing Behavior** - In cases of conflict between two or more children, it is important to help the children verbally solve the conflict. In an effort to help a child to regain composure and ensure the safety of other children, a child may be removed from the activity for a time of renewal, and/or may be guided to another activity. In some cases it may be necessary for a child to spend a short time in the preschool office for a chance to process emotions and reset.
- **Physical/Emotional Harm** - In an effort to make TCC a safe environment for all, parents may be called to pick up children

early who harm others physically or make others feel unsafe. Parents are expected to report to the preschool office immediately in this instance.

PROCEDURES FOR ONGOING PROBLEM BEHAVIORS - It is the policy of the Children’s Circle that physical punishment or abusive language will never be used for any reason in the classroom, or anywhere on the church premises. In the event of persistent, disruptive or endangering behaviors toward staff or children, the following procedures will take place:

1. Staff members will notify the Director immediately of ongoing problem behavior, which warrants further observation.
2. Staff will maintain documentation of their observations of any behavior incident. This will provide valuable information needed to plan a strategy for intervention. The director will be informed of all ongoing documentation.
3. Staff will work with the family to develop the most reliable plan for regular communication of documented incidents and strategies for intervention.
4. If necessary, the director and staff will discuss the particular ongoing concern of the child’s behavior, make further recommendations to parents for evaluation, and/or evaluate the program’s ability to continue to meet the needs of the child.

The Children’s Circle reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child who, after a reasonable time, cannot adjust or whose behavior consistently disrupts the physical and learning needs of the other children. Every effort is made to work with each child’s individual needs and to effectively communicate with parents regarding a potential problem situation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

IMMUNIZATION FORM - A current immunization form and medical report completed by a physician must be submitted by August 15. No exceptions. State law requires the verification of immunizations of all children enrolled. Immunization forms must be updated and kept current during the school year in order for a child to remain in school. All children are required to comply with the NC state immunization recommendations. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html> Immunizations are required for enrollment at The Children’s Circle. No exemptions.

- A child must be kept at home if he/she is not well enough to play outside or shows any of the following symptoms: fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, undiagnosed rash, boil, persistent cough, congestion, sore throat, non-clear runny nose**, “pink eye”, head lice, or any contagious disease. A child must remain at home for 24 hours AFTER the symptoms subside before returning to school. Teachers (with the approval of the Director) may refuse to accept children who exhibit any of the symptoms named above. **If your child suffers from allergies that cause a non-clear runny nose, but is otherwise well enough to come to school, we require a note to that effect from your pediatrician before he/she can attend school.
- If a child becomes sick at school, parents will be contacted immediately. The decision to exclude a child from preschool will be based on the following:
 - Illness prevents the child from participating in activities that the facility routinely offers for well children.
 - Illness requires more care than the staff is able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children.

Keeping the child in care poses an increased risk to others with whom the child comes in contact.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY - The Director must be informed at once if a child contracts or has been exposed to a communicable disease. Since the risk of contracting an infectious disease in any school community exists, the Children’s Circle recognizes the need to guard against any health and safety threat to the school community.

- Information about a child’s condition will not be disclosed to others except as authorized in writing by the parents or legal guardians. However, a notification may be sent home informing parents that their child has been exposed to an infectious disease.
- Written authorization may be requested from the parents, if in the Director’s opinion, such information is necessary for staff to properly care for the child and to protect other children from any health risks.
- If the Director is informed or has a reasonable basis for believing that a child has or is a carrier of a communicable disease, but has no information on file, information may be requested from the parents and a medical evaluation of the child is required at the parents’ expense.

NOTE: The Children’s Circle may at its discretion modify or add to this policy depending upon the circumstances of an individual situation or as scientific knowledge becomes available. If necessary, the Advisory Board will consider the extent of a threat to the school community and make recommendations to eliminate or reduce any health risk.

NOTE: The TCC staff will not administer medication at preschool unless a Special Care Plan is in place. Parents are asked to administer any prescribed medication at home.

ALLERGY RESPONSE POLICY

The Children's Circle seeks to continue to maintain a safe environment for all children enrolled in our program. The following allergy response policy has been developed by the TCC advisory board to acknowledge and respond to the wide variety of allergic reactions possible within the context of the school setting.

Responsibilities of the Parents/Physicians

Before the child enters school.....

1. Notify the school of the child's allergies.
2. Work with the school staff to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs at school.
3. Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed and signed by the child's physician, including the TCC Allergy Action Plan and Allergy Alert Form with photo of child attached.
4. Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
5. Educate the child as developmentally appropriate in self-management of their particular allergy including:
 - a. Safe and unsafe foods
 - b. Strategies for avoiding exposure to allergen
 - c. Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - d. How and when to tell an adult if they are having an allergy related problem
6. Provide emergency contact information.
7. Provide as complete a list as possible of unacceptable foods, including brand names, as per the child's specific allergy.
8. Provide as complete a list as possible of acceptable foods, including brand names, as per the child's specific allergy.
9. Throughout the year, provide appropriate or alternative snacks for your child during class events/celebrations/parties.

Responsibilities of the School

1. Review the child's health records submitted by parents and physicians.
2. Assure that all staff who interact with the child on a regular basis;
 - a. Understand a variety of childhood allergies
 - b. Can recognize allergic reactions/symptoms
 - c. Know what to do in an emergency. (Note: Appropriate actions could be slightly different for each child.)
 - d. Work with staff to protect (as possible) the allergic child's environment.
3. Practice the Allergy Response Action Plan before an allergic reaction occurs to assure the effectiveness of the plan.
4. Be sure that an emergency kit is available that contains a physician's standing order for epinephrine (or other prescribed medication) and that the kit is properly stored.
5. Be prepared to handle a reaction and assure that there is a staff member available who is trained to administer medication during the school day regardless of time or location.
6. Be sure information about the child is located where substitute teachers can easily locate it.

Responsibilities of the Child

(As Age and Developmentally Appropriate)

1. Should not share or trade food with others.
2. Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain an allergen.
3. Should be proactive in the care and management of his/her particular allergy and reactions, as developmentally able.
4. Should notify an adult immediately if he/she begins to experience an allergic reaction.

EPIPEN POLICY

TCC requires 2 EpiPens and complete instructions for administering them. For your child's safety, the EpiPens and forms must be turned in by the first day of school. These will be returned at the end of the year.

RELEASE FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Parents must sign an emergency release form in order for us to provide their child's optimum care while at school. The school will make every reasonable effort to contact a parent and the physician named on the emergency release form. In the event that an injury or illness does not appear serious but first aid/medical treatment is deemed necessary, treatment will be given by the school. In the event an injury or illness appears serious and medical treatment is deemed necessary, paramedics will be contacted immediately. The paramedics will decide whether they can administer treatment at the school or whether the child should be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency care. Should this be necessary, the paramedics and/or hospital to which the child is taken will give emergency treatment. Parents will be responsible for charges.

INCIDENT REPORT

When a child is injured at school a copy of the Incident Report will be sent home that day. A copy will be kept on file in the preschool office and the church's business office.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with diagnosed developmental disabilities or other health impairments will be considered for enrollment. Factors affecting acceptance will be; the appropriateness of placement, the ability of staff to assist with special needs, the appropriateness of the equipment, and the total number of children with special needs enrolled. Each child will be considered individually. A trial period for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program and its benefit to the child will be negotiated at the time of application.

If a currently enrolled student receives a diagnosis regarding a developmental disability during the school year, the Director, parents, and teachers will discuss a plan to best provide support for the child. This plan will include one-on-one support and accommodations funded by the family that will allow TCC to best meet the needs of the student, his or her teachers and the classroom.

A Special Care Plan in conjunction with the child's health care provider will be required to assist the staff in better understanding the child's needs.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools are canceled for inclement weather, The Children's Circle is closed. In rare cases and only after the first day of CMS closure, TCC may choose to open. This can only occur if we have adequate staffing. In those cases, you will be contacted by your child's teachers.

When CMS is on a one or two hour delay, TCC will begin at 10:00 a.m. Regular dismissal time will be observed on those days.

If the church is closed or makes the decision to open offices later than 10:00 AM, then TCC will be closed regardless of what decision CMS makes. Days missed due to inclement weather will not be made up.

In the event of inclement weather, TCC does not post separately on news outlets, so families should watch for CMS postings. If the church is closed and CMS is not closed, you will be contacted by your child's teacher.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills, Severe Weather, and Shelter in Place drills are held throughout the school year in order to prepare staff and teach children what to do in case of such an emergency.

GRIEVANCE POLICY–Procedure for reporting concerns

Communication is very important in order to address problems or concerns with the program or a staff member. If a concern exists involving issues related to the classroom:

1. Families are asked to contact the classroom teacher as the first course of action whenever appropriate.
2. If the teacher cannot solve the problem, or if you are not satisfied, you are asked to contact the TCC Director, Laura Barksdale at lbarksdale@mpumc.org.
3. Your final appeal will be to contact the Chairperson of the TCC Advisory Board.
4. When necessary, a subcommittee of the board will be appointed to assist with the resolution of the concern.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information is kept in the preschool office. *ProCare* allows us to keep contact information on a secure web server. We do not share contact information without your permission.

TUITION PAYMENT/POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Tuition is based on the total annual cost of the program. These costs include items such as staff salaries, playground equipment, educational materials, and supplies/equipment for the classrooms. In addition to instruction time, teachers are paid for planning and staff development training days throughout the year. Tuition may be paid in full at the beginning of the year, or anytime during the school year. In order to facilitate

payments for parents, we have set a monthly fee schedule over the nine-month period. No refunds or adjustments are made for illness, school holidays, teacher workdays, inclement weather/snow days, family vacations, etc.

AUTOMATIC DRAFT - Tuition payments may be made by automatic draft from a checking or savings account through Tuition Express.

PAYING BY CHECK – Please make checks payable to MPUMC and denote TCC Tuition in the memo line. Payments may be mailed to the church, or placed in the locked mailbox labeled **TUITION** outside the Children’s Circle office.

Note: Checks may not be attached to book bags.

Our payment schedule requires that September’s tuition be due by August 1st. October tuition payment is due September 1st and so forth for the remainder of the school year.

REFUNDS/WITHDRAWALS

Tuition payments are non-refundable and non-transferable, except in a situation where the family is relocating out of the City of Charlotte.

Exception: March, April and May tuition prepayments are NON-REFUNDABLE for Transitional Kindergarten (Fives). May tuition prepayment is NON-REFUNDABLE for all ages. If it becomes necessary to withdraw a child from the program during the school year for any reason, families must give a 30 day written notice of the date of the withdrawal to the Director.

DELINQUENT PAYMENTS/ACCOUNTS

Payments received after the 5th of the month are considered delinquent. **A late fee of \$25 will be charged to accounts for which tuition has not been received or postmarked by the end of the school day (1:00 p.m.) on the 5th of each month.**

- ❖ **Delinquent accounts will not be carried beyond 30 days, unless previous arrangements have been made with the preschool office, and the student(s) will be not allowed to continue in the CC program.** No student will be enrolled or registered for a subsequent school year if any delinquency in tuition

RETURNED CHECKS

A service charge of \$25 will be charged for any returned checks.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Limited funding for financial assistance is available for students who qualify on the basis of need. An application must be submitted to the Director to be reviewed by the Children’s Circle Financial Assistance Committee for consideration.

INFORMATION

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Open communication between parents and staff is essential. Your child will benefit from parent/teacher communication. Avenues of communication provided by the school include:

- www.thechildrenscircle.org - Our preschool website.
- **“TCC Breeze”** – Our school-wide monthly newsletter is available on our website.
- **Class newsletters/calendars/Procure** – Teachers communicate in a variety of ways with parents. Parents should also check book bags for important classroom communication.
- **Conferences** – Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled each year for parents of 3, 4 and 5-year-olds. All parents should feel free to contact their child’s teacher as needed.
- **Phone Visits/ Written Communication** - The staff will actively communicate with families through monthly calendars, newsletters, Procure and/or “good news” notes about each child. They will also notify parents by phone or in writing regarding any situation that needs attention. Parents should keep the staff informed of any particular issues or concerns.
- **Children’s Circle Information Bulletin Board** - Monthly newsletters, flyers and other important information will be posted on TCC Information Board outside the Children’s Circle office.
- **Office Hours** – The Children’s Circle office hours are M-F from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. (704-376-5208)

PARENTS VISITING AND OBSERVING

Parents are welcome to visit their child’s classroom to interact with and observe their child. However, it is often best to wait until after the first two weeks of school to avoid upsetting children who are still adjusting to separating from their parents. Check with your child’s teacher for the best time to visit. Parents are also invited to have lunch with their children. Please make arrangements with the classroom teacher in advance.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Special books, or “treasures” found in nature are welcomed items to share with the class. Guns and war toys are not appropriate. Please leave valuable items at home as they may get lost or broken, which could be very upsetting to your child.

CLOTHING/PERSONAL BELONGINGS FOR CHILDREN

ALL clothing should be labeled with each child’s name. **Children should wear washable clothing to school each day.** “Messy” activities using a variety of art materials are offered to children in order to create and explore. Children are encouraged to wear smocks however, the paint may get on clothing. Tennis shoes, rubber-soled and closed-toed shoes are recommended for play, which promotes safety while playing on the playground equipment. Children should wear appropriate clothing for outside play. Each child should have a full change of seasonally appropriate clothing available at school throughout the year.

LUNCHES FROM HOME

Children bring lunch from home to eat at school each day. Label lunch boxes and containers to avoid confusion at meal time.

- Cold packs must be placed in the lunch box daily to maintain adequate temperature and prevent contamination of food. It is recommended that lunches be packed in divided containers and insulated lunch boxes.
- Please provide a suitable drinking container for your child.
- Inform your child’s teacher of any food related allergies.
- Healthy lunches and snacks are encouraged for good nutrition.
 - NC Nutritional Requirements for Children - Lunch should consist of 4 components; milk/*dairy alternative*, 2 or more fruits/vegetables, meat/*protein alternative*, bread/*alternative*
- Please do not send hot dogs (whole or sliced), whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, a chunk of raw carrots, or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. (NAEYC Standard 5B14)
- Your child’s teacher will make you aware of the allergies in the classroom.

CLASS CELEBRATIONS

The Room Parent will coordinate with the classroom teacher to plan classroom celebrations. Please keep school parties **SIMPLE**. Arrangements for younger siblings must be made for these celebrations, unless otherwise directed by the classroom teacher.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

For birthday celebrations parents are welcome to send or bring a very **SIMPLE** snack for their child to share with the class. Please check with your child’s teacher regarding appropriate snacks and times to celebrate.

NO PARTY FAVORS, INCLUDING BALLOONS, PLEASE!!!

NOTE: NC CHILDCARE RULE .0901 - ” If food will be served to other children, such as a birthday cake, cupcakes, cookies for a party, it must come from an approved source such as local bakery, grocery store, prepared on site by the center, or prepackaged for retail sale.”

Special Note: Party invitations distributed at school must include all classmates. Otherwise, party invitations must be sent from home.

FIELD TRIPS

TCC has opted to have only in-house field trips. (In the rare case that we take an outside field; parents would need to be approved as drivers, and each parent would need to sign a permission trip.)

CHAPEL

Fellowship, singing and prayer will be offered once or twice a month for the 3’s, 4’s, and 5’s in Francis Chapel. Members of the Myers Park UMC and TCC staff will offer age-appropriate stories and songs. Chapel visits will coordinate with our “Faith” themes. An offering of non-perishable items may be collected to be donated to a local mission.

CHILDREN’S LIBRARY

Preschool classes use the Children’s Library throughout the week. Older children check out books to take home. Classes also visit the library for

special story times and puppet shows.

BOOK BAGS/BACKPACKS/BAG TAGS

Children are required to bring a book bag/backpack to school each day. Please make sure it is large enough to hold a lunchbox, water bottle, and clothing. All messages, notes, artwork etc. will be sent home in the bag each day. Parents should check the bags each day for notes and other information. Teachers will check the bags each morning for communication from home. A bag tag will be placed on the outside of the bag with the child's carpool number.

FAMILY and PARENT EVENTS

OPEN HOUSE

Before the official "first day" of school, your classroom teacher will tell you the hours and dates of Open House will provide an opportunity for parents to bring their children to school for a short classroom visit.

PARENT ORIENTATION NIGHT

A few weeks after school has begun, parents are invited to come to a "Parent Only" event to learn more about their child's preschool experience and to provide time for parent education.

FAMILY NIGHT

The Parent Council Family Events Committee plans fun events throughout the year for the entire family to enjoy.

ART CRAWL

In the winter, parents are invited to an evening of fellowship with the staff, The Children's Circle Board and the Parent Council to celebrate learning and creativity with a stroll through our TCC ART, Literacy, Math and Science gallery.

Fundraisers

The Children's Circle Parent's Council sponsors various fundraisers throughout each year.

CLASS OFFERINGS

Entry Ages - *All children must be age eligible by the official CMS cutoff date (Aug. 31st)*

TODDLERS - *(Children must be 12 months of age by August 31st to enroll.)*

Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday – 9:00-12:10 p.m.

Ratios – 2 adults: 8 children

TWO-YEAR-OLDS

Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday – 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. begins carpool loading.

2 adults: 10-12 children

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Monday through Thursday – 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. begins carpool loading

2 adults:12- 14 children

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Monday through Thursday or Monday through Friday – 9:00 a.m. - 12:40 p.m. begins carpool loading

2 adults: 10-16 children

FIVE YEAR OLDS - TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

Monday – Friday – 9:00 a.m. - 12:40 p.m. begins carpool loading

2 adults:12-18 children

****Note: Child must be five years old by the official CMS cutoff date to enroll in the 5-year-old TK class.***

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Children's Circle offers classes from 9:00 a.m. until 12:45 p.m. Monday through Friday with a variety of options to choose at each age level. The

program operates on a 9-month calendar, beginning in September (after Labor Day) and ending in May (before Memorial Day). The Children's Circle school calendar does not always coordinate with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools calendar.

ARRIVAL – MORNING PROCEDURES

Toddlers and 2's are walked to the classroom by parents or a responsible adult each day throughout the year.

Staff will receive 3, 4, and 5-year-olds at the carpool loading area between 8:55-9:15 a.m. After 9:15 a.m., parents or responsible adult caregivers must escort children to their classrooms. Security doors will be locked at 9:30 a.m. each morning. Please report to the preschool office if you would like to visit a classroom after that time.

Parking is usually available in the Queens Road parking lot adjacent to the building and across the street.

- **Please wait in the lobby until 8:55 a.m. Teachers are preparing for the day's activities.**
- **Please do not park in the carpool loading lane in front of the building. Signs are posted daily indicating carpool loading times.**
- **Children who are not accompanied by a responsible adult should not be dropped off at any entrance.**
- **Please do not park in handicap parking spaces unless you have a valid handicap placard.**

DEPARTURE –AFTERNOON PROCEDURES

- **Toddlers will be picked up at the classroom by parents or a responsible adult beginning at 12:10 until 12:25 p.m.**
- **2's begin loading at 12:15 p.m. until 12:25 p.m. All 2's must be picked up no later than 12:25 p.m. Families of 2's with 4's and 5's will re-enter the carpool line for pick-up of the older child.**
- **3's will be dismissed at the front driveway beginning at 12:30 p.m.**
- **4's and 5's will be dismissed at the front driveway beginning at 12:40 p.m.**

All walk-ins (any age) must be picked up by 12:25 p.m.

Carpool numbers/names **must remain in full view** until children are loaded.

Please remain in your car until a member of the staff brings your child to you. You will be asked to buckle your child's safety belt. Staff members will minimize conversation to expedite the flow of traffic.

Parents are asked to be prompt in picking up their children to avoid additional parking congestion in the carpool loading/parking areas. The carpool lobby will be closed to late pick-ups at 12:25 p.m., as older children will be gathering. Parents must wait in the lobby area for their children to be brought to them.

AUTHORIZED RELEASE OF CHILDREN

For your child's safety, a written notice regarding any change in pick up arrangements is required.

- **No child will be released without authorization from a parent. Verbal messages from children will not be accepted.**

LATE PICKUP FEES & TIMES

Late Pick Up times - Toddlers and 2's after 12:30 p.m.
3's and 4's after 12:45 p.m.
T/K after 1:00

- **If late pick up is an ongoing problem, you will not be able to participate in carpool. You will need to walk in to pick up your child each day.**
- **All staff members assist with carpool. Late pickups bring unnecessary anxiety to children, are disruptive to staff assisting with carpool,**

and create hardships for teachers who have obligations after school. Parent cooperation is required.

REMEMBER THAT CHILDREN MAY NEVER BE LEFT UNATTENDED IN A PARKED CAR AT ANY TIME. PLEASE REPORT ANY VIOLATION TO THE CHILDREN'S CIRCLE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. NO PARKING ALLOWED IN HANDICAP AREAS!