



*Children's Day In at Meridian Street*

# Nursery School and Traditional Preschool Parent Handbook



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# CDI General Information

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## Registration Timeline

CDI will offer open enrollment throughout the year if spots are available. Otherwise, we will register as follows:

<b>January</b>	Registration for MSUMC members and current CDI
<b>February</b>	Open registration for non-church members and new families not currently enrolled in CDI
<b>March</b>	Enrollment confirmation or notification of wait list placement
<b>June</b>	No later than June 15th – your August tuition (first of 10 equal/monthly payments) is due

## Enrollment

The following forms must be completed and turned in by August 1st or the first day of attendance if starting mid-session. Registration is first come, first served and once classes fill, wait lists will be formed.

## Registration and Emergency Forms

Information on this form must be kept up-to-date at all times. This includes persons to contact in case of an emergency and designated individuals who are allowed to pick up your child.

## Child Profile

This form is very helpful for the teachers and caregivers to learn more about your child before the start of school.

## Physician's Statement and Immunization Form

This form must be completely filled out and signed by the child's physician within one calendar year of the current fall session in September. All immunizations must be up-to-date for the child's age. If there are allergies, additional documents will be required.

## Custody Agreement and Visitation Schedule

Children of families in which parents are divorced or separated must have these forms on file with the CDI office.

## EasyPay

This is the preferred method of payment for tuition. It allows for automatic withdrawal/debit from a checking or savings account.

# Children's Day In

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The Children's Day In Nursery School & Preschool is a weekday ministry program of Meridian Street United Methodist Church. It's a fully inclusive early childhood program with an emphasis on Christian values for children ages 9 months to 3 years old.

## A Developmentally Appropriate Environment

Because children learn most effectively in a play-oriented environment, each classroom provides a place that is both safe and developmentally appropriate for the age of the child. Teachers plan for daily experiences by using their knowledge of child development to meet the needs of a variety of temperaments and learning styles. Activities and materials are designed for specific age groups. Topics for units in older classes are those which hold meaning for the child in his/her daily living and which incorporate behavioral and educational goals for each child. As children mature, the classes add more structured dimensions to assure school readiness. Our preschool program includes the following enrichment classes and opportunities at no extra cost to you; special visitors, weekly First Steps in Music, Christian Life Skill and Book Club.

## School Calendar

The school year session begins mid-August and ends before Memorial Day. CDI meets Tuesday-Friday, from 9 am to 2:30 pm, with pick up beginning at 2:00. Please refer to the current CDI newsletters and website for specific dates.

## Beginning the School Year

An open house will be held in mid-August so that children and their families have an opportunity to visit their classrooms and meet their new teachers.

## Hours of Operation

CDI hours of operation are 9 am to 2:30 pm, Tuesday-Friday, during the school year. Our classroom doors will not open before 9 am and we ask that your child be picked up no later than 2:30 pm. We cannot allow you to stay in the classrooms once we have closed for the day. You are welcome to use our outdoor playgrounds and athletic field before or after our hours of operation.

In the **Nursery School** we do not require that you be on time, but we strongly suggest that you arrive no later than 9:30 am. This allows your child an opportunity to transition into the room during free play before we start our more structured activities.

In the **Preschool** we do ask that you arrive as close to 9 am as possible, so your child does not miss out on the daily Circle Time. During Circle Time, the teachers and children gather in a circle and talk about what they will do that day. Curriculum is introduced and expectations are discussed. We have found that this is a very important part of the day and helps every child start off on the right foot.

## Parent-Teacher-Child Relationship

Early childhood education is a three way relationship among the parents, child and the teacher. If there is something that is occurring at home that affects your child, please be sure that your child's teacher is informed. Likewise, if you have a question concerning something at school, we encourage you to contact your child's teacher by leaving a message in the office. A child feels more secure in an open, friendly home-school relationship, and we will work with you in every way to make your child's school experience as enriching as it can be.

## Separation from Parents

It's not always easy to say goodbye at drop-off time for parents or for children. The beginning of school may bring a few tears as children adjust to their new friends and surroundings, but this usually ceases after a few weeks. Some children have a more difficult time, and you can be assured that the teachers and staff will do everything possible to make this time of transition a time of growth for your child. We ask that parents spend no more than five minutes saying goodbye.

Returning for “one more goodbye” can confuse and upset a child, so your loving hug with a promise of “I love you, and I’ll see you soon!” will help your child to grow in his or her capacity to adapt to new situations in a healthy manner.

## **Parent-Teacher-School Communication**

We send out a weekly electronic newsletter to each family. Important information concerning the school schedule, activities, announcements and curriculum are included; please be sure to read it carefully each week.

Depending on the age of the class, monthly newsletters and calendars may be sent home as well. Special events, weekly themes, enrichment classes and other information is included. Many classes also have “What We Did Today” boards to give you ideas for discussing the day’s activities with your child.

Please check your child’s school bag each day for school-wide communications, notes from the teacher, etc.

Should you need to speak with your child’s teacher individually, please advise the teacher or leave a note in the office. Teachers will contact you by phone or schedule a time to talk at school. Please do not ask for your child’s teacher to take her attention away from the children at drop-off or pick-up time by engaging in conversations that distract from safety and security responsibilities.

**Preschool** parent-teacher conferences are scheduled as needed with a written assessment at the end of the year. **Nursery School** parents will receive a written assessment at the end of the school year. More frequent conferences can be scheduled through the office.

## **Security and Safety**

Your child’s safety and the security of our entire community are of the utmost importance to us. Therefore, please read and abide by the following guidelines concerning these areas:

### **Parking**

Please park in the marked spaces and not along the sidewalk or under the portico. We also would request that you do not leave children unattended in your car. Never leave children in a running car.

### **Daily Sign-in and Sign-out**

Parents are required to sign their child in and out each day on the daily sign-in/sign-out sheets located outside the classroom. Please list a legible phone number at which you can be reached. Please make it part of your daily routine to speak with the adult in charge as you pick up your child.

### **Authorization to Pick Up a Child**

In addition to a parent, only those persons listed on the registration and emergency form will be allowed to pick up a child. If anyone else needs to pick up a child, the parent must advise the office by phone or in writing. CDI teachers and staff will ask for identification of those with who we are not familiar.

## **Health**

It is very important that we be able to reach parents promptly in case of emergency. Please be sure that all phone numbers, including those of home, office, cellular and other adults authorized to pick up your child, are correct and up-to-date in the office.

## **Illness**

Please do not send your child to school if he/she appears to be ill or overly tired. If a child is not well enough to play both inside and outside, he/she should be kept at home. Children with elevated temperatures or who have diarrhea or vomiting will be sent home. Children must be diarrhea, vomiting and fever free (without medication), for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents will be notified if a child becomes ill at school and needs to be picked up (within the hour) of being called.

Please tell your child’s teacher if you have given your child a medication that could cause drowsiness or a change in toilet habits.

If a communicable disease is diagnosed in your child's classroom, parents will be notified. Please keep this information on hand in case your child develops symptoms. If your child develops a communicable disease at home, please notify the school so that we can inform other parents in the class.

### **Clothing for Indoor and Outdoor Play**

Washable play clothes are our school's "uniform." Costumes, dress clothes and other clothes that can impair safe movement, or serve as a distraction should not be worn. Shoes should be rubber-soled with laces or Velcro® closures. Boots (except for snow boots to be used outside), sandals, slip-on, open-toed and dress shoes are not appropriate for school. Please be sure your child has a change of clothing in their bag in case of food spills, toileting accidents, or messy art projects. All clothes should be marked with the child's name in permanent ink. Children play outside all winter, so please be sure that coats, boots, gloves, hats and long pants are worn as cold weather arrives. If your child prefers dresses or skirts, please wear shorts or "playground pants" underneath to maintain discretion.

### **Weather-Related School Closings**

CDI programs will observe the same severe weather closings as Washington Township and IPS. If there is a weather-related school delay for one or both school systems, CDI will follow the same delay. If either district closes due to weather, CDI will also close. The CDI Facebook page and an electronic email will inform you of any cancellations as soon as possible. Please check if you have doubts about whether CDI will be in session. No refunds will be given for program cancellations.

### **Birthday Parties**

Birthdays are special days to celebrate! In order to be consistent and mindful of each families means and needs, the following birthday party policies define acceptable celebrations: Parents may bring a simple non-edible treat to celebrate a child's birthday which will be passed out at the end of the school day. Balloons, candles, favors or decorations are not to be brought. Invitations to outside parties may be distributed, only if every child is invited. In lieu of party favors, you are welcome to donate a book to your child's classroom. We will provide a special book plate with your child's name and birth date to commemorate the special donation!

### **Staff**

All staff is hired from recommendations or personal knowledge. We do a criminal background check on every person on the CDI staff.

### **Indiana Juvenile Code**

Our programs observe this code. Any individual who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect must report this suspected abuse to the proper authorities as per this code and the church's child protection policy.

### **Discipline**

Thankfully, discipline is typically not an issue at CDI. Obviously, we want our school environment to be safe for every teacher and child alike. We also want to reinforce the same positive behaviors that you expect at home. In addition, we want to help curb any negative behavior and be consistent with language and techniques used by each individual family. Commonly we redirect children from one activity that may be causing the negative behavior into another activity. Occasionally children will need a moment or two to collect themselves, or just observe appropriate actions before rejoining the activity. Please be sure to tell your child's teacher any language that you may or may not use at home to help effectively communicate with your child. If problems arise that the teachers and family cannot resolve, the director will intercede with a plan of action. Each instance will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Insurance**

Meridian Street United Methodist Church carries accident insurance which provides accidental death and dismemberment coverage and medical expense coverage for all children while attending the weekday program sessions, subject to its limitations.

### **Grievance Procedure**

In the event that you have an issue or concern regarding your child and/or our program, please bring it to the attention of the Program Director at your earliest convenience. We will work with you to resolve whatever issues and concerns that you may have in the strictest confidence.

## Special Items to Remember

1. Children should not bring gum, candy, money, cough drops, balloons, toy weapons or valuables to school.
2. Children should eat breakfast before coming to school (and fully finish all food before entering the building). Snacks are generally served in the morning in the Nursery School, and in the afternoon in the Preschool.
3. The school closes at 2:30 pm. Parents, teachers and staff should be able to leave the building at that time. Please allow time to pay tuition and talk with staff and friends prior to 2:30, or outside on the playground after the school has closed.
4. Please notify the office of any changes in address, phone, email, immunization status or family concerns that affect a child.
5. Never leave a child unattended in the building or on the playground. If you arrive when the class is in another part of the building, walk your child to that class and hand him/her over to the teacher in charge.
6. Please call when your child is ill or will not be in school for the day.

## What to Bring

Preschool children are requested to bring the following items, each clearly marked with the child's name: a nutritious cold-pack lunch completely free of peanuts and tree nuts, a drink cup with lid, a change of clothes and appropriate outdoor clothing. Children in the Nursery School classes are asked to bring the following items each clearly marked with the child's name: a nutritious cold-pack lunch, a drink cup with lid (please do not freeze juice boxes as they do not thaw in time), a change of clothes, diapers, appropriate outdoor clothing and a blanket or comfort item for naptime.

## Comfort Toys

It is the policy of the preschool to discourage children from bringing comfort toys to school. We have sharing days when children are asked to share special items from home if they like.

## Morning Activities

Daily routines include age-appropriate curriculum, circle time, stories, games, music, art, puzzles and outdoor play. Teachers encourage the children to participate in activities which develop their language, social and emotional growth as they interact with others.

## Snacks

A snack will be provided mid-morning each day with water. Typical snacks include Cheerios™, Cheez-Its®, animal crackers and pretzels. Please notify your teacher if there are food allergies of which she should be aware.

## Naptime

Following lunch, children have a quiet transition to naptime. Soft music, a blanket from home and the gentle voice from our teachers make this a time to unwind from the morning's activity. Parents are requested to pick up at 12:45 pm before naptime begins if you do not plan for your child to stay until the 2:00 pm dismissal time.

## Toilet Training

Our teachers will work with you in this very important developmental process, but we need your help as well. Please communicate to your child's teacher what you are doing at home in regards to toilet training. We do reserve the right to request that your child be sent in diapers vs. underwear or pull-ups if there are a number of accidents, especially those involving bowel movements. Please be understanding of the fact that our caregivers are caring for a number of children and may not be able to recognize those signals as well as you do. We will do everything we can to reinforce your training methods. All children in the older preschool classes are required to be fully potty trained.

## CDI Fees

A non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee must accompany this completed registration form for each child. August tuition is due by June 15th. If payments are not received by these dates, unsecured positions will be released to the next person on our waiting list. All prepaid tuition payments are non-refundable & non transferable unless moving from Marion County or the contiguous counties. If you are registering after any of the above due dates, any previously due payments must be made in full upon registration. Registration is on a first come first serve basis.

## Tuition Policies

1. All registration fees and tuition paid in advance are ***non-refundable and non-transferable*** unless moving out of Marion County and the contiguous counties.
2. Annual tuition is divided equally between 10 months, creating an equal payment each month regardless of the actual number of school days in a given month.
3. August tuition will be billed on June 1st with payment due on June 15th. After this date, all unsecured positions will be released to the next person on our waiting list. All other monthly tuition payments will be billed on the 15th of the month with payment due by the 1st of the month. A \$5.00 late tuition fee is added per child after the 1st of the month, for the first late payment, and the late fee increases with each late payment.
4. If you are unable to pay your tuition, please contact the CDI office to work out a payment plan. If you are unable to work out or honor a payment plan, we will have to ask you to leave the program.
5. There will be a \$25 charge on all returned checks, payable in cash or a certified check.
6. Tuition checks should be made payable to Children's Day In (CDI), and brought or mailed to the CDI office at Meridian Street.
7. No refunds will be made if the school is closed due to unavoidable circumstances such as bad weather or building maintenance problems.
8. Thirty days written notice is required for a child's withdrawal from the program. Parents are responsible for the entire amount of tuition through the thirty day period.
9. Parents will be assessed a late pick-up fee of \$10.00 per family if you do not call to let us know you will be late AND \$1.00 per child for every minute a child is left past dismissal time.

## Absences

If your child is absent from the program for illness or other reasons, you will continue to pay tuition unless he/she is formally withdrawn.

## Health

You guarantee that your child is in good health and free of communicable diseases each day he/she participates, and will have the necessary immunizations or required waivers. Please refer to the State Board of Health guidelines outlined in the CDI Parent Handbook.

## Refunds

No refunds will be given for program cancellations due to weather or building issues or days missed due to illness or vacation. There are no make up days.

## Illness or Injury

In the event of serious illness or accident, as determined by the Director or other personnel designated by the Director, it is understood that an ambulance will be summoned to transport your child to a medical facility. You agree to assume the responsibility for any and all costs incurred for the ambulance service and/or emergency medical care provided.

## Email Notice

By providing your email, you are agreeing to receive regular email communication regarding any and all Meridian Street/Children's Day In programs and activities.

## Photography Release

Your registration indicates that you give permission to Meridian Street United Methodist Church and Children's Day In to use, without charge and without reservation, your likeness in any medium and for any lawful purpose, including promoting the church, its programs, and services. You waive any rights of action you may have and release Meridian Street from any and all claims you may have arising from the use of your likeness, including any rights to sue for defamation or violation of your rights of privacy or publicity.

## Notice Regarding Ministry Status

With your registration, you also understand that this child care ministry is not licensed under the laws of Indiana. However, you understand that this child care ministry must comply with the state rules concerning sanitation and fire and life safety for the primary use of the structure in which it is conducted. You understand that it is your responsibility to ensure that the nutritional and health needs of your child are met while your child is at the child care ministry.

