



# Parent Handbook

2025-2026

**Sunbeam Children's Center**  
**of St. Thomas United Methodist Church**

Parent Handbook 2025-2026

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# **Sunbeam Children's Center of St. Thomas United Methodist Church**

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## **WELCOME!**

WELCOME to the Sunbeam Children's Center of St. Thomas United Methodist Church! We are looking forward to getting to know you and your children. It is our prayer that every child will have a fun, educational time while here.

### **PURPOSE**

To glorify God and to provide a safe, fun place where children grow spiritually, socially, intellectually, emotionally, and physically — each one able to shine their own sunbeams of light into the world for Jesus. We collaborate with families to help lay the spiritual foundation for children throughout their lives. It is important to the staff at Sunbeam Children's Center (SCC) to recognize the individuality of each child and to care for each child accordingly.

### **Mission Statement**

We exist to reach, nourish and serve the Community so all may experience healing and new life through Jesus Christ

### **LOCATION & FACILITIES**

We are in St. Thomas United Methodist Church at 8899 Sudley Road, Manassas, VA 20110. Phone number: 703-368-5161, Option 2 (or extension 109). The church building was built in 1994. The Sunbeam Children's Center is located on the lower level of the church; we occasionally use the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary upstairs. Enter from Grant Street.

### **SUNBEAM CHILDREN'S CENTER ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

**Reverend Matt Sergent**

Senior Pastor of STUMC

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**Tracy Spencer**

Chair of Sunbeam Children's Center Board

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**Veronica McGuin**

Director, Sunbeam Children's Center of STUMC

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**Teresa Rook**

Assistant Director, Sunbeam Children's Center of STUMC

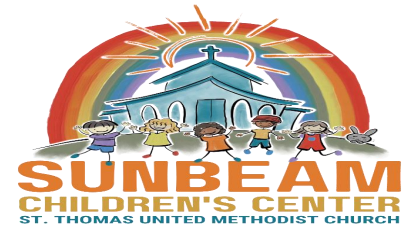
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**Teachers, Aides, Substitutes, and Volunteers**

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## STAFF REQUIREMENTS

The quality of the staff is especially important in providing quality education and care for infant, toddler, preschool and kindergarten age children. Each teacher is required to have either an educational background in early childhood development/education or equivalent experience, a calling to minister to children and their families, and a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

All staff are required to attend a minimum of 16 hours of staff development training per year as approved by the Director. Training must relate to children, early childhood development, or the education of young children.

Staff members are required to have a current Pediatric CPR and First-Aid certificate.

An annual health exam form stating that each staff member is free from any disability, which would prevent him/her from caring for children, must also be on file with the Director. A qualified physician or certified nurse practitioner must sign the form.

Each staff member must provide proof of a negative PPD skin test for tuberculosis. If an employee is unable to provide skin testing results, then she/he must provide a chest x-ray report as proof of a negative tuberculosis status.

A background check that includes a fingerprint based national criminal history search, a search of the child abuses and neglect registry, a sworn statement/affirmation and child protection policy is completed on each staff member.

## SCHOOL HOURS

The Sunbeam Children's Center operates from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm Monday through Friday. Children in the Day Care program may not be dropped off earlier than 6:30 am and must be picked up by 6:30 pm. The Preschool classes operate from 9:00 am to 12:15 pm. Children in the Preschool program may not be dropped off earlier than the starting time of 9:00 am and must be picked up by the ending time of 12:15 pm.

**A late fee of \$25 is due for every 15 minutes you are late picking up your child after his/her program has closed** (beginning with 12:20 pm for Preschool and 6:31 pm for Day Care). Your child may become upset if you are not here on time. Please call and let us know if you are going to be late. Your call will help us communicate with your child to let him/her know you are on your way.

## CLASSES OFFERED

### **Day Care Program**

- Infant - 6 weeks until 1 year, crawling or taking a few steps.
- Pre-Toddler - Designed for children in the early stage of walking. Taking steps or have aged out of the infant room and ready for limited teacher-directed activities - transition class for learning to



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eat sitting at a table, to drink solely from a sippy cup instead of a bottle, to sit in a chair at the small table, walking steadily and to sleep on a cot.

- Toddler - Must be walking steadily, drinking from a sippy cup, able to feed self at a child size table, and participate in structured group activities.
- 2-3-Year-Old Class - Must be 2 years old by September 30, 2025.
- 3-Year-Old Class - Must be 3 years old by September 30, 2025, no diapers.
- 4-year-Old Class - Must be 4 years old by September 30, 2025, no diapers.

### Preschool Program

- 2-3-Year-Old 3-Day Classes - Must be 2-3 years old by September 30, 2025.
  - Monday/Wednesday/Friday class
- 3-Year-Old Classes - Must be 3 years old by September 30, 2025, no diapers/pull-ups
  - 3-day class - Monday/Wednesday/Friday
  - 5-day class - Monday-Friday
- 4-Year-Old Classes - Must be 4 years old by September 30, 2025, no diapers/pull-ups
  - 3-day class - Monday/Wednesday/Friday
  - 5-day class - Monday-Friday

The following ratios apply for all programs at SCC to meet or exceed the Commonwealth of Virginia licensing standards:

- 6 Weeks to 16 Months - 1 caregiver per 4 children enrolled
- 16-24 months - 1 caregiver per 5 children enrolled
- 2-Year-Old Class - 1 caregiver per 8 children enrolled
- 2-3-Year-Old 3-day Preschool Classes - 1 caregiver per 8 children enrolled.
- 3-Year-Old Classes - 1 caregiver per 10 children enrolled
- 4-Year-Old Classes - 1 caregiver per 10 children enrolled

The maximum in a class is 10, infant room 12.

Floating aides are available to assist in all classes.

### ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

The Sunbeam Children's Center admits children regardless of race, creed, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the children in the center. We do not discriminate based on race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions, or other school administration programs.

A \$125.00 non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of registration for all programs. A \$125.00 supply and activity fee is due on the first day of your child attending school or the first day of the new school year for all students. Students currently enrolled at SCC and their siblings will have registration priority, followed by regular attendees of St. Thomas United Methodist Church, and then registration opens to the community.

Items required at the time of registration are:

- Completed registration form.



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- \$125.00 **non-refundable** registration fee
- \$125.00 **non-refundable** supply and activity fee each school year and or the first week of school for new students - infants do not pay an activity fee until they move up to the Pre-Toddler or Toddler class.
- Child's original birth certificate. (According to the Commonwealth of Virginia, if a parent/guardian fails to submit proof of the child's identity and age within the first seven business days of initial attendance, the Center is required to notify the local law-enforcement agency.)
- A Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form verifying a child's record of immunizations that is signed by a physician, or his or her designee, or health department official.
- A signed Parent Agreement, Nut and Medication Form must be submitted to the Director's office for each child enrolled prior to the first day in attendance at Sunbeam Children's Center.
- If your child has an allergy an Allergy Action Plan Form must be filled out by a physician

If the class you wish to enroll your child in is full, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list. When there is an opening, you will be notified. You must respond within 48 hours of notification. The next person on the waiting list will be called if you do not respond.

## TUITION

### Day Care Program

Infant's	\$359/week	\$277/3-day week	\$215/2-day week
Pre-Toddlers	\$342/week	\$260/3-day week	\$201/2-day week
Toddler's	\$315/week	\$245/3-day week	\$186/2-day week
Twos	\$309/week	\$237/3-day week	\$180/2-day week
Threes	\$287/week	\$231/3-day week	\$173/2-day week
Fours	\$287/week	\$231/3-day week	\$173/2-day week

Tuition is due on Monday of each week or the first day of the week that your child is scheduled to attend. If payment is not received by close on Wednesday, then a \$25.00 late fee will be applied to your account. If the weekly tuition plus late payment has not been paid by closing on Friday, then the child will not be allowed to return to school until all delinquent payments are paid in full. We cannot guarantee a space for your child if delinquent payment has not been paid within 2 weeks. If needed, please speak with the Director concerning payment adjustments.

If a child is absent from school one calendar week (Monday-Friday in the same week or whatever days in the week the child is enrolled to attend) due to family vacation or illness, then the parents may choose to pay a 50% reduction in tuition for that week. This 50% tuition reduction is granted only once during the school year. No other prorated tuition will be given for any reason.

Full tuition is due when the school is closed for a holiday(s). If your child will not be attending school during a holiday period, then tuition for that week(s) is due prior to the child being out to avoid being charged a late fee.





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If your child is absent for an extended period, but expects to return to school, tuition must be paid during the period of absence to keep your child enrolled in the program.

**If the school closes temporarily because of weather conditions or other reasons beyond the control of the school, tuition will continue to be charged.**

If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason, the registration and supply and activity fee must be paid again for the child to be reinstated in the program later.

### Preschool Tuition

#### Preschool Program

##### 2-3-Year-Old Classes

3-Day Class \$412/month

##### 3-Year-Old Classes:

3-Day Class \$412/month

##### 4-Year-Old Classes:

5-Day Class \$443/month

Tuition for children enrolled in the Preschool program is due the first of the month, September through May. **If payment is not received by the seventh of the month, a \$25 late fee will be assessed.** If payment and late fee are not collected by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month, your child will be removed from the program and added to the waiting list.

Prorated tuition will not be given for days your child misses due to illness, vacation, holidays, or for any reason other than enrolling in the program after the beginning of the month. If your child is absent for an extended period, but expects to return to school, tuition must be paid during the period of absence to keep your child enrolled in the program. **If school closes temporarily because of weather conditions or other reasons beyond the control of the school, tuition will continue to be charged.**

If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason, the registration fee must be paid again for the child to be reinstated in the program later.

### Subsidy Tuition Payments

Sunbeam Children's Center shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations related to the licensing or exemptions of childcare providers, state regulations, policies and guidelines for the Child Care Subsidy Program as set forth by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

The Purchase of Services Order (POSO) shall state the rate to be paid to Sunbeam Children's Center. Payments made to SCC are subject to the terms regarding registration fees, supply and activity fee, holidays and absent days. Sunbeam Children's Center is a nonprofit therefore the Virginia Department



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of Social Services (VDSS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) does not pay SCC for registration fees, supply and activity fee, absent days or any tuition over the amount of the Maximum Reimbursable Rates ("MRR"). Any uncovered registration fee, tuition or supply and activity fees are the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the child enrolled in any program of SCC. Subsidy payment rates are located at [www.childcareva.com](http://www.childcareva.com).

If a child is absent from school one calendar week (Monday-Friday in the same week or whatever days in the week the child is enrolled to attend) due to family vacation or illness, then the parents may choose to pay a 50% reduction in tuition for that week. This 50% tuition reduction is granted only once during the school year. **No other prorated tuition will be given for any reason.**

If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason, the registration and supply fee must be paid again for the child to be reinstated in the program later.

**Once your child or children are registered, you will receive a sign-up link for the Playground App. You will be able to complete registration forms add guardians and others that are allowed to pick up and drop off. You will use the Playground app for payments, tuition statements and summer camps.** If you link your bankcard, you will be charged a fee of \$1.00 for one or more transactions. If you link a credit card, you will be charged a 3% fee from Playground. You also have the option to pay by cash but we encourage you to use the Playground app. No checks will be accepted for tuition or the registration application.

A two-week written notice to the Director/Assistant Director is required to withdraw a child from the program. If a two-week notification has not been given to the Director/Assistant Director, your account must be paid in full at the time of notification. There will be no refund on a tuition payment that has already been made. For children withdrawing from the Day Care program, tuition must be paid in full on Monday of the child's last week of enrollment. If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason, the registration and supply fee must be paid again for the child to be reinstated in the program later. Your child will be placed in the class where space is available.

### **CURRICULUM**

The environment in which all the children at the Sunbeam Children's Center learn will be one of unconditional love, support, and respect to help them grow socially, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. The curriculum used at our school is letter and number based as well as theme based according to what is age appropriate. The lead teachers of all classes submit lesson plans monthly to the office for review.

### **Infants**

At SCC, we strive to meet the specific needs of each baby in a variety of ways. Each baby is held, talked to, read to, and sung to by loving, nurturing staff members. Our schedule also offers ample "tummy time" and opportunities for playing and learning with other babies. A variety of age-appropriate toys for both younger and older infants is always available for the babies to explore.





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We welcome nursing mothers to feed their infant(s) on site. We strive to use "best practices" when feeding infants to help them build healthy eating habits right from the start. These best practices include feeding infants when they begin to show signs of hunger and ending feedings when they show they are full. Our feeding practices are flexible to the needs of families. For example, we can avoid large feedings at the end of the day before mother's plan to breastfeed. Families should inform us of their preferences and instructions in writing on the "Infant Information Sheet". Any warmed unused breastmilk will be discarded after one hour of sitting out.

### **Pre-Toddlers**

The Pre-Toddler class is for children who are in the early stages of walking, taking steps or have aged out of the infant room. This class is a transition class from the Infant Room to the Pre-Toddler or Toddler class. The children transition to eating at a table, simple activities, sleeping on cots, and drinking solely from a sippy cup. In this class, the children learn to follow a planned schedule with snack time, outdoor playtime, lunchtime, naptime, and activity time. The children in the class are introduced to simple teacher-directed time including some table activities and more organized play. The children continue to enjoy being read to, sung to, and cuddled in this class. They also are read simple Bible stories and introduced to simple Bible songs.

### **Toddlers**

We recognize that toddlers still require schedules that are individualized to their specific needs, but toddlers are also ready for more "structure" in their daily routines. Our toddler teachers continue to talk, read, and sing with each child, but also begin introducing activities within a group setting. In addition, our toddler schedule offers many opportunities to learn through playing and exploring. We offer a wide variety of activities that aid in language development, gross and fine motor skills. The toddlers are briefly introduced to the colors, shapes, numbers, letters, and various themes through a variety of activities. Our toddlers also enjoy a weekly Bible story and related art project shared by our director, or other staff members of Sunbeam Children's Center or St Thomas United Methodist Church.

### **Twos, Threes, Fours**

Our curriculum for twos, threes and fours is letter and number based, theme based, and Bible based. It includes age-appropriate reading, writing and math readiness, and social interaction activities aimed to provide the children with many educational opportunities that will prepare each child for the next educational level.

They will be provided with opportunities to:

- Learn to share, work, play, and get along with other children.
- Learn discipline and self-control.
- Learn to follow instructions and to finish work.
- Learn to express ideas and feelings in acceptable ways.
- Learn to accept responsibility for their actions.
- develop language, pre-reading, pre-writing, pre-math skills (including recognition of colors, shapes, letters, and numbers with encouragement to use correct strokes when writing letters and numbers)
- Learn good health habits.

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- Learn to independently take care of self.
- Develop an awareness and appreciation for God's world.
- Learn age-appropriate Bible based truths to nurture them in developing faith in Jesus Christ.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Each classroom will have a daily schedule posted. We strive to maintain consistency in following the schedule each day; however, it may be altered as the teacher necessitates or as activities change. As required by the Commonwealth of Virginia licensing standards, the Pre-Toddlers, Toddlers, 2's, 3's and 4's in the Day Care program have a scheduled naptime each day. The naptime at SCC varies for the different ages between the hours of 12:15 pm to 2:30 pm. The center provides cots and sheets, but we ask parents to provide a blanket, which should be taken home on Fridays, or the child's last day of attendance for the week to be washed. Blankets are to be brought back to school on Monday or the child's scheduled day to attend.

## LUNCH AND SNACKS

All student lunches and bottles must be labeled and dated each day due to the Virginia Department of Social Services and the Virginia Department of Education guidelines. Please do not send peanut butter, seeds, nuts, or any tree nut products into the school. Please check food labels for ingredients and how the food is processed. Uncut grapes, uncut raw carrots, or popcorn is not recommended for children under 3 years of age.

## Day Care Program

Because we do not have a commercial kitchen on the lower level, the Sunbeam Children's Center is unable to prepare full meals for the children in our care. Each child enrolled in the Day Care program is to bring a packed lunch including a drink from home that he/she can feed him/herself without too much difficulty. Refrigeration will not be available so please include an ice pack with the lunch. We are equipped with a few microwaves that enable us to heat up food brought in a child's lunch. Please label your child's lunch box/bag, spoon, fork and drinking cup with his/her name where the teacher can easily see it. Place his/her lunch box/bag in the designated location within the classroom when you drop off your child in the morning.

A nutritious snack with 2% milk or water will be served in the morning and afternoon by the center for children in all the classes except the Infant Room. A snack calendar is posted in each classroom listing what was served for snack on each day. If it is your child's birthday and you would like to bring in a special snack such as cupcakes, please notify the teacher. No homemade items allowed due to allergies.

If you have a child in the Infant Room, please provide age appropriate and enough food for your child. **Your child's bottles and food must be labeled with his/her name and dated daily.**

## Preschool Program



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Children enrolled in the Preschool program will be served a nutritious snack with 2% milk or water by the school. If it is your child's birthday and you would like to bring in a special snack such as cupcakes, please notify the teacher. **No** homemade items allowed due to allergies.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

When feasible, the daily curriculum will include a period for outside play. Children 2 years and up will use the playground located to the right of the entrance of the center. Pre-Toddlers and Toddlers will use the playground to the left of the center's entrance. The base of both playgrounds consists of shredded rubber tires and complies with the Code of Virginia.

Parents are encouraged to send their children to school with appropriate outdoor clothing. We will go outside every day unless the temperature or real feel temperature is 32 degrees or below, it is raining, extremely windy, the playground is too wet, or snow covered. When indoor play is necessary, the children will have recess, gross motor play in the Big Room (Children's Worship Center). When the weather is cold, please dress children with coats, hats, and mittens. When the weather is warm and sunny, we suggest sunscreen be provided by the parents.

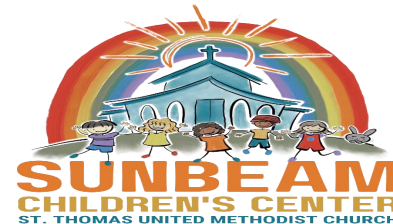
### **CHAPEL TIME**

Once during the week, the 3 & 4-year-old Day Care, Preschool and Kindergarten students will go upstairs to the Sanctuary for chapel time. Chapel time combines Bible stories and songs that affirm God's unconditional love for each child. Chapel time is lead by the Director, Assistant Director, SCC staff, the Pastor or a member of the church staff. Teachers will remain with the children during chapel time. The chapel time monthly themes and Bible verses are reinforced in the classroom.

### **BIBLE STORY TIME**

Children enrolled in the Toddler and 2-year-old Day care classes as well as the 2-3 year old Preschool classes are told a Bible story each week. Bible time combines Bible stories and songs that affirms God's unconditional love for each child. The Director, Assistant Director, SCC staff, the Pastor or a member of the church staff, leads Bible time. The Director will present a related art project to go with the story. Teachers will remain with the children during Bible time. The themes for the Bible stories taught throughout the year are:

- Jesus Loves Me
- The Bible
- Creation
- The Life of Jesus
- Old Testament Characters
  - o Noah
  - o Abraham
  - o Jacob
  - o Joseph



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- o Moses
- o Hannah and Samuel
- o David
- o Daniel
- The Church

### **STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

For security purposes, SCC uses an electronic access entry system. Each family enrolled in the school is given a personal code to enter in the access pad for entry into the building. A camera and intercom is located to the left of the doors for communicating with the office if needed. You will also find a doorbell to the left of the entrance. In addition, to ensure the safety of the children, a monitor is in the SCC office displaying the view of the various cameras located throughout the building, on the playgrounds and around the church premises.

An authorized adult is required to sign in and then sign out the child using the Playground scan bar code that is located throughout the school. It is your responsibility to do so every day for attendance purposes. If your child will be absent, you may register them as absent through the Playground app.

Under no circumstances will a child be released to anyone other than those listed on the registration form unless permission is given to the office by way of an email or a written, signed note. The office will accept verbal permission over the phone only in a last-minute situation. When the designated person arrives, staff will ask to see his or her valid identification to verify that your child may be released.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Each teacher will communicate information about classroom activities, skills to be learned, and announcements to the parents using the Playground App, the white boards in their classrooms, monthly newsletters and on the Parent Information White Board located in each classroom. There is also an Information Board across from room 107 and one at the entrance of the school.

Please check your child's cubby each day for any papers when picking him/her up. It is the responsibility of the parents to take the papers home that are in your child's cubby each day and review the information. Any information that is required to be returned should be brought in on the child's next day of attendance or by the specified date. Monthly newsletters and information from the school as well as from the teachers are available on the Sunbeam Children's Center website at [Sunbeam.StThomasUMC.org](http://Sunbeam.StThomasUMC.org). The newsletter also includes curriculum information, important dates, and an article from each classroom teacher, Tuesday night dinners, food pantry and upcoming church events.

Parents may contact the school office at any time during school hours at 703-368-5161, Option 2 (or extension 109) or via email at [Sunbeam@Stthomasumc.org](mailto:Sunbeam@Stthomasumc.org). If there is no answer and it is an emergency, redial the church office at 703-368-5161, Option 1 and someone will come downstairs to find the needed party. **It is important that parents keep the office informed of any changes in information provided on the**

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registration form such as emergency contacts, phone numbers, addresses, allergies and/or health conditions, address change and physician.

## ATTENDANCE RECORDS

During the school day, the Director/Assistant Director will visit each classroom and verify attendance. Please be sure to sign your child in and out each day using the Playground app. This will enable us to account for all the children attending in the case of an emergency.

## CALENDAR DATES/HOLIDAYS 2025-2026

### Day Care Program

2025-2026 School Year Begins	Monday, August 18, 2025
Meet the Teacher Night	Thursday, August 21, 2025 - 6:45-8:00 pm
Labor Day	Monday, September 1, 2025 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 27 & Friday, November 28, 2025- <b>SCC Closed</b>
Christmas Eve	Wednesday, December 24, 2025 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25, 2025 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
New Year's Eve	Thursday, January 1, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Presidents' Day	Monday, February 16, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Easter/Good Friday	Friday, April 3, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Easter Monday	Monday, April 6, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
SCC Graduation	Friday, May 22, 2026
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Independence Day	Friday, July 3, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
2025-2026 School Year Ends	Thursday, August 13, 2026 ( <b>Subject to Change</b> )
SCC Cleaning Day	Friday, August 14, 2025 - <b>SCC Closed</b>

### Preschool Program

First Day of School	Monday, August 18, 2025
Meet the Teacher Night	Thursday, August 21, 2025 - 6:45-8:00 pm
Labor Day	Monday, September 1, 2025 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Thanksgiving Break	Thursday, November 27 - Friday, November 28, 2025
Christmas/New Year's Break	Monday, December 22, 2025 - Friday, January 2, 2026
Parent Conferences	Monday, January 19, 2026 - <b>No School for Students</b>
President's Day	Monday, February 16, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
Easter Break	Monday, March 30, - Friday, April 3, 2026 <b>No School for Students</b>
Easter Monday	Monday - April 6, 2026 - <b>SCC Closed</b>
SCC Graduation	Friday, May 22, 2026
Last Day of School	Friday, May 22, 2026





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### INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

#### **Day Care Program**

The Sunbeam Children's Center recognizes that parents depend upon their childcare arrangements so our Day Care program will remain open unless we feel the safety of the children, their families, and the staff of our center may be at risk. **If SCC will be closed or have a delayed opening due to weather conditions, it will be announced on the school's voice mail by 5:30 AM, on WRC-TV Channel 4 & channel 5 News, and the WTOP website.**

#### **Preschool Program**

The Preschool program will be closed when Manassas City Schools are closed for weather/road conditions. If there is a delayed opening for Manassas City Public Schools, Kindergarten and Preschool will open on time.

Should the Federal Government close due to natural disaster, terrorist activity, or extreme weather conditions, all programs of the Sunbeam Children's Center will close as well.

#### Day Care Program

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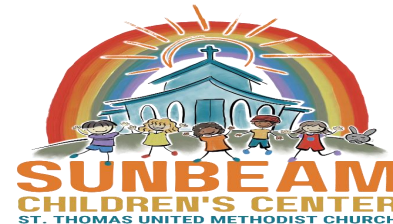
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The Preschool program will be closed when Manassas City Schools are closed for weather/road conditions. If there is a delayed opening for Manassas City Public Schools, Kindergarten and Preschool will open on time.

Should the Federal Government close due to natural disaster, terrorist activity, or extreme weather conditions, all programs of the Sunbeam Children's Center will close as well.

### HAND WASHING

Students and staff washing hands upon arrival at school is required by Sunbeam Children's Center. It is also highly recommended by the health department to help prevent the spread of illnesses and diseases. Therefore, we require each child to wash his/her hands with soap and water in a hallway bathroom or in a classroom bathroom upon arriving at school.



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The staff will take constant precautions to prevent the spread of contagious and communicable diseases. Most common childhood diseases are contagious. Careful hand washing by the staff and children when arriving at school, before eating or handling food, after toileting, after playing outside, when hands are dirty/messy, or when deemed necessary by the teacher can eliminate approximately 75% of the risk of spreading many illnesses.

### **SICK POLICY**

The health of your child is very important to us. We do a visual health screening each day on every child. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her home unless you present a note from your doctor that they are not contagious:

- Has had a fever of 100.4 F or higher within the past 24 hours.
- Has had vomiting within the past 24 hours.
- Has had diarrhea with a frequency of three loose/watery stools per day until symptom free for 24 hours.
- Has severe coughing.
- Has a sore throat or trouble swallowing?
- Has pinkeye or any eye discharge.
- Has a rash of unknown origin that may be contagious?
- Has been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours or less than three doses.
- Is too ill to play outside or participate in classroom activities.

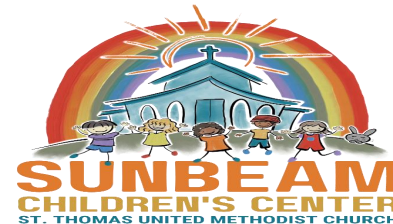
If your child exhibits any of these symptoms or situations during the day, you will be called to take your child home. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the persons listed on your emergency form.

Please contact the center if your child contracts a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, flu, hand foot and mouth disease, etc. or parasites such as ring worm, head lice, etc. Communication and cooperation of parents are of great importance in helping to prevent the spread of diseases. **Your child must no longer be contagious when he/she returns to school. Please return with a note verifying this from the doctor.**

### **Child May Return to School When:**

- Chicken Pox - all pox must be scabbed over.
- Strep Throat - has been on antibiotic for 24 hours and fever free.
- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease - no fever and 3-4 days after blisters appear on hands, feet, and mouth with a note from the doctor stating that child may return to school.
- Ring Worm - area is covered with a bandage.
- Head Lice - no visible bugs or nits after receiving treatment.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) has been on antibiotic for 24

If your child has been exposed to any contagious disease, you will be notified by the office.



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### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION AND AUTHORIZATION**

Certified staff of the center that have completed the M.A.T. (Medication Administration Training) course shall administer the giving or application of medication, including special medical procedures. The parent/guardian must complete a written Medication Consent Form, including a release of liability, authorizing the administering of medication, indicating dosage and length of prescription term. Any long-term medications (medications needed over ten business days), nebulizer or epinephrine auto-injector medication must have a completed Medication Consent Form signed by both the physician and parent, except for bug sprays, sunscreens, and nonprescription diaper ointments.

All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be in their original containers and labeled with the child's name. Parents must supply the center with the appropriate medication administration tools such as medicine cups, droppers, dosing spoons, oral syringes, and pill crushers, labeled with the child's first and last name. All medication and administration tools, along with the completed consent form, must be stored in the office or infant room. After ten business days, the medication will either be returned to you or discarded. **Under no circumstance will the center administer the first dose of any medication to a child.**

### **POTTY TRAINING/BOTTLES**

#### **3 and 4-Year-Old Classes**

It is recommended that children be fully potty trained to enroll in any 3 or 4-year-old class at SCC. Potty trained means no diapers, pull-ups, or training pants of any kind. It also means that the parent is confident that his/her child can make it between bathroom breaks without having any accidents. There are several scheduled bathroom breaks each day, but children may use the bathroom at any time.

#### **Younger Classes**

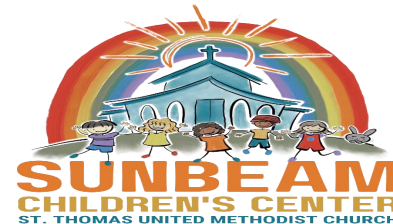
Children in the 2-3-year-Old Preschool class, the Infant Room, the Pre-Toddler class, the Toddler classes, and the Two-Year-Old classes do not have to be potty trained. However, you will need to bring disposable diapers and wipes, if applicable, because they will not be provided by the center. Diapers and wipes must be labeled with your child's name.

We ask that you only send your child to school in pull-ups if he/she is occasionally having accidents such as two or three a week. If it is more than occasionally, please send him/her in diapers because it is difficult and time consuming to change a child in a pull-up since we often must take off articles of clothing, including shoes, to put a new pull-up back on the child.

**Bottles are not permitted in any program except the Infant and Pre-Toddler Day Care classes.** We also encourage you to leave pacifiers at home for children in other classes. The passing of germs among the children can be increased with the use of bottles and pacifiers.

### **CLOTHING**

Our program involves the use of paint, glue, water, etc. Please dress your child in comfortable and washable play clothes. (Sleepwear/pajamas are only allowed on specified days.) We will play outside every



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day possible, so please provide appropriate outdoor clothing and sneakers as well. We ask that you provide an extra set of clothing in case your child needs it during the day due to a spill, accident, etc. For storing clothes at school, please place the extra clothes in a clear plastic bag labeled with your child's name. Remember to label all clothing, coats, mittens, hats, sweaters, etc. with your child's name.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, jewelry, money, or candy to school. We will take no responsibility for lost or broken items or toys brought from home. **NO** toy guns or weapons are permitted in the school at any time.

However, we do encourage students to bring their special item to share for Show-N-Tell on days scheduled by the teacher, pajama day and any other special activity scheduled by the teacher.

### **SUPPLIES**

Most supplies will be provided by the center; however, an annual \$125.00 non-refundable supply fee will be due during the first week of school. A list of supplies used by the center daily will be sent home when enrolling your child. In addition, your child's teacher may request certain items that will be used in the individual classroom. If items are needed for a specific project or craft at times, parents will be notified when these items are necessary.

The center will provide each child in the program with a tote bag during his/her first week in the school for carrying his/her papers and any other necessary items. The tote can be used in place of a backpack and can be used each year the child is enrolled in the program. If you need a replacement tote bag during the school year, you may request one from the front office for a fee of \$10.00.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Conferences for children enrolled in the 3 & 4-year-old Preschool and Day Care program are scheduled once during the year, usually in January. If a conference or observation is desired at another time, please make an appointment with the teacher. The teachers are willing to discuss your child's progress whenever needed. Conferences for children enrolled in any of the other Day Care or Preschool classes will be scheduled as requested by the parent or teacher.

### **FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION SAFETY**

Children enrolled in the kindergarten program and the 3 & 4-year-old Preschool and Day Care program may go on a field trip during the year. For the field trip, there will be a permission slip that the parent must sign specifically for that trip. We require at least one parent or guardian to go on the field trip with your child or we will have to rely on other parents to drive your child to and from the field trip. Car seats are required, or your child cannot go. Students must have a car seat and signed permission form to participate. Drivers who transport a child other than their own must provide proof that they have a valid driver's license and insurance in accordance with the regulations of the state that licenses the driver.

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SCC does not necessarily promote businesses visited nor endorse the resource people brought to the center.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the center at any time. It is not necessary to call ahead if you would like to visit; however, you must check in with the office before entering a classroom. We also welcome your help in the classroom. Volunteers are needed for special events and celebrations, field trips, cooking projects, etc. If you have a talent or skill such as music, dance, puppetry, storytelling, carpentry, or crafts, we encourage you to share it with your child's class. Please coordinate visits with your child's teacher and the SCC office administration. Volunteers involved with any activity involving a minor are required to sign a release form, which we will keep on file in the front office and allows us to request a criminal background check.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

In accordance with Virginia State licensing for Religiously Exempt Day Care:

A. Discipline shall be constructive in nature and include techniques such as:

1. Using limits that are fair, consistently applied, and appropriate and understandable for the child's level.
2. Providing children with reasons for limits
3. Giving positively worded directions
4. Modeling and redirecting children to acceptable behavior.
5. Guiding children to constructively express their feelings and frustrations to resolve conflict.
6. Arranging equipment, materials, activities, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior.

B. When disciplining a child, staff shall not:

1. Use physical punishment or disciplinary action.
2. Shake a child at any time.
3. Be verbally abusive.
4. Force, withhold, or substitute food.
5. Force or withhold naps
6. Punish a child for toileting accidents





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- C. When separation is used as a disciplinary technique, it shall be brief and appropriate to the child's developmental level and circumstances. The child who is separated from the group shall be in a safe, lighted, well-ventilated place and shall be within hearing and vision of a staff member.

### **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

Section 63.1-238.2 of the Code of Virginia defines an abused or neglected child as any child under 18 whose parent, or other person responsible for the care of the child:

- Causes or threatens to cause a non-accidental physical or mental injury.
- Neglects or refuses to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, emotional nurturing, or healthcare.
- Abandons the child.
- Fails to provide adequate supervision in relation to the child's age and development.
- Commits or allows to be committed any illegal sexual act upon a child including incest, rape, fondling, indecent exposure, prostitution, or allows a child to be used in any sexually explicit visual material.

Some symptoms that may indicate abuse or neglect\*:

- Nervousness around adults
- Aggression toward adults or other children
- Inability to stay awake or concentrate for extended periods.
- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Knowledge about sex that is unusual for the child's age or stage of development.
- Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
- Poor hygiene or dress that is inappropriate for the weather.

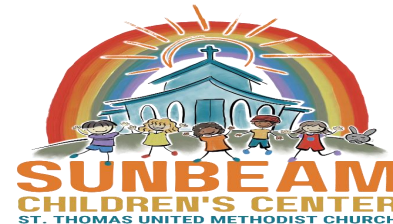
*\*Excerpt from the Virginia Department of Social Services "You Can Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect" brochure. February 2004. [http://www.dss.state.va.us/pub/pdf/church\\_bulletin.pdf](http://www.dss.state.va.us/pub/pdf/church_bulletin.pdf)*

Anyone may report suspected abuse or neglect; however, Section 63.2-1509 of the Code of Virginia **requires** that designated professionals who have contact with the children immediately report their suspicions. It is not necessary to prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. Reports can be made by calling your local social services department or the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-552-7096. Reports can be made anonymously. If you choose to provide your name, it will not be released to the reported family, except by court order. Persons reporting in good faith are immune from civil and criminal liability pursuant to Section 63.2-1512 of the Code.

The policy of the Sunbeam Children's Center states that if any of our staff members suspects a child is being abused or neglected, we will contact the Department of Social Services immediately.

### **Reporting**

Sunbeam Children's Center will not retaliate against any person who brings forward a complaint. All staff leaders and members are expected to immediately report any knowledge of harassment, abuse, or misconduct to anyone of these persons: Sunbeam Children's Center Director, Pastor of STUMC, SPRC Chair, District Superintendent or Bishop. Prompt and appropriate investigation and corrective action will be



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taken, including discipline. Persons who make false accusations will be disciplined. While Sunbeam Children's Center and St. Thomas United Methodist Church (STUMC) cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality, it will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality by disclosing information about the complaint only on a "need to know" basis and as necessary to promote God's call for justice, reconciliation, and healing. Anyone who has any questions or concerns about this policy, or the issues addressed, is encouraged to air those questions, or concerns to the Sunbeam Children's Center Director, Pastors of St. Thomas United Methodist Church or the SPRC chair.

### **EMERGENCY DISASTER PLAN**

In case of an emergency, Sunbeam Children's Center of STUMC has established a plan for staff and children to follow. Parents may ask to view this plan at any time. Emergencies included in the plan are fire, medical, bomb threat, suspicious package, hazardous substances, workplace violence, terrorist attack, tornado or hurricane, and other weather related or local conditions. We will closely monitor any situation. During any emergency, staff will reassure the children that they are safe and remind them that trustworthy adults are in charge and will see to it that they are protected and out of harm's way. If your child is safe in the building, we will continue with the normal routine. However, if we need to act quickly to ensure the safety of your child, we will act immediately. For emergencies where the children need coverage inside the building, they will be taken to the "Big Room." For emergencies where the children need to evacuate the building, they will be relocated to one of the smaller buildings located on the grounds for protective custody until the children can be picked up by a parent/guardian or designated person. The smaller buildings include the Parsonage house, for the younger children and the REMAX building, for the older children.

The policy for picking up children in an emergency is as follows: you may pick up your child if your entrance into the building is not a threat to the other children and staff that remain. You will be contacted if you need to pick up your child. We will do everything possible to ensure your child's safety until you or a designated person is able to pick up your child.

### **LICENSING/INSURANCE COVERAGE**

The Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Education recognizes us as a program religiously exempt from child day center licensing requirements recognize us. To meet the requirements for this status, we must annually submit the following forms: annual fire inspection, health and sanitation inspection, staff-child ratio information sheet, a staff health report on each staff member, statement of intent, and a statement of code compliance. If you have any questions, please contact:

Northern Regional Office, Division of Licensing  
410 Rosedale Court, Suite 270  
Warrenton, VA, 20186  
Phone: 540-347-6345, Fax: 540-347-6304

Sunbeam Children's Center of STUMC is covered by the public liability insurance of St. Thomas United Methodist Church.

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## **SUMMARY**

These policies have been set forth by the Sunbeam Children's Center of STUMC to clarify and give meaning to our program. Our center will continue to succeed by adhering to our established policies and by encouraging open communication among the children, families, and staff. The information contained in this Parent Handbook is a part of our commitment to you and your child, and we assume you will be responsible for following our policies. Please keep this handbook as a reference throughout the school year. Thank you for sharing your child with us!