

GROWING IN GOD'S LOVE



MT. OLIVE PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

REVISED NOVEMBER 2017

# Mt. Olive Preschool

10408 Hwy 290 West

Austin, TX 78736

Federal Tax ID # 74-2025774

Karen Keswick, Director

Jodi Welker, Assistant Director

Preschool Office 512- 288-2330

Fax 512-288-2375

Email: [admin@mtolivepreschool.org](mailto:admin@mtolivepreschool.org)

[www.mtolivepreschool.org](http://www.mtolivepreschool.org)

Mt. Olive Preschool is part of the mission and ministry of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Students and their families are invited and encouraged to participate in all activities, fellowship, and worship opportunities provided at Mt. Olive.

## Mt. Olive Lutheran Church

Paul Meyer, Pastor

Melissa Robertson, Office Manager

Church Office 512-288-2370

[info@connectwithjesus.org](mailto:info@connectwithjesus.org)

[www.mtoliveaustin.org](http://www.mtoliveaustin.org)

### Worship Times

8:00 am Liturgical Service

9:15 am Education Hour

10:30 am Contemporary Service

## OUR MISSION

Our mission at Mt. Olive Preschool is to teach a child Jesus loves them and to nurture their social, emotional, and academic development in a loving, Christian environment.

## OUR GOALS

- Provide children with a Christian education
- Help them develop a positive self-concept
- Help children develop a sense of sharing, caring, and kindness
- Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- Encourage children's language and physical development
- Encourage good health practices and safety awareness
- Encourage creative expression through art, music, and movement
- Play, have fun, and make friends

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe sharing the love of Jesus with each child is the most important thing we can do each day. We will provide a warm and loving atmosphere in which to learn. We believe that children learn best through a variety of experiences, including play. Each teacher will attempt to provide situations which make learning exciting and fun.

## CORE VALUES

### Faith

We believe teaching children about God's unconditional love for them is the most important thing we do each day. At Mt. Olive Preschool children learn about God's power, love, and promises through Bible stories and illustrations.

### Family

At Mt. Olive we consider your family to be a part of our family. We strive to provide a loving and caring environment for children and families.

### Friendship

At Mt. Olive, children learn to make friends and play together. Taking turns, sharing, and using kind words are important social skills that children learn and practice in preschool.

### FUN-damentals

Preschool is meant to be FUN. Children learn through play and exploration and have daily opportunities for both at Mt. Olive. By focusing on social as well as academic readiness, children leave Mt. Olive ready for the school environment ahead of them. Learning letters and letter sounds, colors, shapes, basic math concepts, and exploring the natural world provide a foundation for further academic success.

## School Session

Mt. Olive Preschool operates year round and sets its own school year calendar. The school calendar is set in close conjunction with the Dripping Springs ISD and Austin ISD school calendars.

In order to serve our families better, Mt. Olive Preschool chooses to have fewer school closures than the public schools. A school calendar will be issued at the start of each session.

## School Hours

Mt. Olive Preschool offers several options to better serve the needs of all families. Hours of attendance include the following options:

Full Time: 7:00am – 6:00pm

Extended Day: 8:00am – 3:30pm

Part Time: 8:00am – 12:30pm

## Days of Attendance

Toddlers (18-24 months), Twos and Threes

MWF or TTH or M-F

Part Time, Extended Day or Full Time

Pre-Kindergarten (4 Year Olds)

M-F only

Part Time, Extended Day or Full Time

Mt. Olive Preschool does NOT accept drop-in enrollment.

## Registration and Enrollment Procedures

Mt. Olive Preschool offers classes for children ages 18 months through 4-year-old Pre-Kindergarten. We admit children on a space available basis without regard to race, gender, national or ethnic origin or religion.

Children are placed in classes based on their age on September 1. *While each classroom had been designed with a specific age group in mind, each child will be placed in the class that best meets the needs of the child.*

Priority registration is given to students who are currently enrolled, siblings of currently enrolled students, and church members.

The following are necessary for enrollment:

1. Completion of all enrollment forms
2. Current immunization record with child's name and date of birth
3. Medical Documentation Form signed by child's physician
4. Payment of Registration and Supply Fee (annual, non-refundable fee)
5. Confirmation of class placement by the Director or Assistant Director
6. Prorated August tuition (School Year Session start only)

All completed forms and records must be turned in prior to attendance at Mt. Olive Preschool. All forms must be updated annually.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

Each child is to be picked up no later than the 12:30, 3:30, or 6:00 pick-up time for which he/she is registered. It is important to note that staffing numbers are reduced at 12:30 and at 3:30, and at 12:30 naptime begins. For the preservation of naptime and for maintaining proper student/teacher ratios, picking up on time is of the utmost importance.

A fee for late pick up will be assessed for pick up after these times. On inclement weather days, or when the child becomes ill at school, the child must be picked up **within one hour of notification**. Time is recorded from the atomic clock in the foyer.

Each family will be given one "Grace Day" per month. A Grace Day will be afforded as long as the parent/guardian arrives within five minutes of the scheduled pick up time. Parents will be notified when the Grace Day has been used.

A late fee will be assessed when:

- A Grace Day for the month has been used, or
- The parent is 5 minutes late or later

Late Pick-Up Fees

- First 5 minutes = \$10
- Each additional minute = \$1

## Tuition

- Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and is late after the 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Tuition received after the 5<sup>th</sup> will be charged a late payment fee of \$20.
- A billing statement will be given to each family prior to the tuition due date each month.
- Families are encouraged to take advantage of the Auto Tuition Withdrawal that is available FREE OF CHARGE.

- Tuition checks should be placed in the tuition drop box outside the Director's Office.
- If there is a problem with making tuition payments on time, please speak with the Director immediately.
- No refunds of pro-rated tuition amount will be given for illness, vacation or other absences.
- No refunds or pro-rated tuition or fees will be given for enrollment withdrawals.
- Tuition payments returned for insufficient funds will be assessed a \$20 fee. If the returned check causes tuition to be late, the late fee of \$20 will also be charged.

## Absence and Withdrawal

If a student will be absent from school, notification to the teacher or Director is requested in advance for planning purposes. If a student is absent on a particular day due to illness, etc., notification to the office by phone is requested and appreciated.

**30-day written notice is required prior to withdrawal.** Children are considered enrolled and tuition is owed until 30 days after notification of intent to withdraw. Neither tuition nor fees will be pro-rated or reimbursed for any days not attended or for early withdrawal.

## Notification of Changes in Enrollment

Thirty-day written notification is required for changes in student enrollment (i.e., increase or decrease in days per week or length of days attended). A Late Notice Change Fee of \$50 will be charged for changes made without prior 30-day notice.

## Summer Enrollment

### New Policy for 2017

Mt. Olive Preschool operates year-round. Families have the option to take time off from Preschool in the summer. Beginning summer 2017, families will be required to pay one month's summer tuition to hold their child's spot for fall. Children may attend Preschool during that month.

## Inclement Weather

Mt. Olive Preschool will be closed any day the Dripping Springs ISD schools are closed due to ice, snow, flooding, or other severe weather conditions. In the event DSISD schools open late due to weather, Mt. Olive Preschool will open at **10:00 a.m.** If DSISD schools close early, Mt. Olive Preschool will close early as well. Parents will be notified by telephone, text message, or email of early closures.

## Procedures for Release of Children

Mt. Olive Preschool will NOT release a student to anyone who is not listed on the enrollment papers on file. If someone other than the routine person(s) should need to pick up a student, the parent needs to send written notice to the school, stating the person's name and driver's license number. The person will be asked to present his/her driver's license for identification before the child is released to him/her.

If an emergency situation should occur during the day, and prior written notice was not given, a parent should call the school office and give a notice to the Director or Teacher.

## Illness/Exclusion

Mt. Olive Preschool is required by law (Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers §746.3601) to observe and enforce the following sick-day illness policies. A child will be excluded from care in the following circumstances:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the classroom activities.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following:
  - a. Oral temperature of 101 or greater, armpit temperature of 100 or greater.
  - b. Uncontrollable diarrhea or 2 or more episodes of vomiting in 24 hours
  - c. Any other symptoms of serious illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, or behavior changes
  - d. A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is not contagious.

In the event a child becomes ill at school, the child will be excluded from the classroom. The parent will be contacted and should come immediately to pick up the child. **The student is not permitted to return to school until he/she is free of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours WITHOUT medications.**

**The best way to prevent the spread of illness at the Preschool is for sick children to stay home until they are completely well. Full cooperation of all parents is required for the Preschool to maintain a healthy environment.**

When called to pick up a child due to illness that occurs during the school day, parents must pick up their sick child **within one hour of notification** or be subject to late pick-up policy and fees.

## Medication

Medication may be administered to a student under the following conditions:

1. The parent completes the medication chart in the classroom, including signature.
2. Medication must be in the original container, labeled with child's name, date and physician's name (if prescription), and directions to administer.
3. Over-the-counter medication that states "UNDER PHYSICIAN'S DIRECTION" for specific ages cannot be administered without a note from the child's physician.
4. Over-the-counter medication that states "DO NOT ADMINISTER" for certain ages cannot be administered by Preschool staff even with a physician's note. Parents may come to the school to administer such medication to their child, if necessary.

## Procedures for Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, the Mt. Olive staff will seek to ensure the safety of the child first. Should the emergency require professional attention, 911 will be called. Parents will be contacted immediately in the event of an emergency. If neither parent can be reached the Alternate Contact Persons listed in the Enrollment Form will be contacted.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan

See Appendix A for Mt. Olive Preschool's Emergency Preparedness Plan.

## Parent Notification/Communication

It is the desire of the faculty at Mt. Olive Preschool to keep in close communication with the parents and families of their students. The following avenues will be used to keep parents aware of events, needs, policy changes, classroom updates, etc. within the Preschool.

1. Weekly email
2. Sign-In Folders
3. Parent / Teacher Conferences
4. PTO – Parent Teacher Organization
5. Special Programs / Evening Events

## Discipline and Guidance

Discipline and guidance will always focus on the love and forgiveness we share toward one another as children of God. Teachers will only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction which include at least the following:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;



2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements;
4. Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

A parent/caregiver/guardian will be asked to cooperate with the teacher in reinforcing appropriate behavior. If the inappropriate behavior continues (examples: biting, hitting, hurting others, or persistent non-compliance with rules) the parent/caregiver/guardian may be asked to pick up the child from Preschool. Mt. Olive Preschool reserves the right to dismiss from its program any child who is a threat to the safety of another child or staff member.

\* For more information, refer to the Discipline & Guidance Policy.

## Lunches and Snacks

All students should bring their own lunch and drink from home. The lunch and drink should be kept in a container that does not need refrigeration. Lunch items can be kept cold with an ice pack in the child's lunch box. **Students should bring a water bottle each day.**

Students may bring items that need to be warmed up in a microwave. We ask that the items be kept to ones that only need warming for one minute or less.

The Preschool provides morning and afternoon snacks daily for all students.

## Immunizations, TB Tests, and Hearing and Vision Screenings

Each child enrolled at Mt. Olive Preschool must meet the applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health.

A copy of the child's current immunization record must be presented to the school on or before the child's first day of attendance.

It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the child current with the required immunizations and to provide the Preschool with a copy of updated records. Failure to do so could result in loss of enrollment.

Students of Mt. Olive Preschool are NOT required to have a TB Test for admittance; however, it is recommended for children whose families travel extensively abroad.

In accordance with State Regulations, Mt. Olive Preschool must file a report with the state on the vision and hearing screening results for all children age 4 by September 1.

Parents may have the screenings performed by their pediatrician, or may have their children screened at the Preschool. A licensed therapist will come to the Preschool during the year to perform the testing. Each student must have the screening performed, or provide a copy of the screening results that meet the State guidelines by the given date.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide the screening results or pay for the screening to be performed at the school. Failure to do so could result in the loss of enrollment.

## Water Activities

Children will have the opportunity to participate in water activities throughout the year. These activities include sprinklers and squirt bottles, etc. The activities do NOT include wading pools, pools or any type of activity where the child will be submerged in water. Parents will always be notified of water activity days in advance.

## Animals and Pets

For safety and health reasons, it is the policy of Mt. Olive Preschool NOT to have classroom pets, with the exception of fish tanks. If a child wishes to bring his/her pet to class to show to classmates, the parent should check with the Director in advance.

## Open Door Policy

At Mt. Olive Preschool we believe that offering the best environment for children requires a team effort between administration, teachers, and parents. Parents should feel welcome to address any issues or concerns about the Preschool with the Director. This can be done via telephone, email or in person. Parents are welcome to observe their child at any time during the hours of Preschool operation. We ask parents to do so in a manner that provides the least amount of distraction and disruption to the regular class routine and the students. If parents know in advance they would like to observe, it is always helpful to let the teacher know. Parents are encouraged to be a part of their child's classroom. There are numerous ways parents can be of assistance and get involved. Parents are encouraged to check with their child's teacher to find the most convenient and effective ways to be a part of the classroom activities.

Parents are also welcome to review a copy of the Minimum Standards Requirements for Licensed Child Care Facilities at any time. A copy of this document is available in the Preschool Office. The most recent copy of the school's Licensing Inspection Report is always available for review and can be found on the bulletin board in the hallway.

For information of child care licensing call 1-800-862-5252 or visit the website at [www.tdprs.states.tx.us/childcare](http://www.tdprs.states.tx.us/childcare). To report a case of child abuse call 1-800-252-5400.

## Toys from Home

Except for naptime cuddle objects, toys and stuffed animals should not be brought to school. These items can get lost or broken, and often cause a disagreement among the children. Classroom Show and Tell Days when children can bring toys from home will be scheduled periodically.

## Gang-Free Zone

Pursuant to House Bill 2086 and Chapter 42 of the Human Resources Code which includes Section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009, Mt. Olive Preschool is required to inform parents that a gang-free zone exists within 1000 feet of our facility. Any gang-related or criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of our facility is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

## Breast Feeding

Mt. Olive Preschool will be happy to provide a comfortable place for mothers to breastfeed. The Cry Room at the back of the sanctuary affords a rocking chair and privacy for breastfeeding. Mothers have the right to breastfeed and may bring breast milk for their children while in care.

## Preventing and Responding to Abuse and Neglect of Children

At Mt. Olive Preschool, keeping children safe is of the utmost priority. All employees are required to obtain annual training in the following areas:

- Recognizing the signs of child abuse and neglect
- Shaken Baby Syndrome, SIDS, and Understanding Early Childhood Brain Development (for teachers of children aged 24 months or younger)

Information for parents to increase awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect as well as warning signs is posted on the bulletin board in the Preschool foyer near the Pre-K classroom.

## Exceptions to Preschool Policies

Any exceptions to the policies within this handbook must be approved by the Mt. Olive Preschool Board.

**APPENDIX A**  
**MT. OLIVE PRESCHOOL**  
**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

**Evacuation Plan**

1. Fire alarm sounds or notification of need to evacuate is given.
2. Immediately exit building through primary exit route from classroom.
3. Teachers check to see all students are gathered and count number of students.
4. Proceed outside to front parking lot or grassy area behind building
5. Teachers count students to ensure all students are still gathered together.
6. Everyone to remain in parking lot or in grassy area until notified that it is safe to return to building.

**Guidelines for Staff**

1. Learn the escape routes to the exits.
2. Follow instructions of the designated staff in charge (director).
3. Count children in your supervision.
4. Leave immediately. Do not stop for any reason.
5. Count children in your supervision again after reaching evacuation area.
6. Stay at the assembly point until released.
7. Treat any fire alarm as the real thing.

**Accounting for Children**

1. Count children present before and after evacuation.
2. Bring attendance sheet for that day and parent contact information.
3. Check off those present.
4. If someone is missing, inform the fire department.

**Responsibilities for Designated Staff in Charge**

1. Survey area carefully ensure all staff and children have evacuated.
2. Be the last one to leave your area.
3. Director will be in charge, Assistant Director will back her, Senior Teacher will back both.

## Severe Weather

### When a Tornado Warning is issued

1. Go immediately to the hallway by the restrooms.
2. Take a flashlight.
3. Sit facing the wall with small children on the inside.
4. If you are outside, go immediately into the building to the assigned area.

### After the Tornado passes

1. Watch for debris and fallen power lines. Stay away from damaged areas. Use flashlight if needed.
2. Listen for information/instructions from designated school officials.

### Alternate Shelter

- In the event that children and staff must relocate to an alternate shelter, Stonebridge Health Center, 11127 Circle Dr., Austin, TX 78736, 512-288-8844, will be the alternate shelter.
- Children and staff will walk on the path between Mt. Olive and Stonebridge to get to the alternate shelter.

### Communication

- In the event of an emergency, staff will **call 911 for Police, Fire or EMS.**
- The telephone number for Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department is 512-972-5600
- The telephone number at **Mt. Olive Preschool is 512-288-2330.**
- Parents will be notified by phone, text, or email of early school closures due to weather or other emergencies.