



2026-2027 YMCA PRESCHOOL AT THE COMPLEX HANDBOOK

The Preschool program here at the Complex was established in the fall of 1983. We are celebrating over 40 years of creating smiles on the faces of children in the Fort Mill area. Your child will receive the expertise of our caring, qualified staff who are educated and experienced in their work with young children. Each day for the children will be a creative, learning experience!

Our handbook was prepared to acquaint you with our preschool program. The policies and procedures set forth will enable our staff to provide a safe, well-organized program for each child. It is important that you read this booklet as well as all information sent home with your child throughout the preschool year. Please be sure to share this information with all persons bringing/picking up your child. Please visit our [website](#) for more information.

Our staff will strive to make this year one in which we will all work together in meeting your child's needs. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the director with any information or concerns you may have. We are dedicated to making each child feel safe and loved!

Our Preschool Beliefs

Young children are eager and enthusiastic to learn! It is important for each child to be an individual, to express themselves creatively and to feel free to develop these qualities. Equally important is learning self-control, sharing and social adjustment. Each child develops at their own speed and we strive to offer every opportunity for them to learn at their own level. We are dedicated to making each day stimulating and challenging for each child. We welcome all families and realize that the inclusion of families from different ethnicities, cultures, abilities, and family structures will enhance our program and the lives of the children who come together here.

Our Preschool Day

Outdoor adventures on the preschool trail, outdoor classroom and nature-based classroom programs promote curiosity about the world around them.

Learning to share, take turns, plan, work and play with others promote wonderful life-long skills.

- Educational learning through hands-on activities and interactive play teach children their ABC's, 123's, colors, shapes and other themes preparing for kindergarten.
- Stories, poetry, dramatization and books lead children on adventures and stretch their imagination.
- Clay, play-dough, crayons, markers, scissors and other manipulatives aid in the development of small motor skills.
- Arts, crafts and painting time explore the creative side of young minds.
- Water play in our indoor pool, besides being lots of fun, helps to build self-confidence and coordination.
- Our FUNdamentals Program, outdoor play, gym time and classroom movement all promote physical fitness, increase large motor skills and develop good sportsmanship.
- Our Science and Nature Program promote an interest in the outdoor world, while giving students the opportunity to learn about nature through hands-on activities.
- Learning through song and music builds listening and attention skills, in addition to self expression and cooperation with others.
- Still want more??? An additional opportunity is The Lunch Crew (TLC) on a certain day each month. Children bring their lunch and stay until 2pm to enjoy fun activities and play. Children will remain with their class throughout TLC in order to continue to social distance from other classrooms. The cost is \$10 per session.

Toys will be sanitized daily (or as needed throughout the morning). Classrooms will be professionally cleaned daily after preschool hours. No water bottles or lunch boxes from home. The 'Leader of the Day' will provide snack. We will provide water throughout the morning. Your child may bring a backpack to school.

Student/Teacher Ratio: Three Year Old Classes 7/1 Four Year Old Class 8/1

Requirements for Preschool Admission

Children must be “potty-trained” and able to care for self in the rest room. We will assist children with verbal instructions and communicate with parents if we feel it is necessary. Children must be the appropriate age for each program.

- For the three year old program: Each child must turn three on or before September 1st of the year he/she enters the three year old class.
- For the four year old program: Each child must turn four on or before September 1st of the year he/she enters the four year old class.

Each child must have up-to-date immunization shots when starting preschool. Please have an updated copy to turn in with your child’s registration form. Religious Exemption Forms are NOT accepted.

2026–2027 Registration and Tuition Fees

In order to assure your child’s placement in our program, a registration fee of \$130 is due at the time of application. This fee is non-refundable. After this date, if you have not paid or contacted the Preschool, then your child’s classroom spot will be given to another student. Tuition fees are due one month in advance. The first draft will be taken on August 1, 2025 for September’s tuition.

To be eligible for member rates your child must be an active member of the Upper Palmetto YMCA.

- 5 Day Classes for 4s
 - Members \$370 per month/ Non-members \$420 per month
- 3 Day Classes for 4s
 - Members \$345 per month/ Non-members \$395 per month
- 5 Day Classes for 3s
 - Members \$355 per month/ Non-members \$405 per month
- 3 Day Classes for 3s
 - Members \$290 per month/ Non-members \$340 per month

We require set up of credit card or bank draft for monthly tuition throughout the school year. Your card will automatically be charged or bank drafted on the first or first business day of each month. This will begin with the next payment for October tuition.

Monthly Tuition	Due On
September	August 1
October	September 1
November	October 1
December	November 1
January	December 1
February	January 1, 2027
March	February 1
April	March 1
May	April 1

A \$20 late fee will be enforced for payments not received within three days of automatic credit card or bank draft decline due to lack of funds or any other card issue by the card holder. If tuition becomes delinquent for more than three days, I understand that my child may not be allowed to attend the preschool program until full payment has been satisfied or payment arrangements have been made.

A 30-day notice is required in writing prior to a child’s withdrawal from the preschool program during which time you are responsible for the current month’s fee that your child is in attendance. Notice of withdrawal must be given to the Preschool Director.

We offer a membership assistance program to assist with your tuition needs. Please inquire at Membership Services for an application.

The Lunch Crew and FUNdamentals payments are separate from monthly tuition and are paid online at www.ymcaup.org.

Drop Off Procedures

All preschool doors will remain locked until 8:45a.m. Please do not bring your child prior to that time. Teachers are busy preparing for the day and are not always in the classroom or online. Children should be dropped off in front of the Preschool building under the covered shelter. Teachers will be there to greet you between 8:45am and 9:15a.m. Children should be ready to exit the car when the teacher opens the car door. If not, you will be asked to park until your child is ready to exit the car.

Parents, please stay in your car during drop off and pick up times. Parents exiting the vehicle will cause a backup in the drop off/pick up line. Teachers will be outside to assist your child with the car door. In order to maintain the safest car rider line possible, please adhere to the following:

- Every child must exit and enter the vehicle on the right side (the side closest to the preschool door).
- Teachers are not permitted to 'cross traffic' and walk in between cars to help children exist on the left side.
- Children are never to exit the vehicle alone without the assistance of a teacher.
- Teachers are not permitted to walk children between cars that are in the car rider line.
- Should you need to help your child from their car seat, please put your car into the 'Park' position and proceed to assist.
- Please proceed through the car rider line with extreme caution and at a slow pace.
- If your child is refusing to exit the car, please pull around, park, and walk the child to the preschool door. This will ensure the safety of all.

Should you choose to walk your child to the preschool door, please park in the front parking lot of the Recreation Complex, go through the front door, through the gym and to the preschool department. We ask that you follow this procedure so as not to distract other drivers and teachers during drop off/pick up routines and it is safer than walking children through moving traffic.

Please be respectful of others in the car line. If you arrive late, you **MUST** exit your car and escort your child to the front door of the Preschool. Ring the bell and remain with your child until greeted by a preschool teacher. No one is allowed in the preschool area without the presence of a preschool staff member.

Pick Up Procedures

At pick up time the children will be seated in the preschool hall, lobby, or classroom and brought to your car. Be sure to have your pick up card visible. **DO NOT** exit your vehicle. Teachers will open car doors and allow your child entrance into the car. You are responsible for properly securing your child upon pick up. Please be prompt when picking up. A late fee of \$10 for each 10 minutes will be added to your account when you are late. If you are late, please park in the parking lot and come to the door to pick up your child. He/she will be located in their classroom or with the director. Failure to comply with late charges may result in the dismissal of your child from the program.

Hours of operation:

Three's 8:45am-12:00pm -late fees begin at 12:15pm

Four's 8:45am-12:30pm -late fees begin at 12:45pm

Daily Release

As a general rule, a child will be released only to the custodial parent or guardian. Should the need arise for someone other than the custodial parent or guardian to pick up the child please follow the procedures identified below.

Individuals listed on the registration form may pick up the child by having picture identification. Other individuals not listed for pick-up on the registration form may be allowed with one of the following procedures.

- 1) A hand written note from the parent or guardian must be given prior to pick up identifying who will be picking up the child on what specific date.
- 2) Another option on short notice is a parent telephone call to the director specifically requesting pick up by a certain person. In each situation the person picking up the child must show picture identification to the director and/or teacher.

Health

If your child is well enough to come to preschool, we consider him/her well enough to participate in all indoor and outdoor activities. Please do not bring your child to school if you suspect he/she is "coming down with something" or if he/she has had a fever, diarrhea, or been vomiting within the last 24 hours. Many illnesses are most contagious in early stages. Very runny noses, bad coughs, and lots of sneezes spread colds very quickly. Let such symptoms diminish before sending your child back to school. If your child has an allergy condition which results in these symptoms and he/she is not contagious let the teacher know this also.

Please follow these guidelines to help all students stay healthy and ready to learn:

- **A fever:** if your child has a fever, 100 degrees or more, please remain at home. Your child may return after 24 hours fever free without taking fever reducing medication.
- **A new cough:** if you notice your child has a new cough that is not allergy related, coughs several times repeatedly (every few minutes continuously and is uncontrollable) throughout the day or night, is 'deep' and/or 'croupy' please remain at home until symptom free.
- **A runny nose:** if your child has an uncontrollable runny nose that is discolored and thick, please remain at home until infection is gone.
- **Strep Throat/Ear Infection:** if your child is diagnosed with strep or an ear infection, he or she must have completed a 24 hour period of being on antibiotics before returning to school.
- **Diarrhea:** if your child has 2 or more loose or watery stools in a day or unable to control bowel movements please remain at home. Child may return when symptom free for at least 24 hours.
- **Vomiting:** if your child has two or more episodes of unexplained vomiting or extreme nausea, please remain at home until 24 hours symptom free.
- **Skin rashes/open sores and/or bug bites:** if your child is experiencing any of these issues please remain at home until symptom free. Which means rash is gone or sores are dry (not oozing) and/or can be completely covered by a bandage.
- **Pink or Red eyes:** if your child has extreme red/bloodshot eyes and is accompanied by colored drainage please remain at home until 24 hours symptom free.

- **Lice: if your child has lice and/or nits please remain at home until hair has been treated and is lice/nit free. This may require more than one treatment over a several day period before returning to school.**

We do our best to keep the preschool classrooms, toys, furniture, etc. clean so as not to spread colds and viruses. We also encourage hand washing throughout the morning.

Unfortunately, as you know germs can spread very rapidly from child to child. If you suspect your child is 'coming down with something' please keep him/her at home until he or she is feeling better.

Please notify us if your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease (such as Covid-19, flu, strep throat, conjunctivitis, or even lice) so that we may alert other parents to the symptoms. The director and teachers will always err on the side of caution when dealing with any issues related to sickness or symptoms of sickness. It will be up to the Director's discretion when the child will be able to return.

If a child becomes ill at preschool, the parents will be notified and are expected to pick up the child immediately. Please be sure that current telephone numbers are available on your child's preschool records.

No medications, with the exception of epi pens, inhalers, or Benadryl will be administered by the preschool staff. Epi pens, inhalers and Benadryl will be administered only when a signed Emergency Medical Treatment form has been completed by the parents/guardians of a child for emergency situations. Emergency prescriptions of inhalers or epi pens must be in the original container clearly labeled with the child's name and have written directions from a physician for administering the medication.

Only unopened OTC Benadryl with signed Emergency Medical Treatment form will be accepted. Please enclose medication in a zip lock bag and give to your child's teacher to be kept in the classroom's first aid kit. No child is ever allowed to have any type of medication in their backpack or on their persons which includes necessary epi pens and inhalers.

All allergies and health conditions **MUST** be identified on the medical form with the enrollment agreement prior to your child's start date. For the safety of our students and staff, we require that all immunizations be current. An up-to-date immunization form must be on file at the Preschool at the Complex prior to the child's start date. Religious Exemption Forms are **NOT** accepted.

Snacks

A morning snack time will be allotted for each day. The "Leader of the Day" will provide a snack for your child daily by sending in a healthy snack to share with the class. A list of preferred healthy snacks will be provided to you. The Preschool is a peanut/tree nut free facility. No snacks with peanut/tree nuts, "contains traces of nuts", or "made in a facility where nuts are produced" will be allowed during snack time or The Lunch Crew. Please be sure to list any food allergies on the medical form and inform both of your child's teachers and the Preschool Director.

Special snacks (such as mini cupcakes, cookies, etc.) may be provided by you for your child's birthday. If your child's birthday falls during the summer months, he/she may have a birthday celebration in May. If you wish to share any snacks with the entire class all foods must be unopened and include the label for varication of ingredients

Clothing Attire

Washable play clothes are most suitable! Every effort will be made to prevent getting paint glue, etc. on clothing but please do not expect your child to stay perfectly clean – outdoor play is a lot of fun.

Clothes should be easy on/off to assist the children in trips to the restroom and water play days. Clothes with belts, button, ties, etc. should be avoided.

Children should have a complete change of clothes in his/her bag each day. In case of a "restroom accident" soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag to be sent home. Teachers will not be responsible for washing soiled clothing.

An extra set of clothing should be sent in your child's backpack and remain in your child's cubby.

For safety purposes, shoes are required to be rubber sole shoes which entirely cover the feet. Absolutely NO flip-flops, open toe/open heel shoes, or crocs are permitted; they simply are not safe for outdoor or gym play! Tennis shoes with Velcro are great for preschool play.

If proper shoes are not worn, parents will be notified and the child will not be allowed to participate in physical outdoor or gym activities until proper shoes arrive.

All clothing, including towels for water day, should be labeled with child's name. Preschool staff is not responsible for lost items.

Weekly Water Play

Most classes participate in a weekly water play session at some point during their school year. Weekly water play in the pool for the 4 year olds begins in the fall. Water play, besides being lots of fun, helps to build self confidence and coordination. Your child's water play schedule will be given to you during orientation. The water in our pool (the 2 to 3 foot pool) is heated and the air temperature is approximately 80 degrees.

American Red Cross trained life guards are on duty during our swim time. Safety is our number one concern!

If your child is too ill for water play, he/she must be picked up from school during this time. No child will be allowed to sit out or on the side for the entire water play session.

Swim bags should be large enough to hold the child's towel, clothes and shoes. Clothes should be easy on/easy off as children will be encouraged to dress themselves with as little assistance as possible from the teachers, thus nurturing independence. Velcro or slip on shoes should be worn on water play days.

A bath size towel (beach towels are too big and bulky) is just right for small hands to manipulate after water play.

Swim suits should be worn under clothing each water play day.

It is very important to label all items of clothing and towels for easy identification. Leaving it up to children to identify clothing may not be a reliable source, please label all items.

Toys

We have plenty of toys and equipment in the preschool classes. When children bring toys from home often there is a problem with sharing, toys are misplaced and sometimes even broken.

Behavior Management

Positive behavior is encouraged through hands-on interactive activities and centers developed for both indoor and outdoor recreation experiences. Kind words, hugs, words of encouragement and praise will be used to instill repeated good behavior. The use of physical discipline will never be used. Behavior modifications for child discipline include: 1) Reminder of the rules; 2) Redirection to another activity; and 3) Time out for reflection.

If misbehavior continues, the child will be removed from the situation and have a talk with the Preschool Director. If improper behavior continues following the meeting with the Preschool Director, a conference will be set up with parents to ask for their assistance in resolving the conflict.

If the misbehavior continues after the conference, parents will be contacted to come in and remove their child from the center. At this time the child could be put on suspension. No center can meet the needs of all children and we reserve the right to terminate services when a child's behavior poses a direct or significant threat to the health or safety of others, self, and/or fundamentally alters the classroom program. The following types of behavior will result in dismissal from the preschool program.

Type I Behavior

Type I behavior includes, but is not limited to: serious infractions such as damage or theft of property, assault, possessing weapons, tobacco products, alcohol, narcotics or illegal drugs, bullying, repeated TYPE II violations, and any conduct that may be detrimental to the other program participants. TYPE I behavior can result in immediate dismissal from the program for the remainder of the school year. No refunds will be issued.

Type II Behavior

Type II Behavior is less serious, but disruptive, and therefore unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to: profanity, verbal abuse, uncooperative behavior, verbal or physical disrespect. If the behavior persists, parents will be notified with a conduct report or a phone call. Suspension and/or dismissal from the program may occur if the behavior continues. No refunds will be issued for days missed due to suspension.

Action Steps: The YMCA believes that children learn self-control for appropriate and responsible behavior when adults treat them with dignity and use proper techniques:

- Guide children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits for behavior
- Value mistakes as learning opportunities
- Redirect children to more acceptable behavior or activities
- Make eye-to-eye contact and listen when children talk about their feelings and frustrations
- Guide children to resolve their own conflicts and model skills that help them to solve problems
- Patiently remind children of rules and their rationale as needed
- Use effective praise that is immediate, sincere, and specific
- State directions in a positive fashion

“Time out” is used as a method of behavior management. If this does not solve the inappropriate behavior, a behavior report will be written and discussed with a parent.

- If a child receives three written behavior reports during the year, the child will be suspended at the end of the day of the third report. The suspension length will be the decision of the Preschool Director and will be based on the offense.
- Expulsion from the program is automatic for fighting or stealing. There are no refunds given for suspensions or expulsions.
- The YMCA has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying. Bullying of any type toward another child, teacher or director results in automatic, immediate expulsion.

Communication between parents and staff is vital in the preschool setting. However, threats, bullying, or any other assertive behavior from a parent/guardian toward a staff member, teacher or director will not be tolerated and will result in the dismissal of the child from the program.

Inclement Weather

When faced with potentially dangerous weather conditions, the Preschool at the Complex will follow the Fort Mill School District's decision on closings. Information can be found at their [website](#) and on the local news. Information is also relayed by the primary radio and television stations in Rock Hill and Charlotte.

If there is a FMSD weather delay, the Preschool at the Complex will
CLOSE for the day.

Makeup days due to weather or other unforeseen reasons will be determined by the Preschool Director, and parents will be notified as soon as a decision has been made. Should inclement weather occur after preschool begins, we encourage parents to pick up their child as soon as possible.

Emergency Drills

Fire, tornado and lock down drills will be conducted quarterly, giving the children and staff security in knowing what to do in case of an emergency. In case of a fire, children are led outside to designated classroom areas identified by the fire department. A diagram of exit route and designated outside area can be found in each classroom. In case of a tornado warning, children are taken into an interior room where we sing, do finger plays and chat until the danger has passed.

We would advise you not to venture into the storm. Should a lock down occur, children will be barricaded in a classroom and will not be allowed to open the door to anyone. Your child's safety will be our number one priority.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the unlikely event of an emergency requiring evacuation, we will remain at the preschool location for 30 minutes after evacuation notification. Parents and authorized persons may pick up during this time.

Preschool at the Complex
971 E. Tom Hall Street
Fort Mill, SC 29715