

# **St. Matthew's Early Education Center**



By Santiago Solares

## **Parent Handbook**

**2016-2017**

# **St. Matthew's**

## **United Methodist Church**

## **Early Education Center**

**14900 Annapolis Road  
Bowie, MD 20715**

[www.stmatthews-bowie.org](http://www.stmatthews-bowie.org)

### **Telephone Numbers**

Main Office	301-464-1813
Fax Number	301-262-2148

### **E-Mail Addresses**

Director	<u><a href="mailto:directoreec@gmail.com">directoreec@gmail.com</a></u>
Assistant Director	<u><a href="mailto:christinvare@gmail.com">christinvare@gmail.com</a></u>
Business Manager	<u><a href="mailto:eecbilling@gmail.com">eecbilling@gmail.com</a></u>

### **Administration**

Director	Leah Tipton
Assistant Director	Christin Vare
Business Manager	Stephanie White

### **School Hours**

Morning Classes	8:45 - 11:45
All Day pre-K	9:00 - 2:30
Afternoon PreK	12:30 - 3:30
Kindergarten	9:00 - 3:15
Child Care Hours	7:00 - 6:00

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at: St Matthews Early Education Center

# The Best Learning Center in Bowie

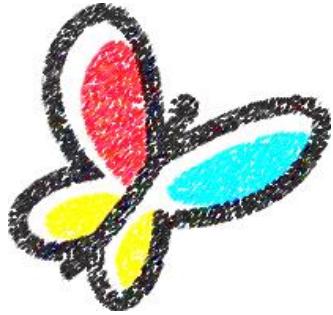
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Many thanks to our loyal families!  
Your dedication and support  
mean the world to us!

It has been our pleasure  
to serve you!



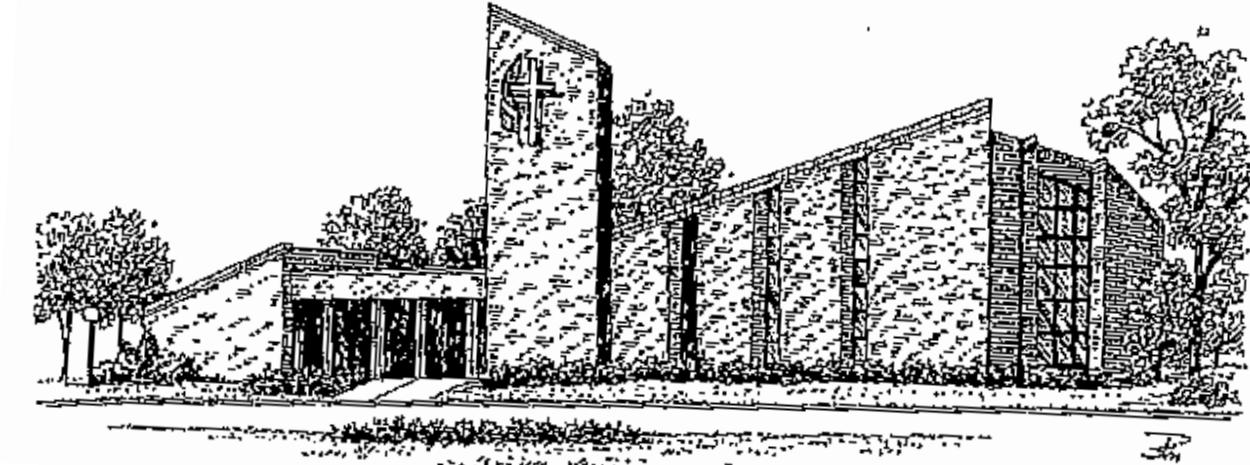
# play, explore, SOAR!

Welcome to St. Matthew's Early Education Center! This fall marks the opening of our **51st** year of preschool and kindergarten and our **27th** year providing year-round child care. It has been our honor to serve two generations of young children in this amazingly diverse and dynamic town!

In the last five decades we have learned a thing or two about educating and caring for young people. I think all of our parents will agree that our experienced, dedicated, and loving **STAFF** is the most important feature at the EEC. Teachers and aides have been here, on average, for seven years. They are credentialed, creative and professional!

Time has also taught us that the best philosophical approach to educating preschoolers is the idea that **PLAY** is the work of young children. Through play, children hone their skills of communication & language, coordination, creativity, problem solving, planning, self-confidence, and socialization. Teachers guide students and encourage them with an intentional selection of activities and individual attention. In this safe and encouraging atmosphere, our students feel free to **EXPLORE** their curiosity so that ultimately, they **SOAR** as students and friends!

**PLAY...EXPLORE...SOAR**  
The St. Matthew's Way!



## History

Since its inception in 1965, St. Matthew's United Methodist Nursery School and Kindergarten has been an important resource for young families in the Bowie area. Developed as a community outreach ministry, church members created a program to enrich the emotional, social, physical, and intellectual lives of young children. In the Methodist tradition of *providing opportunities for spiritual and intellectual growth ...for people from all faiths and walks of life*, St. Matthew's EEC welcomes children, families, and staff of all races, religions, national and ethnic origins, sexual orientations and disabilities.

In 1989, in response to the changing demographics of our community, St. Matthew's added child care to its preschool classes and became St. Matthew's United Methodist Early Education Center. Today, our dedicated and caring staff have the great joy of serving 220 enthusiastic children and families. Together, we form a warm and welcoming community of learners.

## Program Philosophy

Our program provides a happy, enriching, and productive first school experience for young children. It is our firm belief that positive attitudes formed in the crucial first years will continue throughout our students' lives, and that well-planned learning experiences in the early years will benefit not only the individual child, but the community and country as well.

The EEC's program is developmental in approach with emphasis placed on the child learning and achieving at an individually appropriate level. Within our predictable



daily schedule, there is moderate structure, flexibility in attitudes and methods, and the belief that each child must be free to gain confidence in his/her abilities. There is a time for structured activities when the teacher can present an interactive lesson to a small group. There is order and routine as children clean up, get ready for different activities, follow directions, and recognize the needs and rights of others. There is also a time for “free play” when a wide variety of materials and experiences are available for children to make choices. In the words of James Hymes, “free play is thinking time for young children” but in the words of young children, “free play is fun!”

## Program Goals

St. Matthew's Early Education Center has well-established goals that help each child to:

- Develop a positive self-concept about himself and his ability to learn.
- Develop confidence and competency through successful social, emotional, intellectual, and physical experiences.
- Develop skills and form concepts in areas of language, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, health, and safety.
- Develop thinking skills through opportunities to form conclusions based on reasoning and logical progression.
- Understand and cope with feelings and emotions
- Appreciate differences in others.
- Demonstrate independence in decision-making, self-care, and self-evaluation.
- Express herself creatively and imaginatively in her use of ideas and emotions.
- Experience success and cope constructively with frustration.
- Feel secure and comfortable in a happy and relaxed atmosphere.



# PLAY

**Playchool**, our program for two-year-olds, is built around the concept that *play is the work of young children*; our program is fun!

Within a flexible and developmentally appropriate curriculum, our students sing, dance, play, create, and learn social skills. We also focus on language development, self-expression, and self-care tasks.

Our Playschool is a unique program in Bowie, providing parents the opportunity to choose from either part-time or full-time care. This means that some parents use our program to introduce the school setting to their child for a few hours at a time, while others choose this program to transition their child from home day care to an academic child care center.

Playchool children DO NOT need to be potty-trained prior to admission!



# EXPLORE



**Preschool** for three-year-olds and **Prekindergarten** for four-year-olds compose the foundation of our program. In warm and secure classrooms, students are introduced to the rhythms and routines of a school environment.

A variety of schooling options are available. We offer 2-day, 3-day, & 5-day classes. Offerings change year-to-year, so please check our website for the latest information.

Our **Preschool** curriculum is called High Reach. It nurtures the curiosity of young children through play, art, music, movement, and individualized instruction. Preschoolers are introduced to early learning skills in an organic method, gaining familiarity with letters, sounds, and numbers in their play, during projects, and through teacher-lead circle time. Children should be potty-trained before starting school.



Our **Prekindergarten** program uses the dynamic curriculum called *Let's Begin With the Letter People* along with the companion piece, *DIG: Develop. Inspire. Grow.* These well-known and exciting programs facilitate explicit instruction in literacy, reading, language arts, science, math, and social studies. Most importantly, our pre-k students continue to play, experiment, explore, and create in a secure but challenging environment. At the end of the year, they are thrilled about school and well-prepared to enter kindergarten with confidence and the essential skills for success.

# SOAR!

## Kindergarten

In a warm and inviting classroom with a student/teacher ratio of 7:1, our kindergarteners begin their academic careers with inspiring curriculum and individualized instruction. Emphasis is placed on developing strong reading and thinking skills and encouraging children to be themselves - **curious explorers of the world around them!**

We provide explicit instruction in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, music, Spanish, art and P.E.. We also balance this instruction with time to play during 2 recesses and free-choice activities at the end of the day. Kindergarten is a full-day program with before- and after-care available.

Our kindergarteners leave St. Matthew's with the academic skills and self-confidence to **SOAR** in a wide-range of public and private schools. Recently, we have sent students to Bowie public schools, Crofton public schools, Bowie Montessori, Cornerstone Academy, Grace Christian, Holy Trinity, Indian Creek, Key School, St. Andrew's, St. Anne's, St. Martin's, St. Pius X, and School of the Incarnation.





## P.E. and Music

Each 3-day & 5-day class in our Playschool, Nursery School and Kindergarten programs has at least two specials classes each week. Students studying P.E. focus on such age-appropriate topics as body & space awareness, cooperation, traveling & locomotive skills, and rhythm. In Music, students are introduced to rhythm, singing, movement, and dance. Students also participate in two music performances a year.

## Child Care

Child care is available for our current students as an addition to their school day. Before-care begins at 7 A.M. and after-care is available until 6 P.M.. Child care teachers supplement our school programs through planned activities and routines that reinforce academic, social, emotional, and physical growth and development. St. Matthew's EEC provides two snacks daily, one in the morning and the other in mid-afternoon. Parents provide lunch.





## Summer Session

Over the summer, we continue our child care program from 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. for children ages 2 to 6. Using weekly themes as our inspiration, teachers plan special art projects, games, songs, books, snacks, activities and visiting entertainers. Our schedule is more flexible during the summer, but the underlying structure of the school day provides the continuity and security our children have come to expect. **Summer session is open to students from all schools.**

## Summer Enrichment Program

The Summer Enrichment Program is the latest addition to our comprehensive child care program. Children in grades 1 through 3 participate in 2 to 3 field trips per week to such places as the Glenn Dale Splash Park, Pirate Adventures, Pump It Up, the National Zoo, Bowie Baysox and more. In addition, the Summer Enrichment Program follows the same weekly themes as the Summer Session and participates in a variety of thematic academic, artistic, and athletic activities. Our Summer



Enrichment Program strives to find the right balance between structure and adventure for our independent school-aged friends.

## Faculty and Staff

Our faculty and staff are the reason our school is so successful and our students are so happy. Through strong partnerships with families, our dedicated and experienced staff provides a nurturing, loving, and enriching environment for young children. Currently, our faculty and staff have been with St. Matthew's for an average of seven years. They are certified through the Office of Child Care and background checks are processed through the FBI and Maryland's Criminal Justice Information System. Each lead teacher in the nursery school and kindergarten classes has a bachelor's degree, each teaching assistant has their 90-Hour Early Childhood Development and Curriculum certification, and 70% of our child care aides are senior staff qualified by the Office of Child Care and the Maryland State Department of Education. In addition, St. Matthew's requires teachers and aides to be certified in First Aid and CPR and to complete professional development classes each year. St. Matthew's EEC program is highly respected because our staff is experienced, well-educated and devoted to their students.

## The EEC Community

Educating young children takes a village, so the daily involvement of our families is an essential factor in our success. Parents, grandparents, aunts & uncles, babysitters, nannies, and friends participate in a variety of [COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES](#). We call on active members of our community to govern on our school board, to organize as room parents, and to assist us with fundraising. Parents share special talents such as photography, music, and art. Other parents provide special snacks and classroom items. We thrive on the energy and talents of those around us!



**ST. MATTHEW'S**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The EEC Community is also a part of [St. Matthew's United Methodist Church](#). While we do not participate in worship services, our teachers, students, and families contribute to several church missions. In the last few years, EEC families have given food to the Bowie Interfaith Food Bank, filled Christmas stockings for children whose parents are incarcerated, and purchased sweatshirts for



disadvantaged children in Prince George's County. We are very proud of the generosity of our families!

St. Matthew's UMC also encourages EEC families to attend their functions throughout the year. EEC students love the church's Trunk-or-Treat Halloween Festival, Vacation Bible School, and Family Movie Nights. Likewise, church members support the school by participating in fundraisers like Claire's Gourmet and our monthly restaurant nights.

Together, St. Matthew's United Methodist Church and the Early Education Center have created an inclusive community of lifelong learners and doers!



## CONTACT US

If you are interested in exploring St. Matthew's Early Education Center as a school for your child, please don't hesitate to stop by or give us a call. We also schedule tours of our facilities between 9 am and 11:30 am.

**Director:** Leah Tipton

**Assistant Director:** Christin Vare

**Business Manager:** Stephanie White

**PHONE:** 301-464-1813

**EMAIL:** [directoreec@gmail.com](mailto:directoreec@gmail.com) Or [eecbilling@gmail.com](mailto:eecbilling@gmail.com)

**WEB:** [www.stmatthews-bowie.org](http://www.stmatthews-bowie.org)



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St Matthews Early  
Education Center

# Policies & Procedures

## Registration and Admission

St. Matthew's Early Education Center encourages your admissions inquiries throughout the year. Please call the school with questions or to make an appointment to tour our facilities. We begin enrollment for the next school year in February. At the time of registration, a non-refundable fee will be required to officially enroll a student. As classes fill, a waiting list will be maintained in chronological order so that as vacancies arise, spaces may be filled in an orderly and equitable manner. The registration fee will be due when the child is officially placed in a class.

St. Matthew's EEC accepts children with special needs that can be adequately addressed within our classrooms. If your child has a diagnosed special need, we request that parents share this information and a complete IEP with the director and the teacher so that we have the knowledge to provide the best care possible.

## Registration for the 2017-2018 School Year

- **In-House Registration** for all attending students, siblings, & St. Matthew's UMC families  
7 am Wednesday, February 8, 2017
- **New Student Registration**  
7 am Wednesday, February 22, 2017

## Registration for the Summer Session

We are re-evaluating how we do summer registration so these dates will be announced before February Registration.

## Requisite Paperwork

Prior to the first day of school, parents or guardians must provide us with the following paperwork:

1. Evidence of a physical examination. Health Inventory and form signed by a physician or nurse practitioner.
2. Evidence of required immunizations.
3. Evidence of Blood-Lead testing.
4. An Emergency Contact form.

## **Tuition**

Tuition is paid on a monthly basis beginning July 1 and ending March 1. Tuition may be paid by check, cash, or credit card. You may also register for automated payments through the business office. Checks should be made payable to ST. MATTHEW'S EEC. Please write your child's name on the memo line of your check to prevent confusion, and leave checks in the lockbox outside of the office.

**ALL PREPAID TUITION IS NON-REFUNDABLE.**

## **Late Fees for Tuition**

1. If tuition is not paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, a late fee of \$25 will be assessed on the 16<sup>th</sup> and an additional \$5 for every day thereafter.
2. If payment is not received by the end of the month, your child will not be able to attend until payment is made.
3. There is a returned check fee of \$25.00. If a check is returned for a second time, payment must be made by cash or credit card.

If you are experiencing temporary financial difficulties, please see the Director or Business Manager before tuition is due and we will attempt to work out a solution in confidence.

## **Drop-off and Pick-up**

### **EEC HOURS**

Child Care: 7 am to 6 pm  
AM School: 8:45 am to 11:45 am  
PM School: 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm  
All Day Pre-K: 9:00 am to 2:30pm  
Kindergarten: 9:00 am to 3:15 pm

Drop-off and Pick-up take place in the classroom. Please accompany your child to his/her classroom door where the teacher will greet you. At the end of the session, please return to the classroom and wait for your child to be dismissed.

If someone other than yourself is to pick up your child, the teacher must be notified prior to that specific "pick-up". The person designated to pick-up your child will need to provide the school with identification, preferably a driver's license.

Children enrolled in our child care program may be dropped off in the morning child care room any time after 7 a.m. Anyone regularly picking up a child must be noted on that child's emergency card. No one under the age of 16 will be permitted to pick up a St. Matthew's student.

## **Late Fees for School & Child Care**

A late pick-up fee of \$10.00 per child will be charged for each 15 minutes parents are late to pick up from school or child care. This fee doubles to \$20.00 after 6:30 pm. Your fee is due at that time - you may pay by check or credit card.

## **Communication**

The EEC believes that strong communication between parents, teachers, and the EEC community is the key to providing a smooth and enriching experience for your child. Quick greetings and warm wishes at the classroom door, emails, notes, newsletters, reading the daily notes outside the classroom, and volunteering are the best ways to stay informed and become involved. The Director would also welcome any questions or concerns you may have. You may reach her in the office, by phone, or by email -- [directoreec@gmail.com](mailto:directoreec@gmail.com).

## **Parking Procedures**



The parking lot at St. Matthew's is a very busy place. Please be conscientious as you drive through the parking lot because children and church members are present and can be unpredictable. The following guidelines are designed to keep you and your children safe.

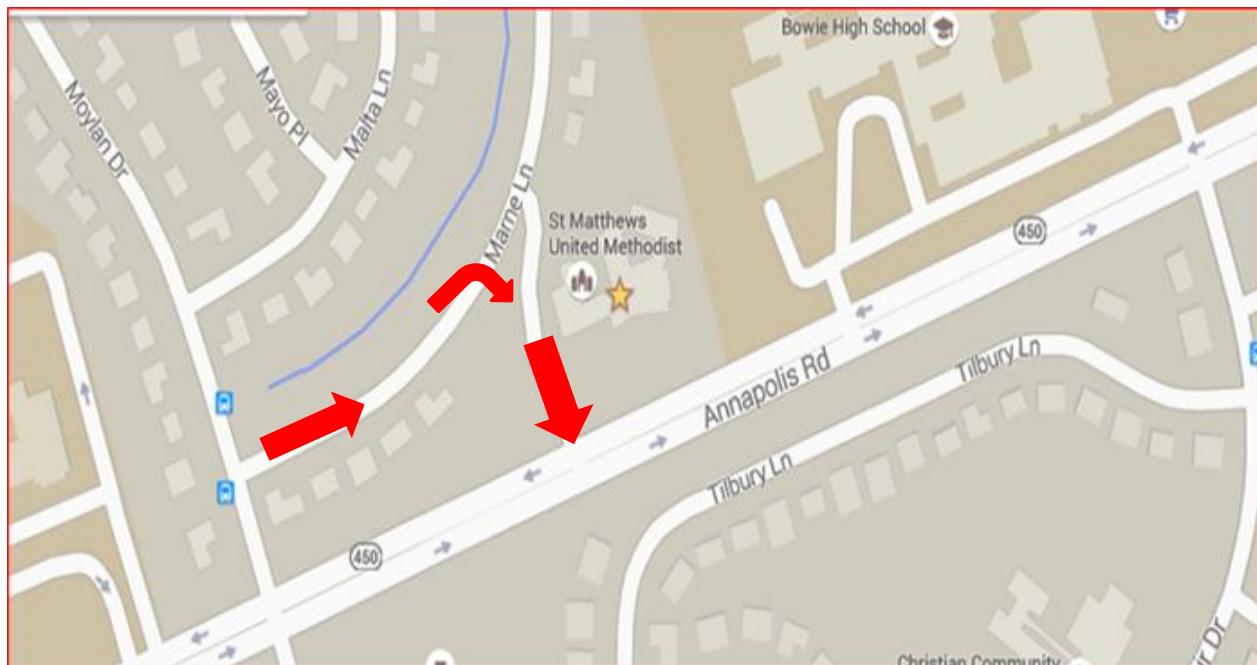
1. Park only in designated spots. Parking along curbs is strictly prohibited and is a ticketable offense.
2. If you arrive and there are no parking spots available, please be patient. One will open up shortly.
3. It is illegal to leave children in the car unattended.
4. You must use the appropriate child safety seat. It's the law.
5. On days when the church has a special event, you will be told ahead of time and provided with an alternative drop-off or pick-up procedure.

Patience is a virtue - particularly in our parking lot!

## Typical Alternative Pick-Up Plan

On days when the parking lot is full at pick-up, we will ask you to use an alternative method at pick-up. Instead of parking in the parking lot, we ask you to line up on the right side of Marne Lane and enter the parking lot for the back entrance. Pull up along the side walk next to the playground and your child's teacher will deliver your child to you. Please do not park in line and get out to find your child. If everyone follows the same pattern, this process works well.

This map shows the movement of cars.



## Snack and Lunch

Our students eat lunch that is brought from home. We provide a morning and an afternoon snack following a published monthly menu. The monthly menu includes foods that are sensitive to the allergy needs of current students, provides fresh fruits and vegetables twice a week, and includes snacks that limit fat, sugar and salt intake. Water and milk are provided at each meal, and seconds are available. Children are encouraged to participate in snack and lunch, but never forced or made to feel bad. Likewise, hungry children are provided with additional food. Child care students eat lunch that is brought from home. *Please include a cold pack in your child's lunch box to keep food fresh. We cannot heat food.*

## Health

A complete physical examination, lead screening and record of all immunizations for each child shall be turned in to the school office prior to the first day of school. The immunization record at school should be updated yearly.

State requirements on this topic have changed and are quite stringent. If a parent does not submit the Health Inventory (OCC 1215) AND appropriate evidence of lead screening and immunizations WITHIN 30 DAYS of the child's admission to school, we cannot allow

the child to remain in our care. The EEC may provide “Temporary Admission to Care” but only if the child is homeless or if the parent provides evidence of the child’s appointment with a health care provider to receive the proper medical evaluation. The appointment **MAY NOT BE ANY LATER THAN 20 DAYS** after the child is temporarily admitted to care. Lastly, the EEC must **EXCLUDE** a child whose parent fails to provide evidence of the required health-related information within the required time frame.



### When is a child too ill to be at school?

1. When the child has a severe cold or cough.
2. When the child has had a fever within 24 hours.
3. When the child has diarrhea or has vomited within the last 24 hours.

Please keep children at home when they exhibit symptoms of illness. If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease or virus, please notify the school immediately. The school is required to follow applicable regulations and will notify other parents as needed. A child will be sent home by the school if signs of illness are detected. Do not send a child to school unless he may participate in all activities. If you feel that an exception should be made, consult with the Director.

### Medication Authorization

St. Matthew's EEC does not have a certified nurse on staff. In order to administer medication to your child, you are required to fill out the MSDE Medication Authorization form (OCC 1216). If your child needs a prescription medication, you must have this form signed by the prescriber and you must provide the medication in a container labeled by the pharmacist or prescriber. If your child needs a non-prescription medication, you must fill out this form AND provide the medicine in its original packaging with dosing directions. Please bring the form and medicine to the office; we will then distribute to the teacher.

### EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES

1. If your child has a medical condition such as **severe** allergies, asthma, or seizures, you will be asked to fill out a health action plan.
2. In case of illness or injury, the parent will be called and must pick up the child within a reasonably short time. (This is a licensing requirement.)
3. In case of simple injury: abrasions, skinned knees, and splinters, the staff will perform routine hygienic measures of washing with soap and water and applying adhesive strips. Ice will be applied to bumps. No topical medication, ointments, etc. may be used (according to licensing guidelines).
4. When a minor injury occurs at the school, the parent will be informed and asked to sign a form acknowledging that (s)he has been notified of school accidents/incidents.
5. In case of a medical emergency, parents will be called immediately. If circumstances require, emergency medical services will be called. The school staff will respond as necessary until rescue arrives. There is a first aid trained staff member on site at all times. In the event that hospitalization is required

(Emergency Room Services), the child will be taken to the closest hospital unless the child's emergency card indicates otherwise. Parents assume financial responsibility for such services

### **Pupil Records**

The EEC protects the right to privacy for pupils and their parents. Therefore, no one other than the teacher, administrative staff, and the director shall have access to the records of individual students. Parents and legal guardians may have access to their child's records at any time under the supervision of a school employee. Anyone other than parents wishing to investigate individual files may do so only if the school has received written permission from the parent(s) prior to the visit.

### **Report Cards and Child Assessment**

Parents will receive periodic reports on their child's progress over the course of the school year. Prior to Parent Conferences in October, teachers will send home a brief "Progress Report" focusing on each child's adjustment to the new school year. October conferences provide parents with the opportunity to share insights into their child's learning styles and to share concerns and expectations.

At the end of January and at the end of the school year, teachers will send home a more formal evaluation of each child's progress. Assessments are conducted throughout the school year to identify strengths and weaknesses across learning domains. Teachers will use these assessments to choose developmentally appropriate activities for the class and to differentiate their daily lessons for each child. A second parent conference takes place in early February. Meetings with teachers can also be arranged upon request.

### **Recommendations**

If you are interested in applying to another independent school for your child, we are more than willing to complete recommendations for you. Please ask the teacher to complete the paperwork for you, and provide her with the recommendation form AND an addressed, stamped envelope. Recommendations are confidential and will be forwarded directly to the other school.

Requests for school records from other schools will only be granted when a Release of Information Consent Form is signed by the parent(s) **and** all tuition payments are current at the time of the request.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

We like to help children celebrate their birthdays in school, and sometimes parents wish to send a treat for the class. You may provide a simple treat and napkins for the class. Appropriate treats include cookies, small cupcakes, or individual ice cream treats. Please, no cake, party favors, candles, or clowns.

Parents who wish to invite their child's classmates to parties and special functions are encouraged to mail invitations. Please do not ask our staff to distribute notices and invitations. This request is out of sensitivity to those children not invited and who could easily have their feelings hurt.

### **Clothing**

Your child's clothing should be loose and comfortable, preferably the kind they can manage themselves. Please put names on all clothing and be sure to dress your child for the weather. All children go outside to play daily, weather permitting. In most cases, if a child is too ill to go outside, he is too ill to be in school.

All children must bring in an extra complete set of clothing (underwear, socks, shirt, and pants) bearing your child's name. These should be in a labeled, Ziploc bag. If your child attends school *and* child care, you will need a bag for both rooms. Please remember to provide seasonally appropriate clothes.

## Classroom Management

Young children need help expressing emotions appropriately and successfully navigating the social world of the classroom and playground. As caring professionals, we will help children gain control of their emotions by building self-esteem, providing an environment and atmosphere designed to encourage success, and acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes.

Caring professionals respond to a frustrated child in the following ways:

- Laughing a lot - easing tension through humor
- Reinforcing good behavior
- Deliberately ignoring inappropriate behavior that can be tolerated
- Providing physical outlets and alternatives
- Showing affection
- Expressing interest in the child's activities
- Explaining situations
- Teaching respect for one another

In our small community, staff members strive to apply these principals in an equitable and individually appropriate manner.

## Dismissal

The school retains the right to dismiss a child if the child's or the parent's behavior is unacceptable. This could take place after conferences with parents and/or a trial period that would allow time for improvement. If after a fair trial period the school chooses to dismiss the child, *prepaid* tuition will be refunded. There will be no tuition refunds after May 1 for the school year or after August 1 for the Summer Session. If a

child's or parent's behavior is considered to be a threat to the safety of the community, dismissal can be immediate.

### **Bullying**

Bullying will not be tolerated in our classrooms. Physical aggression, social exclusion, and verbal assault conducted in a deliberate and systematic manner constitute bullying behavior. While some of this behavior is a natural part of a young child's development, bullying has a detrimental impact on the victim, the bully, and classroom dynamics. Teachers have learned to distinguish this behavior from others, act quickly to set clear expectations, and teach new reactions to trigger situations. Parents are encouraged to bring concerns to the teachers' attention. Teachers bring concerns to the Director immediately. If bullying behavior is determined by the Director to be irremediable, the student could be dismissed.

### **Field Trips**

Private cars are often used to transport children on field trips. Parents will be notified in writing, prior to each field trip. The notice will include the date, time, place and means of transportation. Parents (and guardians) must give their permission for transporting their child on field trips and outings by way of private vehicles and/or mass transit.

To reduce the cost to parents, we rely on parent volunteers to transport children to and from field trips. Transporting other people's children is an important responsibility. If you agree to do so, please understand and abide by the following guidelines.

1. Siblings are not allowed on field trips even if parents are transporting them themselves.
2. Each child must be belted in approved safety seats.
3. No smoking.
4. You must follow the route provided by the teacher.
5. Additional stops are not acceptable.
6. Remember that children in your care could have food allergies. Please only serve snacks provided by the school.
7. You are responsible for the safety and behavior of the children in your group. Please do not allow your cell phone to become a distraction while performing this important task.

If on the morning of the field trip we do not have enough drivers and car seats for each child in the class, we will cancel the field trip and parents will lose their money.

### **Child Safety Seats**

Effective October 1, 2013, Maryland's child safety seat law requires that *all children younger than eight years of age be secured in a federally approved child safety seat according to the safety seat and vehicle manufacturers' instructions, unless the child is 4 feet, 9 inches or taller. The child restraint must be right for the child's height, weight, and age.*

**child's size, age, and weight.** If you cannot accompany your child on a field trip, you must provide a child safety seat to be used in another vehicle.

### **Babysitting**

Staff members at St. Matthew's Early Education Center are not allowed to babysit for families with students currently enrolled in our school. While it is natural to turn to our trusted employees for this service, such relationships often lead to a conflict of interest, breaches of confidentiality and the perception of privilege. Please do not place our staff in the position of having to reject such an offer. *addition, 8/2016*

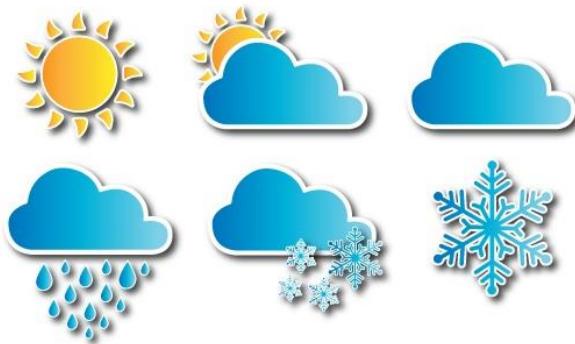
### **CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT**

St. Matthew's Early Education Center believes child safety and security is its number one priority. As trusted caretakers, we are alert to the impact that adults can have on children, both in school and out. We are trained in the signs of abuse and neglect and take seriously our pledge to report our suspicions.

According to Article 27, Section 35 A, Annotated Code of Maryland, regarding child abuse, *it is the responsibility of each staff member to report to the Director any suspected case of child abuse.* Any such case shall be reported both orally and in writing to the Department of Social Services, Prince George's County, by the Director of St. Matthew's United Methodist Early Education Center. The written report shall be made within 48 hours of the contact. The oral report shall be made by telephone to the Dept. of Social Services. Both reports will contain the information required under (d) Form and Contents of Report, Article 27, Section 35 A, pg.2.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER & EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

It is impossible to cover all potential problems and emergencies, so the following is a general policy reflecting our decision-making process. We must deal with any incident on a case-by-case basis and of course this may change as events unfold. ***In any situation, it is ALWAYS up to the parent to make the decision as to what is best for the child.***



1. In the case of an emergency or inclement weather, we will notify parents through email, Facebook, and the message on our answering machine
2. The EEC follows Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) policy for closing **SCHOOL** due to inclement weather.
3. **CHILD CARE** closings will be assessed by the school director.
4. If schools are delayed, we will open school and child care **ONE HOUR** late.

5. If county schools close early, there are NO afternoon classes and Kindergarten will dismiss as soon as possible. Our child care program will remain open, but we ask that you pick up your child A.S.A.P. because our staff needs to get home safely as well.
6. If PGCPSS close for any reason other than inclement weather, the EEC program will operate normally as long as we are not impacted by this problem. (i.e.: bomb threats, shootings, tornadoes, earthquakes)
7. If outdoor safety is ever in question, all outside activities will be canceled, including field trips. All outside doors will remain closed and locked. People will be allowed in on a case-by-case basis.
8. As is our policy at all times, children will only be released to adults listed on the emergency information card, unless we receive a telephone call from the parent stating otherwise. If we do, a picture ID will be required.
9. If necessary, we will take direction from our local civil authority if any unusual situation arises.

*Whether the EEC is open or not, parents must evaluate all situations and make the best decision for their family.* We will certainly do our best to provide a safe environment for all children.

#### **Payment for Snow/Emergency Days**

Tuition payments do not change based on inclement weather and school closing. No refund in tuition will be given.

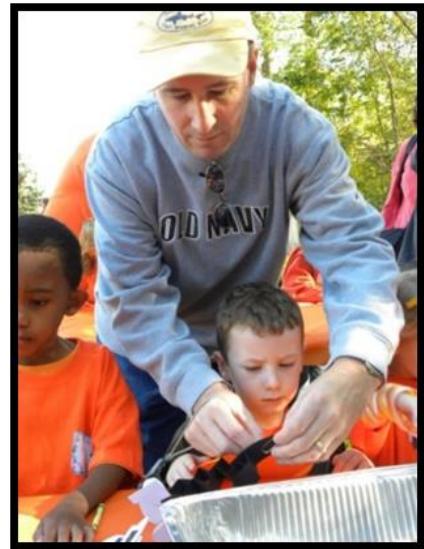
#### **Fundraisers**

While tuition covers the vast majority of our yearly budget, we often have a gap that needs to be filled. This is where our fundraisers become essential. While some schools have mandatory volunteer hours, supply fees, or fundraising quotas, we prefer to provide a variety of opportunities for families to become involved in raising money for our school. We understand that while one family may be able to contribute money, another family might only feel comfortable donating time or talent. We support your need to make those decisions for yourself.

#### **HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?**

1. Leave your child with the teacher on the first full day of school. Pupil-teacher understanding will come more quickly when the parent leaves the child in the teacher's care from the beginning. Please resist the urge to remain in the hallway during your child's class.
2. Encourage your child to feed himself, dress himself, tie his shoes and button his buttons.
3. Encourage your child to speak distinctly and correctly.

4. Let your child know that you are interested in what he is doing in school.
5. Choose appropriate books and read often to your child.
6. Do not give your child money, candy or toys to bring to school unless the teacher has planned a "show & tell" time.
7. Regularity of arrival and attendance is important to your child. Try to arrange your schedule so that your child arrives on time and misses as little school as possible.
8. Let them know how much you love them; praise them often. When they bring home a drawing, let them tell you about it. Encourage them with statements such as, "Tell me about your picture - I really like the colors you used. I can tell you had fun doing it."
9. Come and share a morning or an afternoon with us when your child is in class. (Please schedule a visit with your child's teacher.) Parents can learn so much about their own children just by seeing them perform in a new and different situation.
10. Relax! Let your child know that you are happy for him and he will be happy too.



Teachers and parents form a partnership when educating and caring for young children, so we encourage parents to be involved in our school. Please let your child's teacher know of your area of interest or expertise - whether it's accompanying a class on a field trip, sharing your professional skills or hobbies, helping in the classroom with a special project, working with an individual child or a small group of children, assisting on "work" days, "subbing" to enable staff to attend professional meetings and workshops, etc.

**When we work together, the lives of our children are enriched beyond measure!!**



# Community Resources

## IMPORTANT EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCES

**Office of Child Care -  
Prince George's County**  
807 Brightseat Road  
Landover, MD 20785  
Main office phone: (301) 333-6940

**LOCATE CHILD CARE - MD**  
1001 Eastern Avenue  
2nd Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202-4325  
Tel: (410) 659-7701 Fax: (410) 783-0814

**Check Child Care**  
<http://www.checkccmd.org>

**Prince George's Child Resource  
Center**  
<http://www.childresource.org>

**Prince George's County Infants & Toddlers Program**  
301-925-6627  
(For ages 0-2)

**Child Find - Preschool**  
2300 Bellevue Avenue  
Cheverly, MD 20785  
Phone: 301-925-6600 Fax: 301-925-1994  
(For ages 3-4)

**Child Find for Parentally Placed Students in Religious, Private or Home  
Schools**  
John Carroll Center  
1400 Nalley Terrace  
Landover, Maryland 20785  
Office: 301-618-8300  
(For ages 5-21)

**Bowie Youth & Family Services**  
Kenhill Center - Suite 108  
2614 Kenhill Dr.  
Bowie, MD 20715  
301-809-3033

# ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF LOCAL SCHOOL AND ACTIVITY RESOURCES

**Association of Independent Maryland Schools**  
<http://www.aimsmdc.org/>

**Kenilworth Elementary**  
12520 Kembridge Drive  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-805-6600

**Bowie Boys and Girls Club**  
Bowie, MD 20716  
Phone: 301-262-6113

**Pointer Ridge Elementary**  
1110 Parkington Lane  
Bowie, MD 20716  
Phone: 301-390-0220  
Fax: 301-390-0281

**Bowie Center for the Performing Arts**  
Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-805-6880

**Prince George's County Board of Education**  
14201 School Lane  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

**Bowie Community Center**  
3209 Stonybrook Drive  
Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-464-1737

**Prince George's County Department of Family Services**  
6420 Allentown Road  
Camp Springs, MD 20748  
Phone: 301-262-8401

**Bowie Interfaith Food Pantry and Emergency Aid Fund**  
2614 Kenhill Drive  
Bowie, MD 20715  
301-262-6765

**Prince George's County Public Schools**  
14201 School Lane  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Phone: 301-952-6000

**Bowie Youth and Family Services**  
Kenhill Center - Rm 203  
2614 Kenhill Dr.  
Bowie, MD 20721  
Ph: 301-809-3033      Fx: 301-809-2303

**Rockledge Elementary**  
7701 Laurel-Bowie Road, Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-805-2720  
Fax: 301-805-2718

**Chapel Forge Special Education Center**  
12711 Milan Way  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-805-2740

**South Bowie Boys and Girls Club**  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-249-5070

**Grace Christian School**  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-262-0158

**South Bowie Community Center**  
1717 Pittsfield Lane  
Bowie, MD 20716  
Phone: 301-249-1622

**Heather Hills Elementary**  
12605 Heming Lane  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-805-2730

**Tulip Grove Elementary**  
2909 Trainor Lane, Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-805-2680  
Fax: 301-805-6689

**High Bridge Elementary**  
7011 High Bridge Road  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-805-2690  
Fax: 301-805-2693

**Whitehall Elementary**  
3901 Woodhaven Lane, Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-805-1000  
Fax: 301-805-1006

**Holy Trinity Episcopal Day School**  
Bowie, MD  
Phone: 301-262-5355

**Yorktown Elementary**  
7301 Racetrack Road, Bowie, MD 20715  
Phone: 301-805-6610  
Fax: 301-805-6626

# Staff Directory

**Carrie Ahearn**, Lead Teacher & K Art  
Since 2011  
B.A., Bowie State University  
A.A., Anne Arundel Community College  
Credential: Level 6

**Melanie Alcala**, Lead Teacher & Spanish  
Since 2007  
B.S., Bowie State University  
Credential: Level 6

**Angela Aquino**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2016  
B.S. University of MD, EE

**Jordan Bailey**, Aide  
Since 2015  
Bowie High School '16

**Erin Becraft**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2006  
Eleanor Roosevelt HS  
Credential: Level 3

**Alexis Briscoe**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2015  
B.S. Coppin State University, ECE

**Maria Calabrese**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2013  
B.S., Frostburg State University, ECE

**Andrea Christiansen, P.E. Teacher**  
Since 2014  
B.A. Boston College

**Gigi DiViccaro**, Teacher  
Since 2015  
B.S., University of Maryland

**Maureen Dominiski**, Teacher  
Since 2005  
B.A., University of Maryland  
Credential: Level 6

**Lisa Fitzgerald**, Teacher  
Since 2005  
High Point HS  
Credential level: 4

**Nicole Foster**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2002  
B.A., Wheaton College  
Credential: Level 6

**Angela Gaither**, Aide  
Since 2016  
Bowie HS

**Brenda Galvin-Ramirez**, Teacher  
Since 2011  
Bladensburg HS  
Credential: Level 3

**Sheree Hagger**, Teacher  
Since 2005  
B.A., Michigan State University  
Credential: Level 5

**Karen Hastings**, PE Teacher  
Since 2011  
B.A., University of Maryland  
Credential: Level 3

**Debby Hoffman**, Substitute  
Since 2002  
Credential: Level 4

**Edie Kramer**, Teacher  
Since 1993  
Credential: Level 3

**Bonnie Krum**, Sign Language & Publicity  
Since 1988  
Credential: Level 4

**Judy Loyola**, Teacher  
Since 2014  
Bladensburg High School

**Falon McNeely**  
Since 2013  
Attending AACC for ECE

**Abbie Moses**  
Since 2016  
M.A.T. College of Notre Dame, Baltimore  
B.A. Drew University

**Jackie Mowrey**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2012  
B.A., Cabrini College  
Credential: Level 6

**Alison Musante**, Teacher  
Since 2016  
Bowie HS

**Kemi Olupona**, Teacher  
Since 2013  
Bladensburg H.S.  
Student, PGCC, ECE

**Sue Schiek**, Teacher  
Since 2005  
A.A. PGCC  
Credential: Level 4

**Colleen Simpson**, Lead Teacher  
Since 2013  
M.S., Western Maryland, ECE  
B.S., North Adams State  
Credential: Level 6

**Tiffany Smith**, Teacher  
Since 2016  
Parkdale HS  
Credential: Level 3

**Jeni-Lyn Sullivan**, Teacher  
Since 2006  
Bowie HS  
Credential: Level 3

**Leah Tipton**, Director  
Since 2009  
M.A.T., College of New Jersey  
B.A., University of New Hampshire  
Credential: Level 6

**Sarah Truitt**, Teacher  
Since 2001  
Credential: Level 3

**Erica Turner**, Teacher  
Since 2009  
Patuxent H.S.  
Credential: Level 2

**Christin Vare**, Assistant Director & Music  
Since 2007  
B.A., Ithaca College  
Attending UMUC  
Credential: Level 4

**Laura Vasquez**, Teacher  
Since 2008  
Bowie HS  
Credential: Level 3

**Stephanie White**, Business Manager  
Since 2005  
Glen Burnie HS

**Trisha Wright**, Aide  
Since 2015  
Bowie High School '16





Early Education Center  
St. Matthew's

2016-2017