

First United Methodist Church
After School Latch Key
Parent Handbook
August 16, 2021-May 26, 2022



“Hands that Help, Hearts that Love”

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First United Methodist Church

After School Latch Key Handbook

Welcome to First United Methodist After School Latch Key program. We are pleased to be able to serve you and your child(ren). This handbook is a guide in helping answer your questions concerning our philosophy, programs, and schedules.

If you have any questions or concerns as a result of reading this handbook, please direct them to Melissa Siliceo, Child Care Director at 763-8969.

FUMC MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of the First United Methodist Church Child Care Program is to provide a ministry to the church and a service to the community.

We provide training, activities, and education for a wide variety of ages, in a Christian atmosphere. We intend to help our children grow socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, and intellectually through a variety of learning experiences that will enrich his/her understanding of the world.

We provide a Christian atmosphere of love and acceptance that will help each child feel secure in another place besides home and to encourage self-discipline and independence.

We also provide a variety of activities that will promote development of skills in readiness for more education when the child and parents feel ready, at an affordable rate.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe children at First United Methodist Church learn best through:

- hands-on activities and play-inside and outside
- music, movement, and fantasy play
- real life experiences such as field-trips, walks, and visitors
- an environment that offers opportunities and choices that build independence
- a child-centered environment in which the children have responsibility and constructive, guiding and trustful interactions with their teachers
- a safe environment provided by consistency and predictability of routines and boundaries
- teacher/family collaboration and communication
- a staff that respects and understands the different ways in which children develop
- family-style dining, which encourages language, social awareness and fine motor skills
- teachers who facilitate their engagement, expand their experiences and who challenge and stimulate them

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:

First United Methodist Church (FUMC) is located at 1501 Sycamore Street. Our phone number is 763-8969. Our e-mail address is childcare@fumcclovis.net. This service is provided for children Kindergarten through 6th grade. 6th graders are welcomed to walk across the street Yucca Middle School or can be a drop off from any of the other middle school. It is offered Monday thru Friday from 3:00-5:30 p.m.

During the school year, we follow the Clovis Municipal Schools calendar for session dates and closures.

We are a non-profit, self-supporting mission of the local church. The childcare programs are governed by a Child Care Board, and the Staff Parish Relations Committee of the local church. We are a State of New Mexico 2-STAR licensed day care center with varied programs for children of all ages.

The tuition paid by the patrons attending our programs at First United Methodist Church helps provide the program insurance, equipment, salaries, and supplies for the Child Care Program.

We shall provide a very positive experience for all children in a Christian atmosphere. Loving, caring, fairness and kindness are very important to us. We strive to meet these goals by accepting children as they are, with love and concern for each child as an individual thus stimulating growth, development, and socialization. We will encourage skills in sharing, cooperating, following directions, and being helpful members of a group of children.

GENERAL CURRICULUM:

Since children learn through play, we plan our indoor and outdoor time to encourage constructive play activities. Through play children re-enact experiences, try out different roles, express ideas, develop vocabulary, process information, widen their world view and relate to one another. Our Curriculum is child-centered, starting with what interests the children and expanded through teacher-directed activities. Knowing that children learn from what adults do, we model the behavior we want to encourage. We strive to show understanding and respect for each person and to use words to express needs and feelings.

We try to learn from mistakes instead of labeling them as failures. We believe that growth and development happen best in a supportive, safe and orderly environment where rules, limits, expectations and plans are known. We strive to be clear, consistent and firm. Teachers will use their own judgment in determining the length of time to focus on an area depending on the interest level of the children. Flexibility is crucial for following the interests of the children.

Our program addresses the needs of the whole child, taking into account all of their developmental needs: physical, motor, social, emotional, language and cognitive. Our program is based on the belief that not all children share the same interests. We allow children to make many choices, especially regarding the activities in which they wish to participate. Our goal is to shape the program around the children rather than fitting the children into the program.

CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

Each staff person and child at First United Methodist Church is special and will be treated with respect at all times. Any type of behavior intended to physically or emotionally hurt someone will not be tolerated at FUMC. Only positive guidance is a learning tool to provide children with the guidance and security necessary for emotional and social growth.

Positive guidance methods used in this learning process include: redirection, positive reinforcement, alternative choices, problem solving techniques, modeling, limit setting (Maximum time out will not exceed (5) five minutes), and as a last resort, time out away from the situation and group to calm down for a period of time geared to the age of the child., and then the child will be directed to a constructive activity in a positive way. Parents will be notified if frequent "time out" is needed. (Individual behavior plans will be developed for children who have persistent behavior problems) Each of the staff at FUMC has been oriented to implement each of these procedures.

Part of the First Methodist Church program is to provide acceptable group behavior.

Discipline is defined as training that enables the child to develop self control and orderly conduct in relationships with peers and adults. Discipline is an ongoing process with children and for maximum learning to occur, immediate and consistent reinforcement is important. Because you have entrusted your child to our care for a large portion of the day, we feel obligated to handle each situation as we deem necessary at the time the situation arises.

At First UMC, we encourage self-control and responsibility for one's own actions, Reasonable rules are established for all ages. Respect for each other, self, peers, and authority is taught with love and consistency. However, there are occasions when a child creates a situation which infringes upon the rights of the other children and the child care provider. The child needs to know that you, as parents, support us as the authority while the child is in our care. Examples of behavior that will NOT be tolerated at FUMC are:

- * fighting and touching others in inappropriate ways
- * profanity and name calling
- * destructive acts against the school property
- * lack of respect for staff and peers
- * harming other children
- * deliberate disobedience
- * continued disruption

We will work with the parents to correct all forms of behavior, but if we find that our discipline procedures are not working, we may need to dismiss the child from the program. Prior to dismissal from the program we will take proactive measures to discuss the situation with the parent, to see if the behavior can be corrected. **If a child places any threat, written or verbal, on a staff member or child at FUMC child care program, the child will be automatically dismissed from the program.**

PARENT PARTICIPATION/PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Parents are encouraged to become as involved in the programs operation as their schedule will permit.

Suggestions for involvement are:

- Discuss your child's day with their child care worker.
- Showing interest in your child's activities and carrying on related activities/conversations at home
- Attending special family functions (parties, picnics, field trips, etc)
- Help with fund raisers
- Sharing customs, hobbies, and careers with the children

First United Methodist Church maintains an open door policy for parents.

You are welcome to visit at any time.

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

The First United Methodist Church Child Care Program has an open door policy at all times. Please direct all conversations and questions to the Director or on site- supervisor if director is not available. We can't solve a problem, if we do not know about it. Do remember that the teacher's first responsibility is supervision of your child. **If you have a question or would like to set up a conference you may leave a message and a conference time will be set up.**

If you have a concern regarding our program, you may call Melissa Siliceo, who is currently our Director of Childcare. **Please respect us enough to talk to the director rather than to others about a complaint or problem you might have. Taking to any form of social media to "bash" the school or any employee will be grounds for expulsion.**

WRITTEN POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ENROLLMENT AND DISENROLLMENT

REGISTRATION:

A parent must complete a registration form. We will ask all parents to sign authorizations giving First United Methodist Church permission for emergency transportation, medical treatment, field trips, and acknowledge that you read the program policy manual. We are unable to accept enrollment forms that are not completed. Please provide all required information, and a copy of your child's shot records.

We will accept only those children for whom we have the capability of providing for their social, physical, and psychological needs. This applies to the needs we can meet with the staff we have available. If we choose to do so, we may enroll a child on a **TRIAL** basis, and if we are unable to meet the child's needs with the facility and staff available, the parent will need to make other arrangements.

ADMISSION & DISCHARGE:

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:

Children will be enrolled on a "First Come, First Serve" basis. Enrollment will continue as long as space is available. Our enrollment capacity is 55 students. (Current circumstances may limit capacity at this time.) Any children enrolling after we have filled all vacancies will be placed on a waiting list and enrolled when space becomes available.

Parents needing to withdraw their children from the After School Latchkey program must give the Director a two week notice in writing by filling out a withdrawal form prior to your child's last day of attendance. Failure to provide proper notification will extend your tuition payment two weeks beyond the last attending day, and payment will still need to be submitted. In the event an exception arises, the decision will be made by the Director and Child Care Board.

Grounds for dismissal will include behavioral problems that have been discussed with the parents but not corrected. If a child places any type of a threat towards another child or a child care worker either in writing or verbal, will be cause for immediate dismissal.

Types of Enrollment:

Full Time: Attending Monday-Friday

Part-Time: A consistent weekly schedule that is not 5 days a week, for example M/W/F, or every T-W. Schedule must be given at the time of enrollment and any changes must be submitted in writing before the next invoice date before tuition changes can be made.

We will not tolerate fighting, violence, continual disrespect, bullying, or excessive foul language of any kind. If your child engages in these behaviors toward another child or teacher you will be notified and your child must be picked up immediately. If you do not pick your child up within 30 minutes we will begin to call emergency contacts. Grounds for dismissal, and or expulsion will include behavioral problems that have been discussed with the parents but not corrected. Also if a child places any type of a threat towards another child or a child care worker either in writing or verbal, will be cause for expulsion from the program.

ABSENCES

In the event that your child will be absent, please call or email the director and your child's school to ensure that van attendance sheets are updated before they leave for pick up.

I fully understand due to teacher staffing, supplies, and state ratios that once my child's schedule is set for the month it cannot be changed until the following invoice period and must be submitted in writing. I understand that I will be responsible to pay the tuition. Please notify the program if your child will not be attending.

DISMISSAL

You will be required to sign your child out when picking up. Our staff will not release a child to anyone other than the contacts written on the enrollment form. If someone other than a name on the authorization list plans to pick up your child, we need to know in advance. In order for us to release your child to someone other than the authorized individual, a telephone call and/or e-mail with the complete name of the person picking up your child is required and picture ID will be required from the person picking up your child.

If your child is not picked up by 5:30 a late charge of \$1.75 a minute will be charged to your account.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

FUMC will follow the Clovis Municipal School decision on snow days, early dismissal, and school cancellation. Due to the unpredictability of snow days or any other delays or closures outside of the pre-planned CMS calendar the program will not be able to reimburse or plan make-up days.

TUITION

Tuition Policy:

First United Methodist Church Childcare is a non-profit organization and maintains a tight budget; we try to keep our rates affordable and as low as possible. For this reason, it is necessary that parents cooperate in paying accounts on time so that we in turn can meet our obligations.

Over the past year we have had to adjust to new regulations that have lowered our ratios and capacity while at the same time dealing with continued increases in state minimum wage and increasing overhead costs. For these reasons we have had to increase our monthly fees.

Tuition payments are due on the 1st of each month and considered late by the 10th. A Payment agreement form is required for each child's registration packet to be complete. This form must have a debit/credit card or checking account listed as a reliable payment source. This is **NOT** optional.

The first business day after the 10th of each month any account with a balance will be drafted from the card/account on file. The full balance due on the current invoice will be drafted on the 11th of each month. If for any reason the 11th falls on a weekend or if we are closed on Monday, those charges will be drafted the following business day. At any time you may pay your account in advance to alleviate your card being drafted. Please be sure this is a reliable payment source because any payments that are returned to us will be charged a \$30.00 returned payment fee.

No credit will be given for absences due to illness, closures (this includes COVID 19 quarantine regulations), or vacations during the school year.

Please be sure your payment method is a reliable payment source. If a parent gives FUMC a check that **is returned for insufficient funds**, the parent will be contacted, requesting that cash for the fees owed plus a \$30.00 fee be brought to the church as soon as possible. If it happens a second time the parent will be notified that the child can remain enrolled but all fees will need to **be paid in cash only**. FUMC will reserve the right not to accept checks from parents that have more than two returned checks to the church for non-payment.

If your child is not picked up by 5:30pm a late charge of \$1.75 a minute will be charged to your account.

If your account is not current and arrangements have not been made, we will be forced to withdraw your child. Your child may re-enroll upon availability and all accounts are paid in full. No child will be allowed to enroll for the following school year until all accounts are paid in full and arrangements are made to stay current with payments.

First United Methodist Church Childcare accepts cash and checks in office or credit cards online at www.fumcclovis.net. There is no longer a fee for payment by credit card.

You may also set up an auto pay on the website.

Fees will be reviewed and determined on an annual basis by the Child Care Board and Finance Committees. Fees will be charged monthly according to the enrollment agreement.

In order to hold a place for your child a registration fee of \$35.00 must be collected along with your child's current shot record and the completed enrollment agreement.

Because First United Methodist Church is a non-profit organization and maintains a tight budget, we try to keep our rates affordable and as low as possible **but we will not be able to give discounts, credits, or refunds for absences** once you sign a monthly agreement. **Tuition is to be paid in full by the 10th of the month.** If tuition is unpaid parents will lose child care privileges. If there is a hardship in a tuition payment, please do not hesitate to speak to the director to discuss possible arrangements.

INSUFFICIENT FEES:

If a parent gives FUMC a check that **is returned for insufficient funds**, the parent will be contacted, requesting that cash for the fees owed plus a \$30.00 fee be brought to the church as soon as possible.

If it happens a second time the parent will be notified that the child can remain enrolled but all fees will need to **be paid in cash only**. FUMC will reserve the right not to accept checks from parents that have more than two returned checks to the church for non-payment.

MEDICATION:

In order for our staff to give any kind of medication, we need signed permission from you and written directions about when and how much medication to administer. **ALL CHILDREN'S MEDICATIONS MUST BE LABELED.** Please secure the proper form from the office when leaving medicine. Without this form, medication will not be given to your child. If your child needs Tylenol to keep a fever down, he/she will not be permitted to attend our program. If your child needs a breathing treatment, you will have to administer it.

A written record of the dosage, date & time a child is given medication with the signature of the staff who administered the medication will be kept. This information will be provided to the parent or guardian who IN TURN will initial/date acknowledgment of the information received on the day the medication is given.

Medication must be brought in its original container, which shall include the name of the child, the dosage, and the hours when the medication is to be given. Cough drops and throat lozenges are an over-the-counter medication and often mask a more serious condition. Therefore, we do not allow them in the program unless we have a note from a doctor.

New Mexico State Licensing requires parents to acknowledge daily, any sunscreen, ointment, or other over-the-counter medications that were given to their child while they were at our program. Your signature when you sign your child out is your acknowledgement that you are aware of any medications that were given or applied. Child care workers will discuss daily the times and type(s) of medication that were given or applied to your child.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

All children must have the immunization records on file at First United Methodist Church before they can attend. These requirements are determined by the New Mexico Department of Health.

The address to request exemption forms from immunizations is:

Attn: Jeri Vigil
Exemption forms
NM Immunization Program
PO Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87502-6110

www.Immunizenm.org

SICK CARE

Sick care is **NOT** available at the center. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make alternate arrangements for sick care.

ILLNESS:

We are a facility that cares for well children. While we know how inconvenient it can be for a parent to have to stay at home with a sick child instead of being at work or school, we have a responsibility to all the children and their parents. If, by chance, your child comes sick, it will be our responsibilities to call and have you make arrangements to come and get your child immediately.

Consequently, we have developed the following policies:

1. A child will not be admitted and/or parents will be notified immediately when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the program if:
 - a. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
 - b. The illness results in more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children or;
 - c. The child has any of the following conditions:
 1. A temperature of 100 degrees or more accompanied by a behavior change; child may return 24 hours after fever has broken or a physician has determined that there are no other signs of illness.
 2. Signs and symptoms of illness such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or loss of appetite.
 3. Uncontrolled diarrhea or change in bowel movement pattern; child may return 24 hours after diarrhea has ceased or physician has determined illness is not contagious.
 4. Upset stomach or vomiting; child may return 24 hours after vomiting has ceased or physician has determined that the illness is not contagious.
 5. Mouth sores with drooling; child may return when a physician determines the condition is non-infectious.
 6. Rash with fever or behavior changes; rash with weepy blistering; and or rash with change in breathing pattern. Child may return when physician has determined that the symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
 7. Any kind of earache or ear pain.
 8. A stiff neck or severe headache.
 9. Purulent conjunctivitis (with white or yellow discharge); child may return 24 hours after treatment starts.
 10. Scabies, head lice, or other infestation; child may return 24 hours after treatment has started.
 11. Impetigo; child may return 24 hours after treatment has started.
 12. Strep throat or other streptococcal infection; child may return 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and fever has broken.
 13. Chicken pox; child may return after all sores have dried and crusted (between 6-10 days).
 14. Pertussis; child may return 5 days after antibiotic treatment.
 15. Mumps; child may return 9 days after onset of swelling.
 16. Measles or Rubella; child may return 6 days after onset of rash.

2. Children exhibiting signs of sore throat should be kept at home and checked by a physician.
3. Children should remain at home for at least 24 hours once an antibiotic has been prescribed and administered.
4. If your child is not well enough to be outdoors, he/she is not well enough to be at our program.
5. If we are unclear about whether or not a child is too sick to be at the program, we may consult with the New Mexico Public Health Department.

Parents should make every possible effort to pick up the child upon notification. If we are unable to reach you, your emergency contacts will be called. Be sure those you list as emergency contacts understand their responsibility. Please be sure to update all phone numbers on your contract when changes occur.

If your child is going to be absent from the program please call the church at **575-763-8969** or email @ **childcare@fumcclovis.net**, so that your child's teacher can be notified.

Note: ANY illness with recurring symptoms, i.e. vomiting, fever, etc. will require a Physician's release.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS SYMPTOMS OF VOMITING, CROUPING, SEVERE CHEST COLD, DIARRHEA, TEMPERATURE OF 100 degrees, OR SEVERE EAR ACHE, PLEASE KEEP HIM/HER HOME FOR 24 HOURS.

ACCIDENTS:

The staff at FUMC tries very hard through their supervision of children to prevent accidents. Nevertheless there are certain risks and hazards that may arise in the course of your child's activities.

A parent will be called immediately if there is an accident or emergency that requires more attention than the first aid a staff member can give. If the child needs to be seen in the emergency room, the Director will accompany the child in an ambulance.

Any type of less serious accidents such as minor injuries, i.e. falls, bumps, cuts. etc. will be reported to the parents when the child is picked up. An accident report will be filled out on all incidents that happen at FUMC; the parents will sign the report and a copy of the report will be placed in your child's file.

If your child has a serious accident we will assess the situation, determine whether to call 911, transport the child to the nearest emergency room ourselves, or call you to pick them up. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that those persons listed as emergency contacts understand their responsibilities if the parents cannot be found or notified. First United Methodist Church **does not provide medical insurance** for accidents and has a limited policy on injuries that happen at the Church.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS:

All records of the children in our program and our staff are kept confidential. NO ONE will be allowed to review them, except the staff members, law enforcement officers with proper paperwork, an authorized employee of the Health and Environment Department of the State of New Mexico.

MISSING CHILD:

If a child is found missing from First Methodist Church Child Care Program, one teacher will call another child care provider to come over and help with the remaining children while the other teacher searches the immediate area of the facility. If the child is not located, the parents will be called as well as the police while one teacher continues to search for the missing child by again searching the vicinity on foot or in their vehicle.

Incidents of missing children will be reported by phone and a written report will be sent to the Preventive Services Division of the New Mexico Children Youth and Families Department.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

If any staff member of First United Methodist Church observes any signs of child abuse or neglect, it will be reported to the Director. The Director will note their findings on the child. The staff member and the Program Director will record their findings by using an accident, illness, or observation report form.

Any serious indications of abuse or neglect, or a pattern of such **by law** will be reported as follows:

- Staff will report cases to the Director of the program.
- Director or staff member will contact the Child Care Board
- **All cases** will be reported to Children's Protective Services and Preventive Services of the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department and a written statement will be filed with the licensing authority.

PERSONNEL & STAFF

All FUMC staff will obtain a criminal record background check and will be fingerprinted. Child care givers who work directly with children and who are counted in the staff/child ratios must be 18 years of age or older and must have training in First-Aid, CPR, and infection control. Personnel at FUMC are required to have 12 hours of child care training yearly.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have a grievance concerning anything about the After School Program, you need to first visit with the child care provider directly involved in the matter. If you do not feel satisfied with the results of that contact, you should visit with the Director of FUMC Child Care and, if necessary, the Director will contact the Pastor or Childcare Board. Let me assure you that we want to cooperate with you in any way we can. We will pray about every situation and ask the Lord to guide us in reaching a solution that is in the best interest of everyone involved.

EMERGENCY & DISASTER PROCEDURES/POLICIES/PLANS:

EVACUATIONS

On-Site Evacuation Meeting Place: **FRONT PARKING LOT**

Children will be escorted to the designated meeting spot; all areas of the building will be searched to ensure all children have evacuated. Attendance will be conducted. Notification of parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be completed.

Off-Site Evacuation Meeting Place: **YUCCA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Children will be escorted to the designated meeting spot; all areas of the building will be searched to ensure all children have evacuated. Attendance will be conducted. Notification of parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be completed.

******CIRCUMSTANCES OF ANY GIVEN DISASTER MAY NECESSITATE CHANGING EVACUATION SITE. THE DIRECTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IDENTIFYING AN ALTERNATE LOCATION. ALTERNATE EVACUATION LOCATION WILL BE POSTED ON THE MAIN DOOR OF FUMC OR PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED PLACE******

Visually Impaired Students will be evacuated as follows: verbal notification of the location of the student, the nature of the emergency, obstacles, and conditions. Verbal notification will be given to orient the student of their new surroundings as soon as safety has been reached. Further assistance will be given as needed.

Hearing Impaired Students will be evacuated as follows: Light switches will be flashed off and on to gain a student's attention. Simple gestures, sign language and/or written directions will be facilitated to communicate the student to safety.

Wheelchair Confined Students will be evacuated as follows: Students with respirators will have priority assistance if smoke is present. Student will be secured in the chair with seat belt if appropriate. Assistance will be given to control the chair as needed. Footrests will be locked as soon as safety has been reached.

A complete disaster preparedness plan may be located on the Latch Key Information board.

MEALS:

SNACKS: We provide afternoon snacks. A snack menu will be available monthly.

Please keep us informed if your child is ALLERGIC TO ANY FOODS WHAT SO EVER! Parents will need to provide snack for children with severe allergies.

TOYS, BOOKS, and VIDEOS:

We will allow NO technology at the program. If a child brings electronics to the program we will not be liable for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

Toys should not be brought from home any day, unless the supervisor has sent home a note stating otherwise. Children may read books brought from home during free time but the program will not be responsible for lost or damaged toys or books. Please **do not allow your child to bring guns, swords, breakable things, or any toys of this nature.** We will put up any toy weapons and return them only when the child is picked up.

CELL PHONES:

Cell phones will NOT be allowed at anytime.

Cell phones will not be allowed at the program. If your child carries a phone with them to school it is expected to be in their backpacks when boarding the van and remain there until they leave the building at pickup. There will be NO exceptions.

CELEBRATIONS:

Children love to celebrate their birthdays. Parents may arrange to bring refreshments to celebrate your child's birthday. Please make it simple and make arrangements with one of the On-Site-Supervisors. Some of our children have food allergies. Please do not send birthday party invitations to pass out unless **ALL** of the children are to receive one.

CLOTHING:

We will follow the Clovis Municipal Schools dress code for our After School Latchkey program. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. We will play outdoors as often as we can weather permitting. We will not be liable for **lost or damaged clothing.**

STATE LICENSING REGULATIONS

This excerpt is taken from the State Licensing Regulations manual.

"The following disciplinary practices are prohibited in a child care center: Physical punishment; withdrawal of food, rest or bathroom opportunities; abusive or profane language, or any form of public or private humiliation including threats of physical punishment; unsupervised isolation of the child; and any other type of punishment that is hazardous to the physical or mental health of the child".