

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK



REVISED
JANUARY 2009

N:/Preschool-FBC Weekday/Preschool handbook jan 09

First Baptist Church Preschool

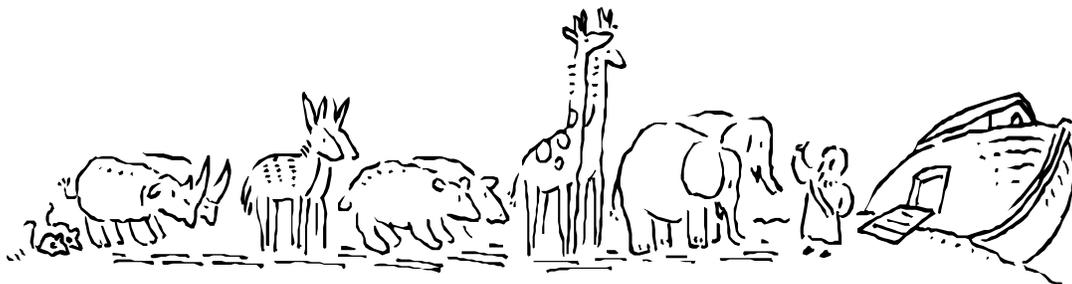
Welcome to First Baptist Church Preschool. We believe that families and First Baptist Preschool should work together as one in order to provide an environment that facilitates the growth of a child into a physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually healthy individual. At First Baptist Preschool we believe that it is our primary role to facilitate the learning of both children and families.

First Baptist Church is pleased with our professional administrative and teaching staff. Our staff members were selected for their knowledge of child development and their strong interpersonal skills.

This handbook has been developed to help strengthen the relationship between families and the school by providing you with specific information about our school.

We are excited that you will be with us for the upcoming school year.

Welcome!



**First Baptist Church Preschool
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

I have received and read the First Baptist Preschool Parent Handbook. I understand all the preschool's policies and agree to follow them. I understand that not following them may result my child's removal from school.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian
Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please complete and sign the bottom portion, along with your enrollment paper work, to the FBC Preschool Director.

✂ _____

FBC Preschool Copy

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I. Purpose

A. Mission

The program at First Baptist Church Preschool exists to promote the child's total physical, cognitive, social, and spiritual development by encouraging a love of God as we know Him in Jesus Christ, a biblical view of self, creative self-expression, an attitude of cooperation and sharing, and an expanding knowledge of the world in which we live.

B. Goals

First Baptist Preschool seeks:

To plan for and provide a safe, clean, well-equipped, well-arranged facility, conducive to meeting the basic physical, educational and social needs of each child and where the teachers will enjoy teaching.

To create a spiritual atmosphere where God's love for us and our love for God is expressed by caring and loving individuals.

To provide an educational atmosphere where each child will enjoy learning about himself/herself and the rest of God's creation.

To provide a curriculum in our Pre-K classes that prepares each child for a successful Kindergarten experience.

To help each child grow as a strong social being through group interaction.

To work closely with the family of each child to ensure high-quality care and education for their children.

To provide a social environment where children of all races, religions, family backgrounds and cultures are treated with respect and consideration.

II. Programs

A. Licensing

The Texas Department of Protection and Regulatory Services, Childcare Licensing Division has licensed First Baptist Church Preschool. These minimum standards and most recent licensing report are available in the office for your inspection. Any complaints may be mailed to TDPRS/CCL Mail Code 016-5, PO Box 15995, Austin, TX, 78761 or call 834-3195. The National Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

B. Children Served/Hours of Operation

First Baptist Church Preschool serves children two years through five years of age. Children are placed in classes according to their age on September 1st of each academic year.

The school operates Monday through Thursday from 8:45 am to 1:00 pm with an Aftercare program until 2:45 pm. Parents should bring children to the playground between 8:45 am and 9:00 am. Please do not arrive before then, as teachers will be setting up for the day. Children may be picked up in their classrooms at 1:00 pm or on the playground or nap room at 2:45 pm following Aftercare. If a child is to ride home with someone other than a parent, the person must be identified on the enrollment forms as someone allowed to pick up your child.

C. Governance

The First Baptist Church Preschool Board determines personnel policies and procedures of the FBC Preschool. The Preschool Board is composed of six to nine members: two thirds of the Board members will be FBCDS members. At least two Board members will have children in the FBC Preschool. The FBC Pastor and the FBC Preschool Director will serve as non-voting Board members. Voting members may not be employees of the FBC Preschool. Board members will be recommended to the FBC Preschool Director or the FBC Pastor with final approval by the Pastor. It is preferred that Board members serve for one to three year terms, but periods of service can be renewed at the discretion of the Pastor. When there is a change in school policy or procedures, parents will be notified by written letter.

II. Curriculum

A. Curriculum

Our curriculum, carefully selected and modified by our experienced preschool staff, assures a superior developmental program for our children.

Small-sized classes and monthly units allow us to plan our curriculum around the familiar world of each child and to address each child as a unique individual. Units of study throughout the year include the individual, home and family, community life, seasons, weather, holidays, plants and animals, pioneer life and Native Americans, to name a few.

Holidays are acknowledged in monthly units with emphasis on both secular and religious traditions. All nationally recognized holidays are included in units of study.

Children are encouraged to share their varying cultures, religions, and experiences in the classroom.

B. Learning Environment

Each classroom provides space for various guided and independent learning centers, a space for group reading, a sink and bathroom, windows to see outside and each with an exit to an outdoor play area.

There are two different outdoor play areas. Each outdoor play area is designed to meet a level in the physical development of the children. These play areas lend themselves to developing the children's balance, posture, locomotion and strength as well as providing an outlet for their unending energy.

We include a general music center where we seek to develop skills of expression, rhythm, listening and coordination.

C. Teachers

The stimulus for a good educational program is a good teaching staff. The faculty at First Baptist Preschool is well qualified. Teachers at First Baptist Preschool are required to have a college degree and early childhood teaching experience. The staff takes special pride in the loving atmosphere of our school and is excited by how young children learn. We believe the early years are the most important and the most challenging and rewarding to teach.

IV. Discipline and Behavior

The school day is structured in such a way as to encourage appropriate behavior at all times.

Redirection and "time out" are the means of discipline used at First Baptist Church Preschool. When a child exhibits unacceptable behavior, the teacher first tries to redirect the child to another project or area of the room. Encouraging the child to be the teacher's helper usually is the most effective technique. If a child continues to have a difficult time controlling himself/herself, he/she is directed to the "time out" chair until he/she is able to calm down. On the rare occasion that the above procedures do not work, the child is escorted to the Director's office for an extended time-out. At that time the school solicits help from the parents. Parents are called and made aware that their child has not responded to the school's form of discipline.

As adopted by Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers - Discipline must be: individualized and consistent for each child; appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following: praising and encouraging good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; redirecting behavior using positive statements; and using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited: corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training; pinching, shaking, or biting a child; hitting a child with a hand or instrument; putting anything in or on a child's mouth; humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child; subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language; placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age. (Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance)

V. Policies and Procedures

A. Calendar

The school year runs on a nine month schedule. Holidays and vacations approximate those of the Dripping Springs Independent School District but are not always exactly the same.

B. Fees

The registration fee is a non-refundable fee payable at the time of acceptance into the program. A supply fee is due twice a year, at the beginning of each semester.

C. Tuition

Tuition is due the first week of each month. Checks are made payable to "First Baptist Preschool". Late tuition payment fee of \$5.00 per day will be assessed beginning on the second week of the month. Families who have more than one child attending First Baptist Preschool will be afforded a \$10 per month reduction in tuition for each additional child. Children not attending Aftercare must be picked up by 1:00 pm. After 1:10 pm children that are not picked up will be checked into Aftercare and parents will be charged accordingly. Children in Aftercare must be picked up by 2:45 pm. A \$1.00 per minute late fee will be charged after 2:50 pm.

D. Scholarship

Tuition assistance in the form of partial or full scholarship may be granted by the FBC Board if the tuition charges prohibit a child from attending the program. Please discuss these issues with the FBC Preschool Director so arrangements can be made if possible.

E. Authorized Release of Children

Children will be released ONLY to parents or guardians or those persons authorized by the parents or guardians on the Emergency Card. There must be at least two alternate pick-up people listed on the form in the event that you are unable to pick up your own child. Please notify the Director if there are any changes to your pick-up arrangements.

Special arrangements must be made for any unauthorized adult to pick up your child. To ensure that your child is going home with his/her appropriate ride please follow this procedure:

1. Permission must be given in writing to the teacher or director if some one other than the parent/guardian or authorized persons will be picking up your child.
2. The parent/guardian must give the child's teacher and the FBC Preschool office the full name and phone number of the designated adult.
3. When the designated adult arrives, the teacher and/or Director will ask for the adult's name and to see a picture ID. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18.
4. Parents should complete an Enrollment/Emergency form to update authorization for release information (for example: to delete or add someone).

F. Withdrawal from Preschool

If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from preschool, a 2 week notice is required. If the child is withdrawn without notice the parent will be billed for the 2 weeks.

VI. Enrollment

Children may be placed on the waiting list for First Baptist Church Preschool. Each application will be honored in the order received subject to the following exceptions:

1. Students already in attendance during the regular August through May session will have first priority.
2. Siblings of attending students will be given second priority.
3. Children of active members of First Baptist Church will be given third priority.

A non-refundable registration fee will be charged at the time a place is offered.

Registration for the next school year must be returned by the deadline date.

Any registration and accompanying fees not received by the deadline will result in your child's name being placed back on the waiting list for that school year.

Once a child is accepted into the school, it is the intention of First Baptist Church Preschool to reserve a place for the child from year to year. Advancement into the next level of the program is subject to the child's readiness for advancement. If, however, during the school year, a teacher recommends the student receive testing or counseling and if that recommendation is not honored, or if behavioral problems become extreme, the school reserves the right to ask that the child be removed from the program.

Class placement will be made based on date of birth, the child's readiness, and the need for a boy/girl balance within each classroom.

IT IS REQUIRED THAT THE THREE-YEAR-OLD IS TOILET-TRAINED UPON ENTRANCE TO SCHOOL. First Baptist Preschool does not have the available staff to change diapers at this age level. It is recognized that the young child will have toilet "accidents".

First Baptist Preschool shall not exclude students because of race, creed, national origin, physical ability or economic status.

VII. Health

A. Illness

A child should not come to school if he/she has any contagious disease, shows signs of a fresh cold, has had a temperature of 99° or more within the past 24 hours, has sore or discharging eyes, or is showing signs of fatigue.

Send your child to school only when he/she is well enough to participate in all school activities. First Baptist Preschool does not have the provisions to keep a child inside while the class goes outdoors. If your child is ill and will miss school, notify the office by 8:30 am, especially if the child has a communicable disease.

B. Medications

First Baptist Preschool cannot be responsible for administering medication to children in our care.

C. Immunization and Vision/Hearing Screening

Each child must have a statement of good health and an updated record of immunizations from a physician or health professional on file in the office before school begins. By order of the Department of Human Services of the State of Texas, any child unable to produce an immunization card by the first day of school will not be allowed to enter school until such card arrives.

In compliance with state law, First Baptist Preschool requires a vision and hearing screening for all children who are four years old or older.

D. Emergency Procedure

If a child becomes ill or is injured while at school, the staff will provide appropriate first aid. If the illness or injury is not life threatening, the parents will be contacted to come for the child. If the illness or injury is life threatening, the staff procedure is as follows: provide appropriate first aid measures; if the situation warrants, an ambulance will be called (parents are responsible for EMS fees); notify the parents; contact the child's physician if the parents cannot be located; accompany the child to the hospital if a parent is not present (the health form accompanies the child to the hospital to insure emergency treatment).

E. Allergic Reaction

We want to continue to work closely with our parents and students to make sure no child suffers needlessly from an allergic reaction to food or environmental factors. With regard to any type of severe reaction, please be sure that the school is aware of your child's allergy.

We ask the classroom teachers to remind the students not to share food amongst each other without first checking with the teachers to make sure that it is okay. Foods that contain peanuts or peanut oil are examples of foods that might potentially cause an allergic reaction in a student. With this in mind, we ask that if you bring baked goods to your child's classroom, please determine whether or not the item contains peanut oil or nuts. If it does, be sure to inform the teacher so that she can check her records for any student in her class who might be allergic to these items. With regard to environmental allergies, if your youngster has a severe allergy to bee stings, etc. again, please be sure that the Director and your child's teacher are aware of this problem. Our goal, of course, is to ensure the safety of all our students.

VII. General Information

A. Aftercare

An afternoon program is offered daily from 1:00 pm - 2:45 pm for children in all classes. The payment may be included with the monthly tuition check. In order to meet our staff/child ratio, a maximum of 12 children may participate. Sign-up for the Aftercare program is on a first-come/first-served basis during our "Meet the Teacher" evening in August.

B. Birthdays

Children enjoy celebrating their birthday with their classmates. We count it as a privilege to make sure your child's birthday is recognized in a special way and to thank God for their life. If you would like to bring a treat to share with your child's class just let us know! If you are planning a party for your child, please invite the entire class if invitations are handed out at school. This will prevent hurt feelings.

C. Chapel

The FBC Preschool has chapel, led by one of the First Baptist Church ministerial staff, on Thursdays at 10:30 am. Parents are warmly invited to attend.

The order of service is adapted for children. There are special chapel programs for Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, with emphasis on the meaning of these special events.

In addition to chapel services, our teachers show through what they say and do that God loves everyone and wants everyone to love and care for one another.

D. Clothing

PLEASE LABEL YOUR CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS!

Children should wear comfortable, washable clothing that is suitable for messy play. Elastic-waist pants are preferable for the two and three year old children. PLEASE no overalls for this age child. Please bring a complete change of clothes for your child (suitable to the season) to keep at school in the event that accidents or spills occur.

Children will go outside every day unless it is raining. We ask that you dress your child appropriately for the seasonal weather (e.g. cool, light clothing for summer; jackets, mittens, hats and leg covering during colder months).

Sturdy footwear will ensure the safety of your child both inside and outside. Closed-toe, non-slip shoes such as sneakers are preferred over "party" shoes, cowboy boots, or flip-flops.

E. Emergency Relocation

In case of fire or danger of fire or explosion, the staff's first responsibility is to evacuate the children to a designated safe area that is outside by the "Early Childhood Center" sign on the front side of the Preschool building. Emergency exit plans are posted in each classroom. We conduct fire drills each month to prepare for such an event.

F. Field Trips

Most classes take a few field trips during the year. They are an important extension of the program and a valuable and enjoyable experience. Many parents drive on each outing and accompany the class. Parents always have advance notice of field trips. Our enrollment forms include permission to travel with the class. School buses will not be used to transport children on field trips. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a car seat for their child. Children will not be allowed to travel without a car seat.

G. Fund Raising Events

Funds raised from these events are used to pay for scholarships and special projects. These events are very important to the financial well-being of the preschool and 100% participation is encouraged.

H. Inclement Weather

First Baptist Preschool is closed on any day that Dripping Springs Independent School District schools are closed due to bad weather. Please listen to announcements on the television or radio regarding school closures.

I. Lost and Found

Unclaimed items will be kept in the FBC Preschool office. Labeling can help prevent the loss of your child's clothing, toys, etc.

J. Lunch

Please send your child with a healthy, ready-to-eat lunch that does not require heating. The preschool is not responsible for meeting the daily nutritional requirements for the children in our care since they bring lunches from home.

K. Outdoor Policy

Frequently parents ask if their child can remain inside during our outdoor playtime due to health concerns. If a child is well enough to be at school, the child is assumed to be well enough to go outside. Children go outside every day except in extreme weather conditions.

Our child-staff ratios rarely allow us to stay inside with one or two children while the rest of the children go outside. We understand that parents naturally have strong feelings about keeping their children healthy, which we share. But health experts agree that when children are properly dressed, cool weather is rarely harmful to children and that being outside in the fresh air is essential.

If you have questions about whether or not your child can participate in outdoor play you might want to consider keeping your child home until you feel your child is ready to fully participate in our daily program, both inside and outside.

We appreciate your cooperation in this issue, as we all strive to maintain a healthy and happy group of children.

L. Classroom Parties

Each class has several scheduled parties a year. These parties usually carry a holiday theme and are well received when the food and the party plans are within reason. Please consult with your child's teacher regarding party details, and work together to provide an appropriate party within the school setting.

M. Personal Property

Except for show and tell, children should not bring toys from home because they often get lost or broken and are difficult to share. Please label all clothing and any item that is brought for show and tell. Teachers will try to see that they are kept safely in children's bag or hung on their hooks.

Your child needs to leave the following items at home: candy, chewing gum, junk food, special toys that would be hard to share, guns and other toy weapons, pets (unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher), and jewelry.

N. Pets

In some of our classrooms we may have small pets such as fish, hamsters, rabbits, hermit crabs, and/or Harry, our Texas Tarantula. Our children learn about the care and unique characteristics of these pets. They are a valuable part of their preschool experience.

O. Snacks

Nutritious snacks are provided by the preschool each morning. These include a fruit, crackers, apple juice or lemonade, to name a few. We do not force a child to eat snack but do encourage trying new foods.

P. Water Activities

Swim parties at private pools are not permitted during school hours. If individual parents invite their child's classmates to swim in their pool, the parents must become responsible for the safety of the children; their home-owner's insurance must cover liability claims. The school cannot be involved in issuing or delivering such invitations or be seen as involved in the event in any way.

IX. Parent Communication

A. Contacting the school

You are welcome to call the school for information or to express concern at any time during our school day. The school number is 858-2203. If the Director is in conference or in a classroom, the recorder will take your message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

B. Parent Volunteers

First Baptist Preschool is not operated as a cooperative; however, parents who enjoy participating with their children are most welcome. We especially encourage parents to share their talents and special interests.

C. Conferences

Each teacher holds parent conferences. A complete report on the child's adjustment to school and progress in the program will be made at that time. Teachers will notify parents immediately if they believe the child has special problems in any area of development.

Parents should keep their child's teacher informed of any unusual events in the home that might affect the child's behavior in school. If you have a concern, you may feel free to contact the teacher or the Director at any time.

D. Communication about Accident or Illness

While First Baptist Preschool makes every effort to prevent accidents from happening, accidents with young children will occur. All members of our staff are trained in CPR and First Aid procedures. In the event of a minor injury (i.e., scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc.) a staff member will administer appropriate first aid and comfort the child. An accident report form will be completed and sent home with your child explaining the nature and treatment of the injury. If the injury is major (i.e., broken limb, requiring stitches, etc.) a parent is immediately contacted. Should a parent be unavailable, alternate names on the child's information card will be contacted. When no one can be reached, the child's physician is contacted to determine what action should be taken. Should immediate medical attention be needed, EMS will be called to transport the child to an emergency room. The staff witnessing the accident will complete a major accident form.

E. Parent Concerns

We request parents to direct all questions, concerns, and praise to their child's teacher. We encourage parents to discuss with the child's teacher and the FBC Director any day-to-day preschool business and activities, curriculum, special programs, chapel services, field trips, building and grounds usage, tuition concerns or anything related to their child's growth and development. If, after discussion with the FBC Director, a parent feels an area of concern warrants FBC Preschool Board attention, a written letter stating the grievance must be submitted to the FBC Preschool Board Chairman at least one week prior to the next scheduled Preschool Board meeting. Upon receipt of this letter, the Preschool Board Chairman/FBC Director will place this matter as the first topic of discussion on the agenda. The parent(s) will be welcome to present the matter to the Board. Discussion will be limited to fifteen minutes.

F. Visiting Procedure

At all times parents are welcome to visit our school. It is recommended that parents schedule their visit so our teachers and staff can ensure visitors get the most out of their time at the preschool.