



FIRST BAPTIST  
WEEKDAY  
EDUCATION

**PRESCHOOL  
HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**



I want to welcome personally welcome you to the Preschool Program of First Baptist Church Weekday Education. We are so grateful that you and your family have chosen to be a part of our family for the 2023-2024 school year. We look forward to getting to know your child throughout the year as we walk alongside you through this important time of educational development. Our goal is to partner with you in providing a safe, warm, and loving environment that nurtures the spiritual, mental, social, emotional, and physical development of each child.

We understand that making a choice for your child's education is a significant decision and we truly appreciate the trust that you have instilled in us for the care and education of your child. We seek to provide each child in our program a meaningful year of learning and enrichment. Our teachers and staff are so excited to meet you and your families.

This handbook is an overview of our policies and procedures. **Even if you have been part of our program for many years, please take time to review these policies as quite a few changes and updates have been made.** The information will be helpful as you prepare to begin a new school year and will also be helpful to reflect back over when specific questions or needs arise. Each year you are asked to sign a statement that you have read this handbook and agree to abide by the policies outlined. Any updates made in the future will be provided on our website.

You are always welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Grace and Peace,

Martha Kate Hall  
Minister to Preschool and Families  
First Baptist Church of Augusta  
706-731-5366  
mkhall@fbcaugusta.org

## **Communication**

Communication between parents and teachers is especially important. We want you to feel as if you can contact your child's teacher with any questions or concerns you may have. Please do keep in mind that while in the classroom, teachers are focusing on the students and not attending to their phone or email messages so we ask that if you have a message that you would like to get to a teacher quickly, call our office (706-731-5366) and leave a message.

Our school has two primary methods for parent/teacher contact: email and Class Dojo. Each teacher in our program has an email address using the following format: `firstname.lastname@weekdayfbc.org`. Each student will be placed in a classroom on Class Dojo which will also allow for sharing of photos, school wide information, class updates and messaging your student's teacher or school administration.

You will also receive "Wednesday Wrap Up" communications from the director by email. Most weeks these email communications will provide updates and valuable information for the school. School wide information will often be shared on Class Dojo. If the school administration needs to notify parents of something quickly, we will communicate via text message through the ProCare system. Cell phone numbers and email addresses provided at the time of registration will be considered official means of contact unless additional methods are provided. If at any time you need to update a phone number or email address, you may do so through your ProCare account.

Teachers will schedule conferences twice during the school year. Fall conferences are optional and may be requested by teachers or parents. Spring conferences will be held for all students to discuss progress for the year and recommendations for the following year. If at any other time you would like to discuss your child's progress, please let the teacher know.

## **Arrival**

Preschool students will participate in a drop-off carline each morning. Please follow details provided at open house. All children should exit onto the curb with adult assistance in front of the children's building. Staff members will be at the sidewalk from 8:50 a.m. until 9:10 a.m. to greet the children and to direct them into the buildings. Children arriving earlier than 8:50 should remain in the car until the staff member is on duty. Children arriving after 9:10 will need to be walked to the office in the Preschool building to be checked in. Never drop your child off and have them go to class if teachers are not present in a carline.

During the first week of school parents may walk their child to the door of the classroom.

When you need to park, please use spaces in the center of the parking lot rather than those alongside the curb or under the covered drop off. Be sure to lock your car, and do not leave your valuables unattended. If you have children in MDO, you will need to drop off your preschooler, park, and then walk your child to the Mother's Day Out drop off.

We do ask that you have your child here on time so that they do not miss meaningful learning experiences and classroom schedules are not disrupted. If you know you will be late arriving (especially after 9:30), please notify the administration.

## **Dismissal**

All K4 and TK classes will dismiss from the curb in front of the Children's Building beginning at 12:50 pm each day. Please take the perimeter road to the last entrance. Two car tags will be given for each child to be placed on the rearview mirror of the vehicle. This **MUST** be visible when picking up your child. This helps those running car line to keep it going smoothly and adds a measure of security to pick up.

K3 classes will dismiss from the covered walkway between the Preschool building and the Adult building beginning at 12:50 pm. All K3 children will receive two pick up tags that must be presented for pick up.

Please do not walk through carline to retrieve our child. In case of rain, K3, K4 and TK students will be picked up at the classroom door. Please bring your pick up tag to the door for rainy day pick up.

If you have children in both Mother's Day Out and Preschool, please pick up your child from MDO then proceed to carline or the covered walkway to pick up your preschooler. Please do not walk into carline to retrieve your child.

**If a parent/guardian is late in picking up a child, a late fee will be assessed after 5 minutes. The parent will be charged \$10 for the first 5 minutes he/she is late and \$1 for each additional minute. This late fee will be added to the child's tuition account in ProCare.**

## **Parking Lot Reminders**

**DO NOT PARK ALONG THE CURB IN THE MORNING OR AFTERNOON**

**Please always use extreme caution when in the parking lot.** Drive slowly. Look before merging into traffic, watching for cars and children. When walking children in, please hold their hands. Everyone's safety is our first concern.

If possible, refrain from being on the phone when dropping off and picking up your child. If you must be on the phone, please remember to remain hands free. Your complete attention to the situation at hand is compromised by the distraction of the phone. This is especially important to our children's safety.

Be aware of cars dropping off children in front of the Children's Building (where staff will be standing for carline.) If you are walking your child up or drop off, please cross at the sidewalk by the playground. When you walk in the middle of carline, drivers are distracted by their children and may not see you.

Always walk a child across the parking lot for arrival or dismissal and do not let them go ahead. All children crossing travel paths must be accompanied (and held) by an adult.

## **Entry into the School**

Parents will be allowed to walk their child TO THE DOOR of the classroom for the first week of class. After this, children will be dropped off just inside the double doors of the preschool building. **Anyone arriving after 9:10 or before 12:30, must come to the automatic doors of the Preschool Building under the covered walkway to gain access.** All students should be checked in and out of the office, not through a teacher. A camera and intercom will allow us to see our visitors. Those arriving late or picking up early must have a valid excuse (i.e., doctor's appointment). If possible, please notify the office ahead of time, so we can be prepared to meet you.

## **Authorization for Pick Up**

Only parents and those listed on the "Pick up and Release" form may pick up a child. If you have changes, please be sure to personally do this with the office. To ensure your child's safety, we will not take phone calls asking for changes in pick-ups. If someone on the pick-up list is coming for the first time and your child's teacher does not know them, let them know that they will need to show their driver's license as a form of identification before picking up. We do ask that all who are picking up children have their car tags or pick up tags each day.

Let your child's teacher know by written note or Class Dojo message if your child's transportation will be different from the usual (and the person is on the pick-up and release form.) Such notification is important so that the staff may act in the best interest of your child and his/her safety. In the event of a custody settlement, the ruling of the court will be followed as to who may pick up the child.

## **NEW NUT FREE POLICY**

Due to an increase in nut allergies as well as the severity of these allergies, we have made the decision to become a nut free school. This means that ALL food items sent to FBC (in lunches, for snack or to be shared in class) may not contain peanuts or tree nuts.

We will be happy to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom. We do ask that you arrange these days with the teacher's schedule. You must also abide by the nut free policy. No homemade treats will be allowed. Non-edible treats are also welcome.

**ALL products sent to be shared in the classroom (this includes birthdays and class parties) must either be from the provided approved list or be clearly marked "made in a nut free facility."**

Approved shared classroom snacks:

- Mott's or Welch's Fruit Snacks
- Lofthouse Brand Cookies
- Jonny Pops or Outshine Popsicles
- Pirate's Booty or Skinny Pop
- Kellogg's Rice Crispy Treats
- Oreo and Chip's Ahoy Cookies
- Hostess Donettes
- Fresh Fruit
- Applesauce Pouches

## **Lunch**

The children will eat lunch at school. Bringing lunch is a great social learning experience for the children as they sit and visit while they eat. Please prepare a simple, healthy, balanced lunch with a drink each day.

We encourage you to monitor what comes home in the lunch box so that you can see if too much is being packed, or if there are some foods that your child is not eating while at school. We are unable to heat or prepare foods inside the classroom. It is most helpful if lunches are items that can be self-fed. Teachers are able to assist in opening containers as needed but cannot feed students individually outside of the infant classroom. Please be sure that items such as grapes and hotdogs are cut into small bite size pieces to avoid choking hazards.

Please remember that NO nut products should be sent in your child's lunch. If a nut item is seen in the lunch, we will substitute that item for your child and return the food item with a note reminding you of our nut-free policy.

## **Media Usage**

Visual media may be used to supplement education, share Bible lessons or for indoor

recess activities. Only movies or shows that are rated G will be shown in the classroom. If a teacher wants to show a movie rated PG, parental permission must be given for all students present in the classroom.

## **Health and Safety**

If your child has a sore throat, fever (100 or above), chills, body aches, earache, excessively runny nose, runny nose with discoloration, cough, shortness of breath, etc., please keep him/her home. If children are experiencing symptoms or have been diagnosed with any of the following, they should remain home until a doctor advises they are able to return to school: cold, flu, strep throat, hand foot and mouth, pink eye, COVID-19, or any other contagious illness. Also, if your child is diagnosed with one of these contagious illnesses, please notify the school so proper action can be taken. If a child begins to develop symptoms of illness during the school day, he/she will be brought to the office and a parent will be contacted.

**\*\*Children should not return to school until 48 hours following fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and other infectious diseases. Children should be fever free without medication for the full 48 hours. Please continue to monitor guidelines as related to specific health within our community.**

Make sure your child has had all the necessary immunizations and that we have a current copy of all immunization forms. Child Care Immunization Certificates 3231 are required. Form 3300 (eye, ear, dental) is required also for the K4 and K5 classes. These are needed by September 1.

Please advise us of any allergies your child may have. Send written instructions if special attention is needed. Medications will not be administered at school (except for an epi-pen or an inhaler). Please inform the teachers of changes to emergency numbers and people we can contact should the need arise.

## **School Closings**

We will follow the ruling of the Columbia County School system for inclement weather closings. All other closings (i.e., illness) will be determined by the FBC Weekday administration. Text message and email notifications will also be sent, when possible, to notify parents of closings.

Should a class or the school close due to illness, tuition will continue to be collected during temporary closure as learn from home materials are provided. The FBC Weekday program will continue to make the best decisions possible based on the health and wellbeing of its students and staff.

## **Tuition**

A statement will be sent by email on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, and payments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup>. Tuition adjustments will not be made for absenteeism regardless of the reason. A LATE FEE OF \$15 will be added to your account if the payment is made after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. If the balance has not been paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month an additional \$25 late fee will be added. If payment is late for three months, the child is subject to dismissal from the program. Also, after three months of late payments, you will be required to sign up for auto-payment.

You may always access your account balance and make payments through [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com). You will need to sign in with your email address and create a password. Payments may be made through automatic drafts or by credit card. If you choose to use a credit card, there will be a 2.75% convenience fee added. (We are also able to process credit cards in the office as well.)

If you plan to write a check, please put it in an envelope with your child's name on the outside and send it to school in your child's folder. Your child's teacher will turn it into the office. A drop box is available outside the automatic doors. You may write one check regardless of how many children you have in the program (and whether they are in MDO or Preschool).

There is a multiple child discount for those with more than one child in the weekday program. Any additional child, after the first child, will receive a 10% discount on tuition. A one-time discount will be offered for anyone choosing to enroll in autopay or for anyone who chooses to pay in full. First Baptist Church Members will receive a 50% discount on all registration fees.

## **Withdraw Policy**

All registration fees are non-refundable unless you move out of the CSRA and notify us prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>. If for any reason your child must withdraw, a written request must be submitted one month prior to the child's last day. Students who are withdrawn after July 1 will also be expected to pay August tuition. Tuition must be paid through the official withdraw date regardless of attendance.

## **Show and Tell**

When your child's class is having Show and Tell, please consider the theme for the week and/or what is requested from the teacher. Please refrain from sending video games, guns, knives, etc.



## **Substitutes**

Substitute teachers are employed by the school when a staff member is absent. Many of our substitutes are or have been parents of children in our school. If you are interested in being placed on our substitute list, please let your child's teacher, Carla or Martha Kate know. Background checks are completed for all substitutes.

## **Discipline**

Cooperative behavior is reinforced with positive praise. Uncooperative behavior is discussed with the student, and reminders are given as a chance to make corrections. If this does not correct the situation, then a minute per child's age "time out" is used with discussion and appropriate measures taken, i.e. – apologize, re-establish a relationship, take care of the neglected task, etc. If repeated time outs are ineffective, the teacher may solicit the help of the Director or Assistant Director. We will discuss ways the school and the parents may work together to reinforce positive behavior. Corporal punishment is never used.

Discipline Plan – In the event discipline of a child is merited, these steps will be taken:

1. Talking with the child.
2. Removing the child from the activity and/or redirecting to another activity.
3. Isolating the child from the other children, such as putting them in a chair alone. Children will never be placed out of sight of the staff.
4. Contacting parents.
5. Removing the child from the classroom and taking the child to the office to talk with the director.
6. Contacting parents and requiring a conference to discuss a plan of action followed by both the program and the parents.
7. Removing the child from the program.

## **Enrollment Policy**

When enrolled at FBC, a child is encouraged to attend regularly unless prevented by illness. We also ask that children arrive on time so that they do not miss important educational experiences or disrupt the schedule of the class.

## **Statement of Acceptance**

The Weekday Education Ministry reserves the right to refuse an applicant we discern is not suitable for our program, to decline admission when we are not able to meet the special needs of a child, or to make exceptions to the “first come” policy when special situations arise. By way of example, such refusal may be for anticipated disruption in the school due to discipline issues or when we believe that we do not have the adequate resources to serve a child with special needs appropriately.

## **Statement of Dismissal**

The Weekday Education Ministry reserves the right to dismiss any student when it discerns that continued enrollment in the program is disruptive to the school, other students, or is incompatible with the school’s mission. Such reasons may include but are not limited to violation of classroom behavioral guidelines and expectations either of a serious or continual nature; failure of parents or guardians to adhere to school terms and policies; misrepresentations or omissions by parents or guardians on enrollment forms or in other interactions with the school personnel; failure to pay tuition in a timely manner, and the school’s inability to meet the special needs of the student.