



FIRST BAPTIST
WEEKDAY
EDUCATION

HANDBOOK 2024-2025

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Allergies	3
Arrival.....	3
Biting	4
Communication	4
Crying.....	5
Discipline.....	6
Dismissal	6
Enrollment.....	7
Illness.....	8
Late Pick Up.....	8
Lunch.....	8
Media Usage.....	9
Nut Free School.....	9
Parking Lot Safety.....	9
Personal Belongings	10
Potty Training.....	10
Records	11
School Closings.....	11
Security.....	11
Special Needs	12
Substitutes	12
Tuition	12
Withdraw	13



Please allow me to take this opportunity to personally welcome your family to the Weekday Education Program of First Baptist Church of Augusta. We are so grateful that your family has chosen to be a part of our program for the 2024-2025 school year. We look forward to getting to know your child(ren) throughout the year as we walk alongside you through this valuable 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 crucial decision and we genuinely 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, we do ask that you take time to review our handbook each year. The handbook has been reformatted and we have added information for several areas.** The information will be helpful as you prepare to begin a new school year and may also serve as a reference throughout the year 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

Allergies

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. If severe allergies are present within a classroom, we may ask all families in the class to keep certain food items out of the classroom. In such instances individual classes will be informed directly.

Arrival: MDO

Each MDO child is given 2 color-coded bag tags along with 2 color-coded pick up tags at the beginning of the school year. Please ensure your child has the most up to date tags on his/her bag. These colors will help teachers ensure students get to and from the right classrooms. Additional bag tags are available in the office for \$5 each.

Drop off will begin at 8:50 am and end at 9:10 am each day. MDO families should enter and exit from the automatic doors by the office. Please plan your arrival for that time. If you have a child in our preschool program, you may drop them off in carline, park and walk your child to the covered walkway for MDO drop off.

When parking in the parking lot on the playground side of the building, please always park away from the curb in the designated MDO section. We ask that you drive carefully and slowly in the parking lot. Watch for merging traffic and on-coming cars from the back of the property, as well as for parents and children crossing the parking lot.

Arrival: K3 & K4

Preschool carline (for K3 and K4) will begin the second week of school. Please pull to the RIGHT of the cones (close to the curb) for morning drop off. ALL CHILDREN SHOULD EXIT ONTO THE CURB BETWEEN THE PRESCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S BUILDINGS. A staff member will be at the sidewalk from 8:50 until 9:10 a.m. to greet the children, help children exit the car and guide children 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 by an adult to the office. Never drop your child off and have them go to class if teachers are not present in a carline. In case of rain, you will need to park and walk your child to the door facing the parking lot of his/her building.

When you need to park, please use spaces in the center of the parking lot rather than those alongside the curb. Be sure to lock your car, and do not leave your valuables unattended. **Please use extreme caution** when in the parking lot at all times. Drive

slowly. Look before merging into traffic, watching for cars and children. When walking children in, please hold their hands. All children should remain INSIDE of the car while in carline (please do not allow them to hang out of the window and/or sunroof/

If you have children in MDO, you will need to drop off your preschooler and then walk your child into the Preschool Building.

During the first week of school, there will be no morning carline. You are asked to walk your child to their classroom door to help them find their room and get acclimated. By Monday, August 19th, we will require all parents to use standard drop off and carline procedures to help them develop self-confidence and independence.

We do ask that you have your child(ren) 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.

Biting

Biting is normal and natural for young children and nearly every child bites another child at some time. Usually, when children bite, it is because they lack the skills to cope with frustrating situations (such as wanting a toy that another child has) or have limited language skills. We manage biting as we would other negative behavior, by redirecting the biter to another activity and close supervision. When an incident occurs, teachers notify parents of the bitten child as well as parents of the child who bit through a written incident report. Biting incidents are managed in the classroom by the teacher as a normal part of the young child's life. However, when chronic biting incidents escalate or persist to the detriment of others in the classroom, the administration may take steps to dismiss the child from our program.

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, call our office (706-731-5366) and or send a message to a member of the administrative staff through Class Dojo.

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. Please note that the Class Dojo app is free for parent and school use. There are optional paid upgrades available, but you are not required to pay for features to use the app.

Most weeks you will also receive "Wednesday Wrap Up" communications from the director by email. These email communications will provide updates and valuable information for the school. Schoolwide information will also be shared on Class Dojo. If the school administration needs to notify parents of a closure or another emergency, the school administration 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 in the spring for all K3 and K4 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. For younger children, it is helpful to know when routines change, if they are teething, potty training, or experiencing other changes. In these circumstances, please help teachers by communicating what changes are taking place. Teachers will be happy to share information about the child's day through Class Dojo or briefly during pick up.

Crying

Your child may cry when left at the beginning of the year. This is normal and expected. We especially know these first few weeks will be difficult and we are prepared to offer extra consolation. Please know we will continue to work with you through this transition. Here are a few tips for helping to make the transition easier:

- Talk positively about school and your child's teacher.
- Talk about the fun they will have and things they may be doing.
- Bring them to drop off and greet the teacher who is welcoming them. Hug, kiss, say good-bye and assure them you will return.
- Leave promptly without lingering.
- A comfort toy at the first of the year may be helpful.
- If you want to check on your child during the first week or two, please feel free to call the office and ask a member of the administrative staff to check for you.
- Please tell the teacher if you want them to call you after a set period.
- The book "Bye-Bye Time" and others can be helpful to read with your child. We have a few copies in the office for parents to borrow.

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.

Dismissal: MDO

All MDO class (Babies-2's) will be picked up from the main entrance of the Preschool building under the covered walkway. Pick up will begin at 12:30 for MDO classes. All MDO children will receive two colored pickup tags that must be presented for pick up.

Please note that we have a new security system that will require us to open the doors for you upon arrival. When leaving you must press the "push to exit" button on the wall to open the doors.

Dismissal: K3

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 colored pickup tags that must be presented for 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 breezeway pick up for your preschooler. Please do

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

Dismissal: K4

All K4 classes will dismiss from the curb in front of the Children's Building beginning at 12:50 pm. Please take the perimeter road to the last entrance and pull to the LEFT of the cones (away from the curb). Two car tags will be given for each child to be placed on the rearview mirror or visor of the vehicle. This MUST be visible when picking up your child. This helps those running the car line to keep it going smoothly and adds a measure of security to pick up. Additional car tags are available in the office for \$5 each.

In case of rain, K4 students will be picked up at the classroom door. Please bring your car tag to the door for rainy day pick up.

Enrollment

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.

Illness

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.**

Late Pick Up

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

Lunch

All students will eat in their classroom during the school day. Lunchtime 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 food 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.

Breast fed babies must be able to take a bottle. If possible, please pre-mix formula bottles before sending them to school. Our baby classroom does have a way to warm bottles in the classroom, but no other classes have the ability to warm food. Be sure ALL bottles and cups are labeled. Please give teachers specific information about feeding times.

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.

Nut Free School

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 below. If unapproved items are sent, we will be unable to serve them.

Approved shared classroom snacks:

- Mott's or Welch's Fruit Snacks
- Lofthouse Brand Cookies
- Partake Brand Cookies
- Jonny Pops or Outshine Popsicles
- Pirate's Booty or Skinny Pop
- Kellogg's Rice Crispy Treats
- Oreo Cookies
- Hostess Donettes
- Fresh Fruit or Apple Sauce Pouches
- Non-Food Treats

Parking Lot Safety

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.

Personal Belongings

If your child is in diapers, please send 5 disposable diapers per day, plus two weather appropriate changes of clothing. If your child is in pull-ups, please send extra pull-ups as well.

Any clothes that will be removed (such as jackets, sweaters, and coats) need to be LABELED. Unfortunately, we have many clothing items that are lost and never claimed each year. Cups/bottles and bags should be labeled as well.

Pacifiers should be attached with a clip to clothing. Please consider labeling the pacifier with initials to help ensure they do not get mixed up.

Potty Training

Our hope is to partner with your children through the potty training process. When your child is showing success with potty training at home, please communicate this with classroom teachers. Teachers will help with this process by taking the child to the potty, reminding them of the need to go and helping them with clothing. However, because of the reality of being in a group, we need your help with sanitation requirements. Until a child is extremely comfortable and skilled in using the potty, please continue to send them in diapers or pull-ups. This helps to prevent leaks in play areas and on other surfaces.

We appreciate your understanding as we seek to make this stage of life a positive one for your child and a sanitary one for all the children in the classroom and on the playground. Be aware that children may be more comfortable in their home setting as they are learning, so accidents may be more likely when away from home. If a child has an accident with a loose stool or has more than 3 accidents in a day, we will opt to put the child in a pull-up for the remainder of the day. We will work with you and your child to help with this transition.

Records

Please ensure 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 classes. All health forms must be turned into the office by September 1.

We are happy to share records with other programs or with individual parents upon request. Please submit record requests to the administrative staff.

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 messages 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.

Security

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.

Only parents and adults listed on the "Pick up and Release" form may pick up a child. If you have changes, please be sure to communicate these directly with the administration in writing (through email or ClassDojo). 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. In

the event of a custody settlement, the ruling of the court will be followed as to who may pick up the child.

Special Needs

As we are a small private program, we have limited resources available to assist with special needs. While we hope to include students of all abilities within our program, there are circumstances in which we are unable to accommodate the needs of particular students. In the event that a child enrolled in our program has an established diagnosis, IEP or other documentation related to special needs, we ask that those details be provided to the administration at the time of registration. If at all possible, we will enroll the student, doing our best to work with the family to create a suitable learning environment for the child. However, if we are unable to accommodate particular needs or establish a suitable learning environment, we may be unable to enroll the child or dismiss the child from the program.

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, Katie, Stephanie, or Martha Kate know. Background checks are completed for all substitutes.

Tuition

A statement will be sent by email on the 25th of each month, and payments are due by the 1st. 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 1st of the month. If the balance has not been paid by the 15th 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. 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

All registration fees are non-refundable unless you move out of the CSRA and notify us prior to July 1st. 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.

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