

FBC Weekday Preschool 2024-2025 Parent Handbook

At First Baptist Church Weekday Preschool we provide opportunities for children, ages 2 to 5 years, to grow according to their individual needs through a structured schedule that balances the academic, social, physical, and spiritual aspects of development. We are deeply committed to meeting each child where they are developmentally and providing the support each child needs to be successful. We strive to provide quality Christian development, social-emotional development, gross and fine motor development, academic development and more. Our program provides opportunities for a wide variety of play-based learning experiences within each classroom and many opportunities for family involvement. Our goal is to create a community that feels like family, where each child and their family feels loved and supported through these important early years of development.

A preschool board, made up of church members who volunteer their time, works closely with the director to set policies and procedures for the preschool. In addition, the Senior Minister stays in frequent communication with the board and director to provide the needed support for our preschool. Please contact the Director, Alyssa Metze, with any questions, comments, or concerns throughout the year.

Contact Information:

Alyssa Metze - FBC Weekday Preschool Director

Alyssa's Cell Number: 803.468.3367

Preschool Office Phone Number: 704.283.8534 ext. 21

Preschool Fax Number: 704.282.2194

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Registration and Enrollment

The enrollment period for each class will begin in February. Parents are urged to enroll their child as soon as possible, so that plans can be made for each class. The enrollment period will continue until each class reaches its maximum number of students. A registration form must be completed, and a non-refundable registration fee must be paid before any child can be considered fully enrolled.

Each class is staffed with two teachers and the maximum number for each class is as follows:

Caterpillars (2s): 12

Owls (3s): 12

Starfish (3s): 12

Ladybugs (4s): 16

Busy Bees (4s): 16

Transitional Kindergarten: 14

School Hours

School hours will be 9:00am-1:00pm for all classes.

Arrival

Assistant teachers will meet parents at their cars at the portico entrance from 8:50-9:10 am each morning. All students will be required to be checked in via the Brightwheel App by a parent/guardian, family member, or approved pick up that is listed on the child's Brightwheel profile. We ask that as many parents use the carpool line for drop-off as possible, however, you will also have the option to park and walk your child to class. A teacher will come to each car in the car line to check the child in on Brightwheel. If you are walking your child

to class, please be sure to scan the QR code found outside of your child's classroom to check your child in on Brightwheel.

The children in the car line will be escorted inside the building and then to class by an assistant teacher. If you decide to walk your child to class, we recommend a quick goodbye to make the separation easiest. Let your child know that you will be back soon. Some children exhibit anxiety when starting school and specifically at drop-off time. Usually, the child adjusts within minutes and has a wonderful day. If this is not the case, we will certainly call you promptly. We want preschool to be a positive experience. Sometimes the child recovers more quickly from the separation than the parent. Please take comfort in knowing that we care for your child and are trained to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Here are some tips to make this process a success:

- As the parent, have a positive and calm attitude about going to school. Your child will pick up on your mood. If you are anxious, your child will be able to tell.
- Don't assume your child is worried about school. Don't ask leading questions that may make your child think he should be worried. Some kids will not have any trouble with the separation.
- Attend open house with your child. Meeting the teacher ahead of time and spending time in the classroom with your child will help the transition to school tremendously. Your child will feel more comfortable on the first day because the surroundings are familiar.
- Prepare ahead of time for the first day of school. Talk with your child about what will happen in the morning on the first day of school and express your excitement.
- Don't drag out the separation process, especially on the first day. Bring your child to school, give a hug/kiss, say that you love him/her, explain that you will be back to pick him/her up, and then leave. Do not stay or return if your child begins to cry. The teachers will know how to distract and make your child feel comfortable.
- Plan ahead about how YOU will handle your own feelings about leaving your child. Plan what you will say so that you will not be visibly upset in front of your child.
- Always be there on time to pick up your child. If your child believes that you will be there to pick him up when you said you would, then he will be more likely to separate easily.

We give every child a 6-week adjustment period. If your child is not adjusting well, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from the program. We will, however, request a conference with the parents prior to any decisions. Our concern is for the well-being of your child as well as the other children.

If a child arrives after 9:10, please park and walk your child to class. Please try your best to be on time so that the classroom experiences the least amount of disruptions possible. When a child is late, this disrupts the flow of morning routines, such as circle time, where a lot of instruction is held. The doors to the hallway upstairs will be locked at 9:10 strictly for security reasons only. If you know ahead of time that you will be arriving to school later than 9:10, please let the teacher know. If tardiness becomes a reoccurring problem, you may be asked to wait until morning activities are completed before your child can enter the classroom.

Dismissal

Dismissal for all classes will begin at 12:50pm. The Caterpillars class will be dismissed from the gym doors. Parents will park in the parking lot at the corner of W Morrow and Hayne St and walk up to the door to pick up their child. The Owls class will be dismissed from the double doors on the Parker St side of the church near the larger playground. Parents are to park their cars along Parker St and walk to the doors to pick their children up. The Ladybugs, Starfish, Busy Bees, and Lions classes will be dismissed from the covered portico every day. In the event of inclement weather during dismissal, all classes will dismiss from the portico.

The following are dismissal guidelines to follow when picking up students to keep everyone safe:

- All cars joining the car line should enter the parking lot from Parker Street and circle the parking lot to the covered portico. **Please do not enter the car line from Houston Street** as this disrupts the flow of the car line dismissal order and will potentially cause you to miss the check out point.
- Car line parents should remain in their cars. A staff member will bring your child out to the car and put them inside the vehicle. Parents should then proceed to an empty parking space in the lot to fasten the child safely. If you decide not to use the carpool line, please wait **outside** of the building under the portico for your child.
- Parents from the Caterpillars and Owls classes will park and walk up to the building holding their car tag to pick up their child.
- Parents parked on Parker St for pick up are asked to only park on one side of the street so that cars can still travel on this road. Please do not use the parking lot of the law office across the street.
- All children are required to have car seats.
- Please drive slowly and carefully.

If someone other than the usual pick-up person is picking up your child, please send in a note or a message in Brightwheel stating the date, the name of the person picking up your child, the child's name, and the type of car they will be driving. We will ask for photo ID of a new pick-up person. **We ask that any person who will pick up your child more than once be added to your child's profile on Brightwheel as an approved pick up.**

All students need to be checked in and out each day by the adult who is dropping off or picking up. This is to ensure that every child is arriving and dismissed with the correct adult. All adults who will be dropping off or picking up need to be added to Brightwheel and have an account so they can participate in the check in and out procedure. If your child has an adult who is NOT allowed to drop off or pick up, please provide this documentation in writing.

Late Pick-Up Policy

School dismisses promptly at 1:00 pm. If your child is not picked up before 1:10 pm, there will be a late pick up fee of \$5 + \$1 per minute. (Example: Pick up time at 1:13 pm, fee of \$8.) Each parent will receive one free late charge per year if the time does not exceed 15 minutes. If you are late, you will receive a late fee charge via Brightwheel. Payment is due the next school day your child attends. Please call or message the director or teacher if you know you are going to be late.

Inclement Weather

During inclement weather we follow Union County Public Schools. If they are closed, we are also closed. If they have a 2-hour delay, we will open at 10:30 am. If they have a 1-hour delay, we will open at 10:00 am.

Business Transactions:

Rates for the 2024-2025 school year

Registration Fees:

- \$110 for 3-day enrollment
- \$120 for 4-day enrollment
- \$120 for a family with 2+ children enrolled

Tuition Fees:

- 3 days a week: \$232.00 per month (Tuesday-Thursday)
- 4 days a week: \$262.00 per month (Monday-Thursday)
- Transitional Kindergarten: \$272.00 per month (Monday-Thursday)

The tuition is for a nine-month school year (September to May) and can be paid in one payment or monthly. **May 2025 tuition is required to be prepaid by August 11, 2024 (or before the child's first day of school if enrolled after August 11th).** All tuition payments for the months of September through April are due on the first of each month. All tuition invoices will be sent to you via Brightwheel.

A 10-day grace period is offered for all payments. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged for any payment received after the 10-day grace period. You will receive the late fee invoice via Brightwheel. As a non-profit organization we rely heavily on tuition payments for our budget, and it is very important that we receive payments on time. ***If no payment has been made in 2 months, your child will be withdrawn from the program.***

We will accept credit card and ACH payments via Brightwheel. If paying with a credit card a 2.7% processing fee will be applied to your final total. ACH payments will be no additional charge to you.

You may also pay with cash or check. Checks should be made payable to First Baptist Church Weekday Preschool or FBC Weekday Preschool. If paying with cash or check, a tuition envelope will be provided to you. Please use the envelope provided to send payments to school. You may place the tuition envelope containing payment in your child's folder and the teacher will be sure it gets to the director.

A returned check fee of \$25.00 will be charged for any returned checks. The Preschool Director is willing to work with you if you have a problem or concern.

Health Requirements and Sickness

The health and safety of all our students is of utmost importance to us. Therefore, a health assessment and physical exam form, as well as a copy of immunization record, must be completed and returned to the school by May 31st if registered by May 1st or at least 5 days prior the child's first day of school if registered after May 1st. All state of NC required immunizations must be up to date and a copy of the immunization record must be provided. **Medical and/or religious exemptions will not be accepted in lieu of immunization records.** If not provided within the timeline mentioned above, your child will not be allowed to attend preschool until the completed medical form and immunization records are provided. If any changes are made to your child's medical record or immunizations during the school year, an updated document will need to be provided within 15 days of the changes. Returning students are required to submit a new medical form and record of immunization each school year.

Young children are very susceptible to colds, flu, covid-19, and other diseases. For the good health of all our children, we cannot allow sick children to attend preschool. Sickness would include any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or 99.5 or greater
- Chills
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Discharge in or around the eyes
- Thick, colored mucus from the nose
- New or excessive coughing
- Questionable/unidentified rash
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- New onset of severe headache (especially with fever)
- Any communicable disease

Any child who comes to preschool with any of the above conditions will not be allowed to stay and the parent or emergency contact will be called. If any of these symptoms begin during the school day, you will be contacted. We are not allowed to administer any type of medication or ointments unless it is stated on the

child's allergy/medical action plan. If your child requires medication during the school day, they will need to remain at home. Please call the preschool or message us on Brightwheel to let us know your child is sick.

Children with any illness will need to be symptom free without medication for at least 48 hours before returning to school.

Clear, runny nose and watery eyes are not necessarily symptoms of a communicable illness on their own and would not require keeping a child home from school. However, either of those symptoms in conjunction with a second symptom from the list above prevents a child from attending school until symptom free for at least 48 hours.

All allergies must be listed on the medical form and registration form. Please also fill out the allergy/medical action plan (given to you at Open House). Please record a written explanation of the allergies, the possible reactions, and the plan of action that needs to be taken.

In the event of a Covid-19 exposure or diagnosis please follow the following protocols.

- Children exhibiting symptoms will be asked to stay home from school for 5 days from onset of symptoms and must be cough and fever free without medication for 48 hours to return to school.
- Children who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 will not have to quarantine unless they become symptomatic. If the child develops symptoms, the child will be required to stay home for 5 days from the first day of symptom onset.
- Children who present with Covid-like symptoms during the school day will be quarantined, while supervised, and parents will be responsible for picking them up immediately.
- If a child or staff member has a confirmed case of Covid-19, parents of those determined to be in close contact will be notified. Close contact is when people are within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period.
- The circumstances of each Covid-19 case are different. Our local health department will guide the director in making the final decisions about isolation requirements for individuals who test positive for Covid-19.
- In the event of a closure due to national, state, or regional disaster such as a pandemic, tuition will be charged for the first two weeks of the current month. Reevaluation will be made if the closure extends beyond this period.
- If a staff member, student, or household member of a student tests positive or begins experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms, the director should be notified immediately.
- If the preschool is open but your child is absent for any reason (including required covid-19 isolation), tuition will not be prorated and regular tuition will be due.

Accidents/Injuries

If your child has a minor injury of any kind, we will let the parent/guardian know at dismissal. The teacher will apply first aid to minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, bruises, etc). If there is a major accident, we will notify the parent/guardian immediately. We have an accident insurance policy that is covered by the registration fee. An Incident Report will be completed by the teacher for any injury that has occurred at school. The parent will be asked to sign the form at dismissal and a copy will be sent home the following school day.

Biting/Scratching/Hitting Policy

When children are overcome with emotions such as fear, anger, frustration, or disappointment they may not have the language to express themselves. Therefore, they may react in biting, scratching, or hitting another child. These behaviors are very common among children birth to three years of age. These instances can occur without warning, can be difficult to defend against, and can provoke strong emotional responses in the children, the families, and the teachers involved. Although it is not uncommon for very young children to bite, scratch, or hit, it is a behavior that is taken very seriously, and is strongly discouraged. The following protocol will be followed for biting/scratching/hitting at school.

Procedures

- We will comfort the injured child and administer appropriate first aid.
- We will explain to the child who bit/scratched/hit why it is unacceptable and remove the child from the circumstances that provoked the behavior.
- We will always inform both parents of what happened. We will not disclose the identity of the children to maintain student confidentiality.

Offenses and Action Taken

1st offense – The procedures listed above will be followed.

2nd offense – Procedures from the first offense will be followed and the parents of the biting/scratching/hitting child will be asked to pick up their child.

3rd offense – Procedures from the first and second offense will be followed. In addition, the teachers, parents, and director will come up with a behavioral plan for the child and the child will be shadowed for the day to see what the triggers for the biting, scratching, or hitting are.

4th offense- Procedures from the first and second offense will be followed. In addition, the child will be suspended from preschool for a week.

5th offense- Procedures from the first and second offense will be followed. In addition, the child will be temporarily removed from the program.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable play clothes and shoes. They will be painting, gluing, playing with water and playing outside daily. Please dress your child appropriately so that these activities can be enjoyed. Here are some guidelines for school clothing:

- Wear closed toe **and** heel shoes
- Wear clothing that the children can fasten independently
- Label coats, sweaters, gloves, and caps with your child's name
- Keep an extra set of clothing, including socks and underwear, in a Ziploc bag in the child's backpack

Visitors

We encourage parent participation in school events and volunteer opportunities. However, we ask that visitors do not come during the first six weeks of preschool while the children are adjusting and learning school routines and procedures. Playmates, cousins, etc. will not be allowed to visit anytime during the school day due to insurance regulations. Siblings will not be allowed to play on the playground or in the gym during school hours. Our insurance covers only those children registered in our program. Adults providing specialized services or emergency care are allowed in the building. Please notify the director if any specialized service provider will need to provide services to your child during the school day.

Curriculum

We have a variety of curriculums we use to provide a well-rounded school environment.

Nobel Learning:

A preschool curriculum that takes advantage of a child's readiness to learn with activities that are fun, challenging and engaging. It is organized into five developmental stages incorporating different subject areas. At each stage of the preschool journey, we introduce new concepts and skills while reviewing and re-enforcing existing skills. (Subject Areas: Language and Literacy, Social/Emotional, Creative Expression, Citizens of the World, Mathematics, Wellness, Science and Social Studies.)

Learning Without Tears:

Get Set for School is a flexible, play-based curriculum that offers a full pre-writing program and materials that build critical skills like early math and literacy. It includes three programs designed to prepare children for school: Readiness & Writing, Language & Literacy, and Numbers & Math.

Orange First Look Weekday Preschool (biblical curriculum):

First Look is a downloadable curriculum designed for babies through 5-year-olds. It's also the key preschool curriculum component of the Orange strategy! Every element centers on giving preschoolers a first impression of their loving heavenly Father. Everything we teach our preschoolers is based on one of three simple, but powerful, truths - God Made Me; God Loves Me; Jesus Wants To Be My Friend Forever. The entire curriculum is constructed to incite *wonder* in a preschooler and meet them where they are cognitively, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Through age appropriate activities, preschoolers are building their spiritual foundation so that by the time they graduate to Kindergarten they know the three basic truths.

Character Values:

It is important that each child needs a strong foundation in both academics and character. To aid our children in building strong character values we incorporate the teaching of a specific character value each month.

Newsletter

A school wide digital newsletter will be emailed at the beginning of each month to inform parents of the activities and upcoming events. Each week you will receive an email from your child's teacher with updates about what your child learned that week and what will be the focus of the following week.

Snack/Lunch

All classes will eat lunch at school. Healthy food choices are encouraged. We are not able to heat food or keep food cold. Please pack your child's food accordingly.

If your child cannot have certain foods, please let the teacher know. If you would like to send in a special treat for a birthday celebration, please discuss this with the teacher ahead of time so that you can be made aware of any allergies in the classroom. You will be notified more specifically if there are allergies present in your child's classroom that would prevent you from sending in certain food items.

Each class/teacher will handle lunch procedures as they are appropriate for the children. Please pack things your child likes to eat.

Safety Drills

Your children will participate in 3 different safety drills while attending FBC Weekday Preschool. The goal of practicing these drills is to help our students feel safe at school and to know what to do should an emergency

arise. We are sharing this information with you, so you may discuss the drills with your children if you choose to do so. Below is a brief description of the drills that will be practiced.

Fire Drill/Evacuation: How to exit the school in a quick and orderly manner. Each class follows an exit route and are accounted for while waiting quietly with teachers outside the building. We practice fire drills once per quarter. No one can enter the school during an evacuation.

Lockdown: How students are kept safe when there is a potential threat within the school or on the campus. Children practice staying quiet and unseen within classrooms or the closest classroom. Nobody may leave their classroom during a lockdown and entry into the school is not permitted.

Tornado Drill: How to move students to a safe place in our school and how to utilize the “duck and cover” position or a “turtle hiding in its shell” position. Students will move to a designated safe area within the building. No one can enter the school during a Tornado Warning.

Special Days

We have celebrations for most holidays throughout the year. The director or your child’s teacher will communicate ways in which you can help with these events. We also will have “Spirit Days” with fun themes that your child can participate in.

We love to recognize children on their birthday. The teachers will make this a special day in many ways. Children who do not have a birthday during the preschool year may choose a school day to celebrate their birthday. We try to celebrate only one birthday at a time, so please let your child’s teacher know at least one week in advance. Please do not bring balloons or small objects (bouncy balls, hard candy, etc) as treats for children. These types of items are often a choking hazard. We recommend mini cupcakes with white icing or cookies. Most children will not eat a whole cupcake. We ask that birthday celebration visitors are kept at a maximum of 2 parents/guardians due to limited space in the classrooms.

Field Trips

Our 4s and TK classes will attend two field trips and our 2s and 3s classes will attend one field trip during the school year. You will be notified in advance of our field trip dates. Field trips only occur during school hours.

Communication

Your child’s teacher is a professional person, one in whom you may place confidence. If you have questions or concerns about your child’s behavior or performance at school, please reach out to the teacher. If you feel a conference is necessary, we ask that it be only during the class playground time or after school hours. Please do not attempt to discuss issues with the teachers during school hours or on the playground. If, at any time, you have questions or suggestions about this program, please contact the director.

Clear communication is one of the keys to a successful preschool program. Parents are informed of the activities of the preschool through messages using Brightwheel, monthly newsletters, Facebook, calendars, and the website. You may also send in a written message and the teacher will get in touch with you. Please do not discuss your child with the teacher during class hours while your child is present. Parent/teacher conferences will be offered to all parents in January.

Withdrawal and Absences

We understand that there are circumstances that require parents to withdraw their children from preschool. The prepaid May tuition is refundable only with a 30-day written notification of withdrawal. If the child is not officially withdrawn, the tuition should be paid as scheduled. Any attendance during the month constitutes a full month’s tuition unless other arrangements have been made. All withdrawals must be made in writing to the preschool director.

The preschool reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child for the following reasons:

- If, after a 6-week period, the child is not adjusting. A conference will be requested before any decision is made.
- If a child is continuously disruptive to a class. A conference will be requested before any decision is made.
- If tuition is not paid for a 2-month period.
- If an immunization record and/or medical form is not submitted.

Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

The foundation of our discipline and behavior management policy is positive reinforcement. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities and self-direction. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop, this program will practice the following discipline and behavior management practices:

- Praise, reward (not necessarily with items), and encourage the children.
- Set expectations and limits for the children and explain them clearly.
- Model appropriate behavior for the children.
- Modify the classroom environment and/or teaching strategies to prevent problems before they occur.
- Listen to the children.
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences for their behavior.
- Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
- Ignore minor misbehaviors.
- Explain things to the children in a developmentally appropriate way.
- Use short, supervised periods of quiet time or calming time.
- Stay consistent with expectations.
- Use a calm tone of voice in all circumstances.
- Explain the inappropriate behavior with the child in a calm reassuring tone and end in a reassuring, loving positive attitude with the child.

Special Note

Please do not let your child come to school with food, drink, gum or any other candy that is not part of their lunch. Please do not let your child bring money to school unless it is intended for a payment to be turned in to the preschool.

Items in the parent handbook are subject to change at the discretion of the preschool director and the preschool board. If any changes are made, parents will be notified immediately.



By providing your digital signature in Brightwheel, you are acknowledging the following:

- I have read the Parent Handbook for FBC Weekday Preschool.
- I understand the contents of the parent handbook and will follow all guidelines/rules listed.