

2026-2027 Zoar PDO Parent Handbook

Beliefs

Zoar Baptist Weekday Preschool Ministry has provided an excellent educational program for young children for over 50 years.

Our preschool is a child-centered program open to children of all spiritual backgrounds. The preschool provides a joyful, enriching experience for all children ages 14 months (and walking) through the age of four. It nurtures the emotional, social, spiritual, and academic growth of children by providing stimulating experiences in a loving, respectful environment.

We believe that a child absorbs his or her concept of God from the people, things, and experiences that are a part of his or her environment. No formal religious instruction in doctrines or beliefs of any church are taught. Rather, a love and an appreciation for God, Christ, and the things God made are stressed through appropriate activities and stories for each age.

We believe that children are created in the image of God. They are born male and female, and they will be referred to as male/boy and female/girl.

During School Hours

Church Office 261-3434

Weekday Office 261-5199

The office is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. and Fridays 8 a.m. till 12 p.m. If you contact the office after program hours or on a day we are out, your call will be returned on the next program day.

If you need to contact us after school hours, you may call and leave a message or email Christie Kracht at ckracht@zoarbaptist.org

Should a parent have an emergency during program hours, they should contact the Weekday office. If there is no answer in the office or you do not receive a return call within a few minutes, please contact the church office at 261-3434 and request that a message be taken to the Weekday Office

Communication

Throughout the year, we will use various platforms for communication with our parents. Every parent needs to install the Brightwheel App and turn notifications on!

1. Texts messages are frequently sent. Please make sure your phone number is accurate in your Brightwheel profile.
2. Teachers will be communicating with you through Brightwheel. It is very important that you have your notifications turned on so you do not miss anything important regarding your child.
3. Social media post to our Facebook page, Zoar Weekday Preschool.
4. Paper Notes. Please check your child's basket daily.

Parents Day Out Program Information

What: A 3 day childcare program.

Days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Hours: 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.

Eligibility: Zoar PDO accepts children who are 14 months and walking up to 3 years old (but not three before October 1). The Weekday Program admits children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

Calendar: We follow the Central School Systems calendar with a few exceptions.

Mailing Address:

Zoar Baptist Pre-K

11848 Hooper Road

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70818

Phone: 261-5199

E-Mail Address: CKracht@zoarbaptist.org

Tax I.D. Number: 72-6071567

Enrollment

Enrollment begins in March. Parents will complete a registration form on Brightwheel at www.zoarbaptist.org/weekdaypreschool and pay a \$200 (non-refundable) registration fee.

Financial Facts for PDO

- A non-refundable fee of \$200 is required to register each year.
- **Monthly tuition** is \$300.00
- Tuition is auto drafted on the 10th of each month through Brightwheel. Please make sure this is set up on the Brightwheel app.
- Field trips and special events will be cash or check only. If paying with a check, payments must be written in black or blue ink and made out to Zoar Weekday Preschool with your child's first and last name on the memo line. If cash payments are made, they must be in the exact amount. Change will not be given. Please place the money in an envelope with the child's name on the outside.
- Payments returned by your financial institution, we will be assessed a \$30 Brightwheel returned payment fee.
- No refunds or reductions are given for illness, vacations, or severe weather days. If you need to make special arrangements concerning tuition, please contact the Director.
- If an account is behind, a reminder will be given. If it falls delinquent by 2 months, the child will not be allowed to return to school until the account is brought up to date.
- Your child's registration is your financial commitment to pay monthly tuition whether your child is present or absent.

Curriculum

PDO uses an age-appropriate theme-based curriculum. Included in the children's day are opportunities to explore and develop through center activities, Bible lessons, group time, art, and outside play

Arrival and Departure

To provide for the safe and orderly arrival and departure of children, our program will follow these procedures:

- *The PDO entry door will be unlocked at 8:45 a.m. each day and locked at 9:15 a.m. We do not accept children after 9:30 a.m. unless pre-approved by the director.

- *Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your child each day.

- *If a parent is consistently late picking up their child, the parent will be charged a late fee of \$10.00

- *In the morning, teachers will greet each child individually. It is our policy that parents do not enter the classrooms for safety and anxiety reasons. If possible, allow your child to walk in each morning. It may make dropping off your child easier.

- * You or your designated person will sign your child out at the end of each day or at the time your child is picked up. The four-digit code is required when picking up your child.

- * If someone comes to pick up your child and the person's name does not appear on the authorized pick-up list, you will be called before your child is released.

- *If you need to pick up your child early or you will send someone to pick up your child early, please inform your child's teachers at drop-off. Due to naps, any early pickups must happen prior to 11:45.

Separation Anxiety

Your child may experience separation anxiety, especially if this is your child's first time to be left in the care of someone other than family. This is a natural process that most children must work through. With the consistency of parents and teachers, children will soon be comfortable staying at PDO. The following are ways that help your child to deal with separation:

- When leaving your child, do not sneak away. Say goodbye and leave your child with the teacher.
- Develop a goodbye routine for each time you drop off your child and repeat it every day. Reassure the child that you will return. This becomes something your child will rely on.
- Talk about PDO before you bring the child. Use an enthusiastic voice so that he or she will look forward to coming.
- At the end of the day allow your child to talk about his or her day. Ask specific questions about what they did.
- Consistently bring your child to PDO. Toddlers thrive on routine and predictability.

Behavior Management Policy

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of positive guidance. When young children experience positive interactions with adults, they develop healthy self-concepts, learn problem-solving abilities and self-discipline. To provide effective methods for the guidance of children, Zoar PDO will:

- * Praise, reward, and encourage.
- *Set reasonable limits.
- *Model appropriate behavior.

- *Modify the classroom environment to prevent problems before they occur.
- *Listen.
- * Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior.
- *Treat children as people and respect their needs.
- * Ignore minor misbehaviors.
- * Explain on the child's level.
- *Stay consistent in our behavior management program. Classroom disturbances and unacceptable behaviors are managed in a positive manner. However, no child will be allowed to continually injure or be disrespectful to other children or the teachers while at PDO.
- *If behavior issues continue; for example, disrespect, hitting, biting, name calling, pushing, etc., we will follow these steps:
 1. The parents will be notified by the director.
 2. The student will have to leave prior to lunch.
 3. The director will notify the parents, and the student must be picked up immediately.
 4. The student will be dismissed from the program

Health Procedures

Potty Training: When you begin to potty train, notify your child's teachers to coordinate the effort. Clothes should be ones that are easily taken on and off.

Illness: In order to provide a healthy environment for children and teachers, we will observe the following policies.

1. Children who are ill or who are symptomatic of a disease of a contagious nature, will not be allowed to remain at the preschool. **Children should be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to PDO.**

2. Parents should notify the preschool if their child is sick.
3. If a child becomes ill while at PDO, the parents will be notified and expected to pick up their child as soon as possible. We will attempt to make the child as comfortable as possible until the parent arrives.

Medication: No medication will be administered by the PDO staff. A parent may come to the school and administer medication if it is necessary.

Accidents and Emergencies

All our teachers and staff are CPR and First Aid Certified.

1. In the case of an accident or sudden illness, we will try to contact the parent. If the parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, we will seek emergency help at the expense of the parent.
2. If the child must be moved from the preschool before a parent arrives, the Director will remain with the child.

Withdrawals

If it becomes necessary to withdraw from our program, the child's parent must let the director know ASAP. No refunds will be issued and any unpaid charges must be taken care of prior to withdrawing.

Dismissals

Zoar Weekday Preschool may discontinue admission to class if the child fails to adjust to group experiences (within the first month), or the parent fails to:

- Pay tuition and fees in a timely manner
- Habitually break program policies and procedures

Clothing

- *Dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Velcro or slip on shoes are preferred.
- *Send enough diapers for 2 weeks and a pack of wipes. Teachers will inform you when items are running low.
- *Each child needs a complete change of clothes with his or her name marked clearly on them and placed in a large zip-lock bag.
- *If extra clothing is needed and not available, a parent will be called.
- *Please label all outerwear that is worn to school.

Toys

- *Toys or other personal possessions should not be brought to school.
- * Children may bring items to share on special days. Parents will be notified in advance of these plans.

Lunch

Parents are responsible for sending a lunch for their child each day. **We do not refrigerate or heat up children's food.** All containers should be labeled so that everything gets back into the correct lunch box.

If you send hot dogs, grapes, or other large food items, we ask that you cut them into small pieces.

Water

Please send a filled (WATER ONLY), spill proof water bottle with your child every day. Please make sure your child's name is labeled on the water bottle. Disposable water bottles are not allowed and will not be opened for your child.

Snacks

A midmorning snack is given. This is provided by Zoar Weekday Preschool.

Occasionally, teachers will ask for parent donations of items for special snacks to go along with a particular theme.

Naptime

Send blanket, pillow, and lovey every Tuesdays. These items will be sent home every Thursday for washing.

If after several weeks your child does not adapt to the rest/sleep time routine, you may be asked to pick up your child just prior to naptime. The children do not have to nap but they must lie quietly on their cot and not disturb the children who do sleep.

Pictures

To capture your memories here at Zoar, we have contracted with a professional photographer to take everyone's picture during the year. We will have fall, spring/class, and graduation (Pre-K 4 only) pictures taken. Parents will have the opportunity to purchase these pictures.

Field Trips

The Director plans field trips to enhance the curriculum. Parents will be notified as early as possible of an upcoming field trip. Field trips are to be paid in cash or check for the exact amount. Unless a parent notifies the Director in advance, the monies are non-refundable. Parents and children will travel in their own vehicles to and from the event and children are the responsibility of the parents. Younger siblings are welcome. In case of rain, we will have a regular school day. We will try to reschedule if possible.

Weather and Early Dismissal

We will follow the decisions of the Central School District regarding dismissal due to severe weather conditions or other concerns. Please tune into social media pages/texts and follow the decision announced. If you hear that the Central schools are dismissing during the day and your child is at Pre-K, please come promptly to pick up your child. If driving conditions become unsafe, please be advised that we will close even if Central schools remain open. Exception - If there is weather advisory regarding snow or other unsafe driving conditions (before 9 a.m.) and the Central School District has not decided; we will be closed.

Security

The Church doors are locked. Cameras have been installed at every outside door. The cameras are monitored. Cameras are also located in every classroom and in the hallway. The director has access to all video footage and can pull it when needed.

From time-to-time we may have people come into our parking lot asking for money. We respectfully ask that you not give them money. This can create a safety issue for you, your child, and our staff. Direct them to the church office. Zoar has a policy in place to help those in need.

Emergency Plan

Evacuation

In case of fire or other occurrences that require immediate evacuation, the staff and children will quickly and safely move to the back-parking lot. We practice this monthly.

Lockdown

This would be in response to a potentially unsafe situation outside of our facility. Our building is locked but we would check all doors. Children and staff would remain indoors until the authorities gave us all clear.

Shelter in Place

We would shelter in place where it is safer for children and staff to remain in the building rather than evacuate or have parents pick up their children. This would likely be due to severe weather conditions. Students and staff would move to the hallways away from windows and doors. We practice this procedure during the school year.

In case of any emergency our Ministers and Staff who work at Zoar Baptist would come and assist us in caring for our children. Because we practice and plan, we will be able to calmly manage any emergency.