

# First Baptist Preschool Parent Handbook

Welcome to the First Baptist Preschool program at First Baptist Church of Fort Mill! We are thrilled that your family has chosen to join us here. Our preschool program is designed to provide a safe, fun, loving Christian environment where your children can play and learn. This handbook contains policies, procedures, and helpful information for you as parents. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the staff. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to love and care for your children.

## First Baptist Preschool Mission Statement

The mission of First Baptist Preschool is to glorify God through providing a safe, caring, and fun environment for preschoolers, where they can learn biblical truths, academic concepts, and social skills.

Our goal is for your child/children to:

- have a successful separation experience from parents
- learn to socialize with other children
- develop a sense of self away from home
- be introduced to preschool appropriate academic concepts
- learn to follow directions and participate in a group setting
- begin to develop an understanding of the Bible, God, and Jesus
- be prepared for Kindergarten by the time they complete our program.

Monthly Bible Themes:

September	The Bible is a Special Book
October	Creation
November	Thank You God for Families
December	Christmas
January	God Wants Me to be a Helper
February	God Wants Me to Love Others
March	Easter
April	Fruit of the Spirit
May	God Wants Me to Obey

Below are examples of concepts covered during the year by age group. This is not an exhaustive list; lessons will be adapted to meet developmental levels of the children. Mastery of skills will vary from child to child - our goal is positive, fun academic exposure.

### 1s

Colors

Shapes

Seasons

Body parts

Verbal name recognition

Social Skills: walking in line, taking turns

**2s**

Continue colors, shapes, seasons, body parts  
5 Senses  
Sight name recognition  
Opposites  
Counting Numbers 1 - 10  
Letter and Number exposure  
Social Skills: walking in line, taking turns

**3s**

Continue colors, shapes, seasons, body parts, 5 senses, opposites  
Counting Numbers 1 - 20  
Number Recognition 1 - 10  
Letter Recognition  
Sight name recognition  
Name tracing/printing  
Weather  
Days of Week  
Letter tracing & beginning writing skills  
Cutting with scissors  
Social Skills: walking in line, taking turns, raising hands, active listening

**4s & 5s**

Continue skills such as colors, shapes, seasons, body parts, 5 senses, opposites  
Letter sounds (phonics) on all letters  
Recognition of capital and lowercase letters  
Count and recognize numbers 1 – 20  
Introduce Numbers 20+  
Recognize first and last name  
Spelling and printing of first and last name  
Printing letters & numbers  
Sequencing  
Positional words (under/over) (bottom/top) (front/back)  
Rhyming words  
Sorting  
Patterns  
Learn birth date  
Foundational Bible verses  
Days of week  
Months of the year  
Introduction of sight words  
Beginning reading concepts and concepts of print  
Cutting, Lacing, Stacking  
Hopping, running, and jumping  
Developing independent self-care skills such as handling all bathroom needs, putting on jackets, managing zippers & buttons, putting on shoes, blowing/wiping nose  
Social Skills: walking in line, taking turns, raising hands, active listening, working in groups

## **Enrollment, Registration, and Communication**

The application for enrollment is available on the preschool website. Once a position has been secured for your child, registration will be completed through our Brightwheel portal. You will be provided a link to join our school via your choice of the Brightwheel app or web-based page. All important forms, communication, and tuition information will be found in in this portal. Brightwheel and email will be the primary forms of communication for newsletters, pictures, announcements, and other important information.

## **Readiness and Qualifications**

A readiness guide for each age group is included in the registration information on the website. We allow children as young as 12 months (by Sept. 1) to register, but please note that ALL children must meet the minimum requirements for enrollment - be able to walk, sit in a chair, eat a cracker-type snack independently, and use a sippy or straw cup (no bottles). You also should determine if your child will be able to manage the morning without a nap. If you choose to register a child in advance, and they do not meet the minimum readiness requirements, they will be moved to the waitlist. If a spot opens during the year, they can re-enroll once they are ready. If a spot does not open up mid-year, or you choose not to enroll mid-year, you will forfeit your registration fee.

In addition to meeting the minimum readiness guides, children must be able to function within the structure of our classrooms. While we wish we could accept every child that comes our way, our program is not equipped to serve children with significant special needs. We may not have the staffing, training, funding, or equipment to serve your child. If your child will need special accommodations, please speak to the director prior to paying the registration fee. Admission will be considered on a case by case basis and is dependent upon our ability to adequately care for your child and accommodate their needs, while still providing the necessary care and attention to the other children in the classroom.

## **Schedule**

We offer two day-a-week classes for 1s, 2s and 3s that meet on Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. You may only register your child for one set of days, not both. We offer PK-3 classes for three year-olds that meet 3 or 4 days-a-week (Mon-Wed or Mon-Thurs) as well as PK-4 classes for four year-olds and TK classes for older fours and young five year-olds, both of which meet 4 days-a-week (Mon-Thurs). Children are placed in age appropriate classes based on their age on Sept. 1 and remain in that classroom for the entire school year.

1-3s & PK-3 classes meet from 9:00-12:00. PK-4 and PK-5 classes meet from 9:00-12:10. The TK class has an extended day until 1:00 on Thursdays which includes lunch at school. With a few exceptions, we follow the Fort Mill School District schedule related to closings for holidays, teacher workdays, and inclement weather.

The complete school calendar is available on our website and in your Brightwheel account.

## **Inclement Weather**

If Fort Mill Schools close, we will be closed for the day. When Fort Mill Schools are delayed, we will begin at 10:15 a.m. Dismissal times will remain the same as a normal day. We will not serve a snack on delayed start days.

We will not meet if FMSD schedules a half day in advance. If we are already at school and it is announced that Fort Mill schools will dismiss early due to incoming weather, each child's "quick pickup person" will be contacted and asked to come to the classroom for pick-up as soon as possible.

## **Tuition & Registration Fees**

A non-refundable registration fee is required each year to enroll your child. Tuition prices, payment schedule, and sibling discount information is available in the tuition document on the website as well as in Brightwheel.

There will be no tuition reductions made for illness, travel, or voluntary absence. No tuition reductions will be made for school closings due to the Fort Mill School schedule (inclement weather closings, etc.) unless it exceeds 4 school days. If a class misses more than 4 days of school due to unexpected closings, a tuition discount will be applied to your final payment due April 15. The discount will be \$15 for each day (after 4) that your child's class was closed. The school calendar is planned to ensure that Mon/Wed and Tues/Thurs attendance days are as equal as possible.

We recommend paying tuition using bank drafts through your Brightwheel portal. If paying cash/check, the tuition box is located in the lobby of the children's building. Please write your child's name on the memo line; checks should be payable to FBC Fort Mill. If paying cash, please place in an envelope with your child's name and "preschool tuition" written on the envelope. Do not give your tuition to the teachers or send it in your child's folder. If you need to drop off payment after preschool hours, please use the church's black deposit box located outside the main office doors.

## **Withdrawal**

Please notify the Director a minimum of 30 days prior to withdrawal. You must notify by the first day of your last month of attendance in order to not be charged the next tuition. Withdraws without tuition are not allowed during the final month. If your child attends during the month of April, you will be charged May tuition, whether or not they attend.

The director reserves the right to withdraw any child under the following conditions:

- Failure to pay tuition
- If a child's behavior (physical, verbal, or emotional) continuously disrupts or causes undue stress on either the teachers or the other students in the class.
- It becomes apparent that the child has needs that extend beyond what we can provide for, while still maintaining a positive and effective learning environment for all children in the classroom.

## Drop Off and Pick Up

We ask that you walk your child to their classroom for drop off each morning. You may enter the church through the pre-school entrance under the covered breezeway beginning at 8:55 a.m. Please wait outside until a staff member opens the door at this time.

Dismissal for the 1s - PK-3s classes is from 11:45-12:00. (late fee at 12:05)

Dismissal for the PK-4 & TK classes is from 12:00-12:10. (late fee at 12:15)

TK Thursday dismissal is from 12:50-1:00. (late fee at 1:05)

For dismissal of children 1s - PK-3s, you may form a car line beginning at 11:45 a.m. at the end of the pre-school hallway. Please pull forward to the orange cones. We will deliver your child to your car but will not buckle them in due to liability issues. Please pull around and park in the back parking lot away from the horseshoe area after receiving your child to properly buckle them into their seat. 4s & 5s will dismiss from the playground beginning at 12:00. If you have children in both age groups, please go through the carline first. During rainy days, you will need to park and come inside for pick-up.

Late pick-up charges for 1s-3s:

12:05-12:10	\$5.00
After 12:10	\$10.00

Late pick-up charges for PK-4 & PK-5:

12:15 - 12:20	\$5.00
After 12:20	\$10.00

If you incur a late pickup fee, the charge will be added to your Brightwheel account and must be paid by the end of the month.

Colored car tags will be distributed at Open House. These tags help us during the car line dismissal and are the only approved tags for child pick-up. Please display them on the front dashboard or mirror and keep them displayed until your child is placed in the car.

You will be given further information regarding dismissal, carline entrance/exit, rainy day pickup, etc. at the beginning of the school year.

## Security

One of our main goals is to make sure that your child is safe at all times while in our care at First Baptist Church Fort Mill. For that reason, we ask that you keep your approved pickup list in Brightwheel up to date. Children will not be released to anyone other than the parent/guardian or those listed in their Brightwheel account. **Every profile should have at least one emergency contact person in addition to the child's parents. This person should live locally and be available to pick up your child if you are unable to do so.** A parent must notify the director or teacher if someone, other than those listed, is going to pick up their child. We will ask for photo identification before releasing your child into their care if they do not have the colored pick-up tag. As part of your enrollment forms, you will be asked to supply the name and number of your "quick pickup person." This is a parent or caregiver that is typically available to come pick up the child immediately, in case of illness or other emergency.

All the doors in the Children's Building are locked and there are security cameras installed in the hallways, classrooms, and playground. The front door will be open until 9:10 while children are arriving. Someone from the preschool staff will be at the front entrance during this time. At 9:10 the door will be closed, please ring the doorbell if you need to enter the building after this time.

**Please make every effort to arrive by 9:10 each day.** We understand that appointments or other situations occur, but please don't make a habit of arriving after drop off time. It is disruptive to the class and difficult for teachers and staff members to start the day if we are consistently waiting on a child to arrive. Thank you!

## Discipline

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, verbal rebuke, teaching, and encouragement. It provides security, produces character, prepares for life, and is evidence of God's love. Our goal in guiding children's behavior is not to punish, but to educate and help children develop self-control. All children are encouraged to use appropriate behavior. When challenges occur, we will use the following methods to help the child make better choices:

**Warning and Redirection** Our primary form of discipline is warning and redirection. The child will be warned that their behavior is inappropriate and instructed in what they should do instead. If needed, the child will be moved to another location where he/she can interact with other toys and children.

**Time out** is the removal of a child from the group for a short period of time. Time out is utilized in a situation in which the child is not responding to redirection or verbal warnings. The time out space is located away from the classroom activity but within the teacher's sight. During time out the child has the opportunity to think about the behavior which led to his/her being removed from the group and given time to calm. After a few minutes, the teacher will discuss the incident and appropriate behaviors with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect as the other children. If time out is not having the desired effect, the child may be sent to talk to the Director and the parents will be notified.

**Harmful behaviors.** Children causing physical harm to others (biting, hitting, etc.) will be disciplined using the following plan. While we understand that self control is a skill that must be developed, we cannot allow a child to remain in the classroom if they are hurting others.

1st offense - handled by teachers in classroom using redirection and/or time out.

2nd offense - sent to directors office for a time out, then can return to classroom.

3rd offense - sent to directors office & parents called to come for immediate pickup.

4th offense - immediate pickup and child must remain out of school for 2 weeks.

\*If a child continues to harm others after all interventions have been taken, they will be removed from the program.

You can help support your child's success by talking with them about the expectations you have for their behavior while at preschool. Keep communication lines open with your child's teacher and follow up at home if there are areas where your child is struggling.

# Wellness Policy

In consideration of other children and teaching staff, please do not bring a child to school who has shown signs of illness within the last 24 hours.

A child should not attend preschool if they display any of the following symptoms:

- \*Persistent coughing or complaints of a sore throat
- \*Persistent sneezing with nasal discharge
- \*Persistent, discolored nasal discharge
- \*Rash (except diaper rash) unless you provide a doctor's note that it is not contagious
- \*Vomiting in last 24 hours
- \*Fever of 100 or more - must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications
- \*Extreme fatigue or irritability
- \*Earaches
- \*Complaints of stomachache
- \*Diarrhea - 2 or more loose bowel movements within a 24 hour period
- \*Red or watery eyes unless a doctor verifies that it is allergy related.

If your child has allergies that cause these symptoms, we must have a doctor's note.

If a child shows signs of any of these symptoms while in our care, the child will be isolated from the other children and the parents will be contacted. Our desire is to protect all children and teaching staff from exposure to illness. We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a healthy classroom environment.

Colds: If the child comes to school with a minor cold, he/she should be able to follow the daily routine, including time outside and any physical symptoms should be very minor. If the staff determines they cannot care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children, the parent will be notified to pick up the child. If your child has significant coughing or nasal discharge, or if they are not yet able to use a tissue on their own or cover their mouth when they cough - please keep them home. You would not want another child to spread germs all over your child's classroom and toys so please be courteous to other families.

In the event of possible exposure to a contagious disease or parasite in the classroom (pink eye, head lice, etc.) the classroom teachers or director will notify parents.

## Illness/Injury

If a child becomes ill or injured during the school day, their "quick pickup person" will be contacted. Please make every effort to come to the school as soon as possible to retrieve your child. If this person is not a parent, we will also notify the parents.

A parent will be notified immediately of any illness or injury requiring medical attention. If a parent cannot be reached, their emergency contact person will be notified. 911 will be called if an illness or injury requires immediate, professional medical attention.

If minor accidents occur and/or scratches, bumps, or bruises are treated during preschool, you will receive an incident report through Brightwheel and/or verbal communication from the teacher regarding the incident.

## Snacks

Snacks are provided for your children while at preschool. Snacks usually consist of some type of cracker, pretzel, or cereal with water to drink. Please send a pre-filled water bottle or sippy cup with your child each day. DO NOT send juice, milk, or any other beverage in their cup. We will have water available to re-fill if needed.

If you would like to bring a special snack to celebrate your child's birthday, please feel free to do so! Cookies make a great snack and are easy to clean-up. If bringing cupcakes, please send mini cupcakes. This works best for little hands and helps during clean up. Contact your child's teacher ahead of time to make arrangements. We require all shared snacks and treats to be store bought and sent in the original packaging so that we can check for possible allergens. We ask that you or your family not attend the birthday celebration as it is disruptive to the classroom schedule.

You will have opportunities to sign up for special snacks during some of our holiday celebrations. Thank you for your help with these special events!

Chewing gum is not permitted at school.

Please have your child eat breakfast before they arrive each morning. If a child arrives with food in hand, they will have to finish or throw it away prior to entering the classroom.

## Allergy & Medication Policy

If your child has any type of allergy or medical condition, please complete the Allergy/Medical Information Sheet that will be distributed prior to the start of the school year. This information will be shared with your child's teachers.

Please note our snacks may contain soy, egg, dairy, and/or gluten. We strive to purchase snacks that contain no peanuts or tree nuts but they may be made in a facility where peanuts or tree nuts are processed. We will make reasonable efforts to work with individual families regarding allergies. To help with allergies, we have a limited, consistent list of snacks that we use throughout the year. We will have examples of each item at Open House and ask families whose children have allergies to read the ingredient list and approve which items their children can have. If your child's allergy is severe and the snacks aren't suitable, you may need to provide a daily snack for your child. If you wish to send in allergy-safe special treats for your child to have when there is a birthday celebration in the classroom, we are happy to store those and will pull out whenever needed.

If your child has an allergy that requires rescue medication, such as an EpiPen, you may not leave the child at preschool without it. If we must administer emergency medication to the child, 911 will be contacted. The parent will then be contacted and advised of the situation. Any expenses incurred must be borne by the parent. Parents are responsible for providing all medication, ensuring that all medication is current, and that it will not expire during the course of the school year.

We are not certified to administer medication to your child (rescue medication is the exception). If your child needs daily medication, please administer that at home.

## Diapers and Potty Training

We ask that cloth diapers not be used while at preschool. Children wearing diapers will be checked twice during the morning.

We will do our best to partner with you when potty training your child. Each class will have a scheduled bathroom time during the morning. Additionally, children will be taken anytime they request to do so. Please take your child to the bathroom before taking him/her to the classroom.

During potty training, pull-ups with velcro sides are preferred. Please do not send your child in underwear unless the child is able to tell the teacher when they need to use the bathroom.

Children in our 1s, 2s, and 3s two-day classes are not required to be potty trained. Please continue to send your child in pull-ups until you are confident they can make it through the school day without frequent accidents.

Children in our PK-3, PK-4, and TK classes must be fully potty-trained to attend.

A fully potty-trained child is a child who can do the following:

1. Be able to TELL the teacher that they need to use the bathroom.
2. Wear underwear all day without potty accidents (rare accidents are understood)
3. Be able to dress and undress themselves when using the bathroom.\*
4. Be able to wipe themselves after using the bathroom.\*
5. Be able to wash and dry hands.
6. Be able to postpone going if they must wait their turn.

\*PK-3 will be provided assistance with dressing and wiping, if needed.

PK-4 & TK children will enter the bathroom stall alone and must be able to manage their clothing and wipe themselves, including after a BM.

## What to Bring and Wear

Each child that enrolls in our program for the first time will receive a tote bag with their name on it. Please keep your bag from year to year. If you lose your child's bag or would like a second bag for separate households, you may purchase additional bags from the director for \$5 each. If you have had your bag for at least one full school year and it needs replacing, let us know and we will provide a new one at no cost. We do ask that all children use the provided tote bag, not a backpack, diaper bag, etc. The bag should come each day with your child's class folder, a complete change of weather-appropriate clothes (including socks and underwear), water bottle or sippy cup, and diapers/pull-ups/wipes if needed. Playground appropriate shoes are required for all age groups.

Please keep in mind that we engage in various activities from playing on the playground to using paints and other craft materials. Please dress your child in appropriate clothes and shoes for these activities. Each class will have 30 minutes on the playground (weather permitting). When the weather becomes colder, please remember to send a jacket or sweater. If desired, sunscreen should be applied by parents/guardians before school.

## General Information

**CRYING:** We know how difficult it is to leave a crying child. Please know that we will notify you if your child continues crying for a prolonged period of time. We want your child's experience at preschool to be a happy one and we will work together to make that happen. Linger during drop-off typically makes crying worse. A quick, happy good-bye from mom or dad reassures the child that they are safe and that this is a fun place to be.

Please do not have your child bring any toys with them to preschool. Your child will be engaged in activities planned by the teacher in the classroom. We have plenty of age-appropriate toys in each classroom. If a child brings a toy to the classroom, we will ask you to take it with you to the car. Exception to this guideline applies to comfort items for toddlers who are experiencing separation anxiety.

Teachers will share pictures of their class in your Brightwheel account. Please **DO NOT** re-post pictures of other children on your personal social media accounts without permission from their parents. If you want to share a picture of your child on social media and the photo includes other children, please blur out the faces of other children or ask their parents if it's ok to post.

First Baptist Preschool does not advertise or promote for outside businesses or products. We do not promote fundraisers or advertise for other ministries or organizations unless they are connected with or supported by First Baptist Church.

First Baptist Preschool website: <http://www.fbcfm.com/preschool>