



first
friends
P R E S C H O O L
first baptist church abilene



Parent Handbook

2017-2018

Purpose

The purpose of First Friends Preschool is to provide children a variety of enriching learning experiences that will prepare him/her for school - all within a loving Christian environment.

Philosophy

Just as Jesus grew in wisdom and strength and in favor with God and man, our philosophy is to teach the whole child: mentally, physically, spiritually and socially.

Since preschoolers learn best through their play, our classrooms are set up around the “centers” concept. This allows for freedom of movement with a variety of teacher-directed and self-directed activities. The result is a relaxed, stress-free environment where learning can take place.

Goals

We will provide an environment and experiences that will allow each child to:

- successfully break from home
- socialize with other children
- develop a feeling of success
- develop a feeling of security
- Develop skills that will get him/her ready for Kindergarten
- develop a joy of learning
- develop self-control
- develop self-expression
- develop creativity

Commitment to Quality

We at First Baptist Church are committed to having a quality program. This means:

1. An adequate number of teachers.
2. Teachers that are qualified and trained in working with children, curriculum, and First Aid.
3. Having developmentally appropriate curriculum.
4. Having facilities that are clean and neat.
5. Having the equipment and tools necessary for learning.

Teacher Qualifications

Teachers are required to have a GED or high school diploma, be at least 18 years of age, show competency, good judgment, and self-control in working with children, and relate to the children with courtesy, respect, acceptance, and patience.

It is preferred that all teachers have some experience working with children and have knowledge related to caring for children. Also, teachers should be familiar with the stages of development and what can be expected of children in each stage. Most of our teachers have college educations and many have teaching certificates. Teachers should also maintain high moral and ethical values befitting a teacher of young children.

Registration

You may register your child at any time during the year, provided there is an opening in your child's class. If there is not an opening you may put your child on a waiting list. The director will call you when there is a place for your child.

There is a registration fee each school year for each child who is enrolling, or re-enrolling after a period of being out of the program.

Fees

Monthly fees are due on the 1st of each month. There is a \$10 late charge for fees received after the 15th of the month. If fees are not paid by the last day of the month, your child may not attend First Friends Pre-school the following month until fees are paid. Please let the Director know of any special circumstances.

Daily Reports

Each day you will receive a daily report of what your child did, how he/she ate, and when potty breaks or diaper changes occurred. These will be given by the classroom teachers to let you know a little bit more about how your child's day went.

Absences and Drop-Ins

Our tuition fee is charged for each child to hold his/her spot in the class. The fee is not a weekly fee, but a monthly fee. Even if your child is absent, we still have staff and supplies for the class. For this reason we do not give refunds for days that a child is absent.

If your child only attends one day a week and you would like to bring him/her for a drop-in you may check with the director the school-day prior to the drop-in to check to see if there is a spot for your child the day you are needing a drop-in. If the class enrollment is full you may call the director the morning of and check to see if there are any absences. If there is a spot you may drop your child off and pay the drop-in fee.

No School Days

First Friends Preschool follows the AISD calendar for holidays and weather days. If there are any other days we will not be in attendance, you will be notified by the teacher or director.

In case of bad weather we will follow the same procedures as AISD. If AISD cancels school, First Friends will also be canceled. If AISD has a delayed start, First Friends will begin 30 minutes after the AISD starting time to allow our teachers to get their own children off to school. If you are in doubt about whether we'll be meeting, call the church office at 675-5031.

What to Bring and Not Bring

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring any toys from home unless a teacher requests it for a special day. This prevents that favorite toy from getting lost here at school, and the trauma that can bring later that night when your child realizes that the favorite dolly is at school.

Please label everything in your child's bag. If everything is labeled, then the teachers will be able to get everything back in the bag it belongs in.

Also be sure to send an extra change of clothes for your child in case of an accident, or if we have water play in the summertime. Parents are responsible for supplying all diapers, wipes, and any ointment to be used.

Drop-Off and Pick Up

Our program begins at 9 am and ends at 2:30 pm every Tuesday and Thursday. When you register your child, you will name up to four people who are allowed to pick up your child. If someone else should need to pick up your child we will ask you to call in the name of that person, and have that person show an ID before we release your child to them. Also, no child under the age of 12 is allowed to sign in or pick up a child. These procedures are for security purposes and the protection of your child.

Also, please be aware that it is important for teachers to have preparation time each morning before children arrive, so we ask you to be here no earlier than 9 am. If you arrive before then, you may stay in the carpeted play area with your child. In the same way, please remember that the teachers may have their own children to pick up after school.

If your child is new to our program and apprehensive about being left, you are welcome to come by and get acquainted with the teachers and the room previous to the first day he/she will be left.

On the first day and for a week to three weeks afterwards, we ask that you do not come into the room to “help him adjust.” Rather, kiss him good-bye at the door, assure him that you will be back for him, hand the teacher his lunch, etc. and leave quickly. The longer a parent “hangs around” the longer it takes the child to adjust. Treat this separation as matter-of-factly as possible. Children pick up on parents’ emotions of being “torn” by first-time separations. You can help prepare your child for separation by talking to him or her about it for a week or two before school starts. When children know what to expect, often they are less anxious about a situation.

Lunch

Unless otherwise noted by the teacher, every child should bring his/her lunch each day to class. This includes all baby food and formula/ bottles. If your child’s lunch needs to be kept cold, then please buy a lunch box or cool pack that will keep it cool. We don’t have refrigerator space for every child. Please do not bring any food item that needs to be heated.

Discipline

Discipline at First Friends is the responsibility of the classroom teachers. No teachers are allowed to hit, bite, pinch, or pull on a child and “time-outs” are the encouraged form of discipline. Teachers may speak firmly, but may not raise their voice to the children. Teachers should be positive in their correction and should redirect incorrect behavior to more appropriate avenues. Students that are disrupting the class repeatedly will be sent to the Director’s office. After an appropriate amount of time, the child may return to the classroom. If the child has to be sent to the Director’s a second time, the child’s first contact person will be called. We take biting very seriously at First Friends Preschool. If a child bites another student or teacher, the parents of the child biting and the child bitten will be notified, without names being used. If a child bites three time in one day, they will be sent home. If the biting continues to occur a meeting will be set up between the Director and parent’s to determine a plan of action.

Holidays and Birthday Celebrations

We will have several celebrations throughout the year for holidays and special occasions. Typically there are special treats or lunches on these days. You will be notified of these days and how you can help out.

Children who only come one day a week are welcome to attend the celebrations if it falls on the day that they do not regularly attend. We will ask, however, that some parents come to help during these times so there are enough adults for the number of children in attendance.

When your child has a birthday you are welcome to bring cupcakes or special treats for your child and his/her class. Please make arrangements a couple of days ahead of time with the teacher to let him/her know you’ll be bringing treats.

Because preschoolers are still trying to sort out fantasy from reality, we ask that the focus at the holidays be on the Biblical story of the holiday, not the secular celebration of the holiday. We are not trying to be critical of anything done outside church, we simply believe that we have the opportunity here in the church setting to focus on the Christian version of these holidays. Thus we will not be focusing on anything scary at Halloween, Santa and reindeer at Christmas, the Easter bunny at Easter, etc

Health Policy

Effective May 2015, First Friends Preschool no longer accepts any Vaccination Waivers. All enrolled children must provide a copy of the most current vaccination record.

We are a well-child facility which means that to insure the safety and health of all the children we request that you not bring a sick child to First Friends. You should keep your child home when any of the following exists:

- Fever over 100.4
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Croup
- Pinkeye or other eye infection
- RSV
- Hand, Foot and Mouth
- Diseases such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps
- Skin infection - boil, ringworm, impetigo, blister, or open skin lesions
- A member of your household exhibits one of the first 7 symptoms listed

We ask that your child be free of fever for 24 hours after a contagious disease before coming back to school. When in doubt, please apply the Golden Rule. Thanks for your help!

Accidents

If there should be any minor accidents, i.e. cuts, scrapes, bumps, etc. an accident report will be filled out by your child's teacher and given to you at the end of the day. Of course if there are any major accidents or injuries needing medical attention you will be contacted immediately.

Field Trips

There are occasions where your child's class may go on a field trip. We will let you know these dates ahead of time via a class calendar or letter. You are always welcome to attend. The children will be transported in a church van or bus. If you would like to have your child ride in his or her car seat, please let your child's teacher know, and you may install the car seat into the van to ensure it has been installed correctly for your child. If your child is not potty trained, an adult must accompany him/her on the field trip.

First Friends Preschool

First Baptist Church

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