

First Baptist Church Children's Weekday Ministry Student Handbook



2008-2009
First Baptist Church Day School
210 McCormick Avenue
Hawkinsville, GA 31036
478-892-8103

Preface

The First Baptist Church Children's Weekday Ministry Day School is a school with high academic standards, but it seeks to do more than educate students. It will be a community that cares for its students and strives to teach values and manners. All rules and procedures in this handbook are intended to fulfill the mission of the school. Not every possible situation can be predicted in this text. Where there is need for interpretation, the mission statement will guide the appropriate course of action.

The members of the Day School staff promise to abide by these guidelines to the very best of their ability. The members will also keep all information including medical history, finances, teacher profiles, recommendations, and behavioral status confidential. In return, the members of the school ask that the families of the students thoroughly familiarize themselves and abide by the policies in this manual.

This handbook provides information about an exciting ministry for our church and our community. We will face success and failures. We will face challenges and achievements; however, we will face them together. We will grow, learn, and improve because of our experiences as a school family. Join us in looking forward to the 9th year at First Baptist Church Children's Weekday Ministry!

An Introduction

First Baptist Day School was founded January 1, 2000 as an outgrowth of the Mother's Morning Out Ministry, presently called Play Day Pals. Members of the Mother's Morning Out Committee were made aware of the growing need for an academically structured Christian four-year-old kindergarten in our community. A survey of local interests was conducted and the results were overwhelmingly positive. Thus, after much research, study, and preparation, First Baptist Day School was formed. On August of 2000, it opened its doors for the first time.

The Day School voluntarily complies with the recommendations of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools on teacher/student ratio, curriculum and class set up, and parent/staff issues. It

also follows the practices suggested by the National Association of Colleges and Schools in its standard guide *Statement of Good Practice*.

The current facilities are behind First Baptist Church. The school consists of a general assembly area, three classrooms, a kitchen and eating area, and playground. Students and their families have access to the church library located in the lower level of the sanctuary.

The Organization

First Baptist Day School is governed by the First Baptist Church Weekday Ministry Committee which delegates the execution of the school program to the school's Director. The committee sees its primary function as follows: the establishment of the philosophy, the broad goals, and the overall policies of the school; the evaluation of employees to operate the school within the specified goals and aims; and the preservation and enhancement of the assets of the school. Once policy has been established, the committee chooses not to interfere with the daily operation of the school; therefore, it directs all inquiries to the Director.

Mission Statement

First Baptist Day School is an academically structured, non-denominational Christian school for students in four-year-old kindergarten.

First Baptist Day School has adopted as its mission the following statement:

- To provide quality education in a safe environment
- To develop active participation among students, their families, and the staff
- To build character by emphasizing self-discipline, cooperation, and achievement
- To encourage leadership and to guide students toward responsible stewardship and citizenship
- To advocate appreciation for diversity and to nurture kindness to humanity
- To inspire loyalty to student's classmates, their school, their community, their church and their Lord Jesus Christ.

In all things, First Baptist Day School seeks its mission statement first and foremost, specifically concentrating on "Leadership and Loyalty."

General School Information and Procedures

Hours of Operation

School:

The 4-K class will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and will end at 11:30 a.m. each weekday. Classes will be Monday-Friday. Extended care will be offered as needed.

Students are expected to be in the school and prepared to begin the day at 8:00 a.m. The building will be open to students at 7:45 a.m. Any child not picked up by 11:40 a.m. will be considered as a part of the Extended Care Program and parents will be assessed the day's fee of \$12.00. Any child using the Extended Care Program should be picked up by 4:00. If the child is not picked up by 4:05, late fees of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. Parents are expected to pay the late fee at the time of pick up. The facility closes and staff is not available after 4:15.

We strive to work with families when unforeseen events occur. If you are aware that you will be late, please call to let your child's teacher know. We will make every effort to work with you when those instances arise.

Library and Media Center:

Students will be able to make visits to our church library on a scheduled basis. Parents are responsible for ensuring that books checked out to their child are returned to the church library. Students must wait until late books are returned before checking out another book. Damaged books may be subject to fees associated with repairs or replacement.

Arrival and Dismissal

Safety:

The safety of the children is a joint responsibility of the school and the home, and is the primary concern in our policy. In order to make drop off and pick up times run as smoothly and safely as possible, we ask that you follow these guidelines when transporting your child to and from school.

- Students may enter the building after 7:45 a.m.
- Staff directs all drop-offs and pick-ups
- Students are instructed where to stand and when to enter and exit cars and buildings.
- Remain in a single file line in the drop off and pick up line.

- Wait in your vehicle for a teacher to transport your child to or from your car.
- Teachers will take children to and from cars one at a time.
- Do not pull around other cars in line.
- If you wish to walk your child into school or from school, please park in the side yard and hold his or her hand at all times.
- Give your child's teacher a note if the person picking up your child is not on the pick up list. Otherwise, they will not be able to pick up your child.
- Please refrain from cell phone use when in line.

Drivers must watch for and follow all staff directions. All vehicles used in carpool must have a car seat for each child's use. If a student is not going home in his or her regular carpool, the students must bring a dated note that morning explaining the temporary arrangements. A dated note is also required for changes in arrangements for students attending the Extended Care Program.

Should a change be made in drop-off or pick-up arrangements during the school day, please call ahead to alert the staff to changes.

Please advise all people responsible for drop off and pick up aware of the school policies regarding safety and procedure.

Parking and Traffic:

Safety cannot be compromised. Directions and details for parking and traffic will be explained at orientation. You will be expected to follow these directions at all times. There will be no exceptions. Students arriving before the staff is available should remain in their cars until a staff member is available. No student is to be dropped off or picked up at any other location. All drivers should remain in their proper place in line. Cars should never be left unattended in the line. During times other than arrival and dismissal, parents and visitors should park in the side yard.

Miscellaneous Items

Visitors:

Should your child have a visitor at school, please notify the teacher with a dated note upon arrival at the school. The teacher's strive to maintain a safe environment for the children enrolled in the Weekday Ministries Program, therefore, individuals unknown to the staff are not permitted into the

building. The educational building will remain locked during hours of operation, therefore, visitors must be made known to the teacher prior to their visit.

Notification of Medical Emergency and Accidents:

The Day School will make every attempt to reach a parent or guardian in the event of an emergency. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, a person designated on the Emergency Contact and Medical Information Forms will be contacted. These forms also give the school the authorization to seek first aid or medical treatment by a qualified physician when appropriate. The school will make the best decision possible if necessary and does not assume any associated medical expenses.

Emergency Closing of School:

Severe weather, utility problems, health epidemics or emergencies, or any other unforeseen urgent situation may necessitate the closing of school. When such closing can be determined, an announcement or personal contact will be made as soon as possible. If possible, the school's answering machine will be updated whenever there is new information.

When there is a question as to whether or not the school should close during the school day, we will follow the decision of the local public school system. Staff will remain with students who must wait for transportation home. If you believe that the weather is too inclement to come to school to pick up your child, you may use your judgment. If you believe that the weather is too inclement to come to school to pick up your child, the staff will seek safe shelter until danger has passed.

In the event of school closing due to severe weather or snow, the First Baptist Church Weekday Ministries Program will follow the decision of the public school.

Fire, severe weather, and other emergency procedures have been established, will be practiced, and will be rigorously followed in the event of an emergency.

Attendance Records:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Attendance records for absences, tardies, and early dismissals are completed each day and are kept on file. Please make every effort to get your child to school and in a timely manner.

Regular classroom attendance is essential for a student to learn. Absences for causes other than illness or emergency are therefore to be avoided with steadfast diligence. A student's family can be most helpful by not asking permission to schedule extended vacations or medical appointments during the school day.

The following are considered excused school absences:

- Illness or family emergency
- For religious holidays
- For necessary medical appointments falling in school hours.

Illness:

The school will make every effort to protect the health of students. Cooperation of families in preventing the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance.

For the child's own protection and for the protection of others, please keep the child home when he or she has symptoms such as: sore throat, inflamed eyes, enlarged glands, nausea or vomiting that has occurred in the past 24 hours, coughing, flushed face, runny nose, discharging ear, fever, and/or a skin rash.

In case of illness during school hours, the student's parents will be notified. Students arriving or leaving after 9:45 a.m. will be considered present for a $\frac{1}{2}$ day only. Parents are expected to pick up their child immediately.

Behavioral Expectations

Above all else, First Baptist Day School seeks to educate its students in the skill of moral living. Developing self-reliant, responsible, industrious children is our goal. We believe that adherence to enforced rules for behavior is an important part of that process. We ask that parents and family of the child support our discipline procedures; in return, we will strive to enforce them consistently and fairly in each case.

Discipline Procedures:

Failure to abide by a rule or disruption during class will result in a warning to avoid repeat behavior. A repeat offense will result in isolation from the class activities deemed appropriate by the teacher. If, after the student returns to the class, he or she still exhibits unacceptable behavior, the child's parent will be contacted to develop an appropriate plan of action for the benefit of the child, his or her classmates, the teacher and the family.

The school reserves the right to withhold a student from participating in a special event or field trip or to expel the student if necessary, regardless of special conditions of the child. The Day School expects families to reinforce the behavioral expectations of the school at home.

School Administration and Policies

Admissions

Enrollment and Tuition:

The Day School seeks students from various ethnic, cultural, racial, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds. We believe that all students can benefit from the academic program and make contributions to the school family.

The payment of tuition is a condition of enrollment. Parents may elect to pay in one or monthly installments. The director is responsible for arranging payment terms and for collecting all tuition and fees associated with each student's account. Payment is due by the 10th of each month. If payments are received after the 10th, a \$5 dollar late fee is assessed. If financial obligations are not met in a timely manner, First Baptist Day School reserves the right to withhold progress reports, deny admission to classes, limit a student's participation in school activities and/or seek the use of a credit agency.

If a family is unable to pay tuition after the school year begins, that family may schedule an appointment with the Director to request one month's grace period. They may choose to withdraw their child.

Withdrawal from the school requires one month's notice and two month's pre-payment unless tuition has been paid in full. There will be no refunds. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the use of a credit agency.

Admission Procedures:

To be followed in sequential order:

1. Upon request, you will receive an application packet
2. After the school receives the completed application and fee, the Director establishes a file on the student.
3. The Director reviews the application, and then informs the applicant's family of the school's decision.
4. The staff will then be responsible for the communication with the prospective student's families.

Student and Family Orientation:

Students and his or her parents expected to attend an Orientation session and Open House prior to the opening of school. The committee and staff are eager to assist families in adjusting to the policies and procedures of First Baptist Day School.

School Regulations

School Rules:

- No chewing gum may be brought to school.
- No toys are allowed. There will be days set aside to bring these items.
- No student is allowed to go into any building or outdoor facility without an adult.
- No weapons, sharp objects, or toy guns will be allowed.

Dress Code:

The dress code for four-year-olds is lenient. Please dress students in clothing that is age appropriate. It is recommended to send students in shoes suitable for recess play and that clothing is comfortable. We ask that students be respectful representatives of the school.

Additional Information for Families

Parental Involvement

Volunteerism:

First Baptist Day School has adopted as part of its mission to develop an active partnership among students, their families, the community, and the staff. We strongly believe family involvement is crucial to the success of any child. The goal of our special events and field trips is to enhance the student's school experiences, encourage family networking, and to support the school staff. We expect parents and families to help participate in these activities. You should expect certain responsibilities during the year. Duties may include assisting the teacher in special crafts and projects, going on field trips, arranging or enlisting other volunteers to help with each event as needed, and/or fundraising efforts.

Academic Information

Curriculum:

Much study and discussion has occurred in the selection and development of the curriculum for the four-year-old kindergarten. At the inception of the Day School, the committee spoke with representatives from many area schools and visited many schools by Internet. One total curriculum has not been chosen, rather various guides from many curriculums are utilized. This is the preferred curriculum selection method by kindergartens all over the country. An anonymous ad-hoc curriculum committee comprised of experienced educators assisted the selection. Our program will incorporate group and individual instruction, structured and instructed learning experiences, and both active and quiet periods. The program will provide developmentally appropriate pre-reading readiness with listening and speaking skills. Experiences and activities are provided for the child to develop basic math concepts. There will be science and social studies integrated into the curriculum. Opportunities for growth in self-esteem, self-control, and problem solving will be offered and encouraged. Library visits, play in centers, music, field trips, special events, and special programs will enhance learning.

Our curriculum seeks to develop students **emotionally**, by building positive self-esteem through success in individual and group activities; **socially** by establishing kind, friendly relationships with teachers and peers, **intellectually**, through introduction to the beginning concepts in reading, writing, English, math, social studies, science, art and music; **physically**, through active participation in activities involving large muscles (block building, playground activities) and small muscles (painting, modeling clay, cutting, pasting, and drawing); and **spiritually**, through daily devotionals, prayer, group assemblies, Christian activities, and celebration of religious holidays.

Philosophy on Religious Education:

We believe that children should be encouraged to incorporate their religious beliefs with their academic education. Opportunities for spiritual growth will be offered to the group in a non-denominational manner through daily devotions, prayer, and other activities. However, we will leave the individual Christian development of a child to each family's discretion.

In all special events and on all holidays, it is our hope to honor and respect everyone's beliefs as much as possible. We ask for your cooperation and tolerance in this matter.

Grading and Assessment:

A progress report will be available during regularly scheduled conferences two times per year. These conferences will be held in December and May. Your child's teacher will schedule a time that is convenient for you as well as your family. A list of the class objectives will be included along with the

teacher's assessment of your child in each area. An attendance record and behavioral report will also be a part of the student assessment.

Our Hope

It is our hope to provide an education that evokes a lifetime of wonderful memories, a foundation of academic learning, a strengthening of the humanitarian spirit, and a love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All rules and procedures in this handbook are intended to fulfill the mission of the Day School Program. Not every possible situation can be predicted in this text. Where there is need for interpretation, the mission statement will guide the appropriate course of action. First Baptist Church, the Day School, and the Children's Weekday Ministry Committee reserve the right to amend the handbook as needed.