



# Parent Handbook

2014-2015

## **First Kids Preschool**

First Baptist Church of Asheville  
5 Oak Street  
Asheville, NC 28801  
828-252-4781 Ext. 1318



## Hours

First Kids Preschool operates Tuesday through Thursday from 9:00 to 12:30pm. An optional 4-day week is possible based on interest and enrollment. The fourth day would be on Mondays from 9:00-12:30pm.

## Mission and Purpose

First Kids Preschool is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Asheville to children and families in the name of Christ. We believe that children are gifts from God, and as such, we value their feelings, desires, thoughts, and needs.

First Kids exists to help children trust that they are loved by Jesus and his followers; to give children opportunities to develop physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, and spiritually to their greatest potential; and to minister, where appropriate, to the needs of children's families.

## Goals

- To help children:
- Trust that they are loved by Jesus and Jesus' people, the church.
- Develop a positive self-image.
- Experience happiness, joy and beauty.
- Develop self-control and self-discipline.
- Become aware of and concerned about the feelings of others.
- Develop creativity, curiosity and self-expression.
- Develop good communication skills.
- Develop their thinking processes.
- Develop listening skills and visual discrimination.
- Develop appropriate independence for problem solving.
- Develop good practices of health, safety and nutrition.

## Statement on Christian Teaching

As a church-based childcare ministry, we offer developmentally-appropriate Christian nurturing as part of our regular program, emphasizing the following themes:

- God made the world beautiful and wonderful. We give thanks for God's creation.
- God made each of us special.
- Jesus loves each and all of us.
- Community helpers show God's care for us in our everyday world.
- We can care for one another and our families.
- Bible stories and Bible characters teach us important lessons, such as taking a stand for what is right, sharing and loving one another, and the importance of family.
- Observance of the two major Christian holidays which occur during the school year, Christmas and Easter. Observances are done sensitively with careful attention to the developmental capacities of children.
- Developmentally-appropriate chapel services are conducted.

***No child or family will be discriminated against because of race, gender, sexuality, color, handicap, religion, or national origin.***

## **Calendar**

First Kids Preschool follows the Buncombe County School District calendar for our general schedule and weather related closings. First Kids Preschool begins on Tuesday, September 2, 2014. School will end on Thursday, May 28, 2015. A list of important dates for the 2014-2015 school year is included at the end of the handbook.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

If Buncombe County schools are closed due to weather, then First Kids Preschool is also closed. In the case of a delayed start we will operate on the following schedule: On a two hour delay, we will open at 10:00AM and dismiss at our regular time; on a three hour delay we will open at 11:00AM and dismiss at 1:00PM. Often, there is more than one announcement for the Buncombe County School District. We encourage you to sign up for our text/phone alert messaging system for the best communication about delays and closings. You may also receive information by watching WLOS-TV Channel 13 or visiting [www.wlos.com](http://www.wlos.com); we will be listed as *First Kids Preschool*. The preschool does not consider make-up days until more than 5 days have been missed. Make-up days or tuition credits are determined at the discretion of the preschool.

### **Arrival and Departure of Children**

Teachers will be available to greet students at 8:50 am. We encourage all children to arrive no later than 9:30AM in order to maximize the benefit of instructional and play time for your child and to avoid disrupting the classroom. If you need to arrive later than 9:30, please discuss your expected arrival time with your child's teacher or the Director.

Also, experts and experience indicate that children will feel more confident if parents do not extend the farewell process. We recommend that parents help their child stow his/her things, give a goodbye kiss and hug, and leave the room promptly. If you have any questions or concerns, we will be glad to discuss them.

Our school day ends at 12:30 p.m. You may pick your child up from his/her classroom or you can use our curbside pick-up. Please refer to the "Curbside" section of the handbook for more details.

Parents who do not pick up their child by 12:40 p.m. are considered late. A late fee of \$5 for every five minutes (or increment thereof) late will be charged to your tuition bill. In case of an emergency or unavoidable delay, the late fee may be negotiated. The parent should call the preschool as soon as possible and speak to the teacher or Director if there is an unavoidable delay. Children whose parents are chronically late will be in jeopardy of being dropped from the program.

In the event that Buncombe County Schools have an early release date, we will not have Curbside pickup. Pickup will be at the regular time in the classroom.

### **Early Drop Off**

For those families that may need to drop off their child earlier than 8:50AM, we are offering an Early Bird Option. Beginning at 8:15AM, you may drop your child off with one of our teachers. Cost is \$5 per child per day. Please let your child's teacher know if you are interested in this option.

## Enrollment and Fees

To apply to enroll a child in the First Kids Preschool, an application and non-refundable fee of \$60 must be submitted. Upon notification of acceptance, a completed Health Form, including a copy of your child's vaccination schedule, must be submitted on or before the first day of the fall term.

Tuition is due by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. A payment envelope will be sent home at the end of the previous month as a reminder. Please return the payment envelope in your child's communication folder. Checks should be made payable to **First Baptist Church of Asheville**.

The monthly tuition remains the same regardless of school holidays, snow days, family plans, or short illnesses which take the child out of school.

Tuition not paid by the fifteenth of the month will be subject to a billing fee of \$15.00. Unpaid tuition fees can result in your child's dismissal from the program. If you have a special financial need concerning your payment, please see the Director.

**Discounts:** If you choose to pay for the entire year's tuition at one time, a 5% discount will be given. Additional children from the same family can receive a 10% discount on non-prepaid tuition. Discounts, however, may **not** be combined.

## Summary of 2014-2015 Fees and Tuition

Registration/Supplies Fee - \$60 per child  
Classes Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - \$180 per month  
4 Day week option (Mon. – Thurs.) - \$200 per month  
Early Bird Drop Off - \$5 per day/per child

## General Policies

First Kids Preschool strives to always provide a warm, loving environment for children to learn age-appropriate skills while sharing basic Christian tenants, building self-confidence and addressing needs, ensuring safety and security, and providing families with assurance that their children are cared for and cherished. Our policies are designed to that end, as follows:

### Absences

If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please notify the teacher. It helps in our planning and we also worry if we do not see them. You can also contact the preschool director by email ([bwelmaker@fbca.net](mailto:bwelmaker@fbca.net)) or by phone (828-230-2072 or 828-252-4781, ext. 318).

### Abuse and Neglect

The staff of the First Kids Preschool will comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act. As teachers, we are considered Mandatory Reporters for child abuse and neglect and are required by law to report any suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services.

### Withdrawal

At least a two-week advance notice is required prior to withdrawing your child from our program. If no notice is given, you will be charged for the next month's tuition.

### Behavior

Young children can present challenging behavior as they learn to interact appropriately in the educational setting. First Kids Preschool is committed to using positive guidance strategies when teaching young children how to manage their own behavior. Developmentally appropriate guidance and classroom management promotes positive social skills, fosters mutual respect, strengthens self-esteem, and supports a safe environment. However, at times some children will exhibit extreme behaviors that cannot be managed within the classroom setting. Extreme behavior is defined as:

- Danger to self or others (examples include but are not limited to : head banging, excessive biting that breaks the skin, hitting, hair pulling, using objects to inflict bodily harm, etc.)
- Disrupting the class to the extent that the child requires one-on-one interaction.
- Disruptive behavior that creates chronic interference to classroom activities (examples include but are not limited to: tantrums, screaming, foul language, severe or chronic non-compliance or defiance.)
- Destruction of the classroom/preschool environment.

The Preschool has developed procedures to deal with such cases of severe behavior. In these situations, the parents will be contacted. The parents will then need to meet with the teacher and/or the director to discuss the situation and what appropriate measures will be implemented. Behavior that is chronically unacceptable may be an indicator that further support or assessment is needed. This support may include a referral process for further assessment and additional outside services through Smart Start of Buncombe County such as their Quality Enhancement Program and the Sunshine Project. If the Preschool's procedures for dealing with extreme behavior problems do not result in the restoration of an acceptable and safe educational environment, and/or that we feel that we cannot meet the needs of the child or the family, the Director reserves the right to temporarily or permanently expel a child from the Preschool.

## Clothing

Please label all your child's clothing and other belongings, including lunch boxes and backpacks. Children should wear comfortable clothing that is washable and athletic-type shoes. Flip-flops or shoes with heels are not safe for playing, climbing or running. Children should be able to easily remove clothing necessary to go the bathroom. ***It is also requested that you leave a complete change of clothing, appropriate for the season, along with a large zipper seal bag at the school*** in case of spills or accidents. The change of clothes will be stored in your child's classroom.

## Communication

Our e-mail address is [bwelmaker@fbca.net](mailto:bwelmaker@fbca.net). Since we do not have telephones in the classrooms, you may call 828-252-4781, extension #1318, for voicemail. If there is an emergency that arises during the school day, you can contact Bree Welmaker, the preschool director, at 828-230-2072.

First Kids will send home a monthly calendar for each classroom, and from time to time, notices, reminders, and other documents. Please check your child's communication folder daily for these updates.

## Curbside Pick-Up

We provide a pick-up service that we refer to as Curbside. If you wish to utilize this option, you may sign up on "Meet the Teacher" day or the first day of school. Each family will be provided with two name cards to place in the front dash of their car. We ask for your patience the first week of curbside as the children become accustomed to the pick-up routine.

Due to traffic concerns, we ask that you **enter the front parking lot at the YMCA entrance**, come around the parking area to the second right hand turn and line up facing Oak Street beside the sidewalk of the church. We will be exiting the lower level door as indicated on the map, and we ask that parents pull into a line along the curb which runs from that lower level door forward, with the child's name exhibited on your dash. Staff will bring your child to you and help him/her enter the car. Please avoid walking up to collect your child. We feel that this is the best way to ensure the safety of your child, and we appreciate your understanding.

## Keys

Two key cards will be issued to the family of each student; additional keys are available upon request from the Preschool Director. A \$5.00 charge will be required for the issuance of each additional key card or for cards not returned at the end of the year.

These key cards will open the atrium doors on the upper side entrance of the church (the playground entrance) and the hallway/stairwell doors to the classrooms during First Kids hours of operation. For those with a child on the lower level – your key will be coded to open the lower entrance door (the Pick-up entrance). Use the key by sliding it over one of the sides of a rectangular box that is attached to the right side of the main doors; the light will change color and you will hear a beep; at that time, you will be able to open the door.

It is very important that you have your key card with you anytime you come to the preschool. While the outside doors are unlocked at times and there is a doorbell, these options will not be available for access to the children's building.

Please exercise reasonable caution in allowing someone else to enter the building after you open the door. If you have concerns about anyone entering without a key, let any church employee know right away. Do not put the keys near magnets! If the key is lost, please report it immediately, either to First Kids' personnel or the church receptionist.

The key cards are to be returned at the end of each school year or if your child withdraws from the program.

### **Meals and Snacks**

Each child should bring a boxed lunch each school day. We have refrigeration available but we ask that you do not send foods that require heating; instead we ask that if you desire a warm meal for your child, you send pre-heated foods in thermos bottles. It is our policy to not allow the children to share their lunch with each other.

Each class issues a calendar/newsletter which includes assigned snack days for each child. On their assigned day, that child should bring enough food for the entire class. Although a sugary treat once in a while is fine, we prefer to see healthier snacks without added sugar. It is your option as to whether or not to include a beverage choice; water can always be provided.

### **Parent Participation**

We welcome and encourage the participation of our parents. Parents and siblings are always welcome to join us for lunch. Check with your child's teacher as to the time your class schedules lunch. There are many other opportunities to participate, such as parties, field trips and helping with challenging crafts.

### **Parties and Celebrations**

Several seasonal occasions during the year will be celebrated with parties on the day nearest to the event. A sign-up sheet will be available for each event.

Birthdays are important passages in the lives of children. First Kids Preschool would like to celebrate this important occasion with your child during snack time on the day nearest the actual birthday. If you would like to do something besides snack, consult your teacher.

### **Potty Training**

Before your child enters the 3's class, it is preferable that your child has begun the potty training process. Your child must be potty trained by the time they enter the 4's class (we will help your child to remember to go and we understand occasional accidents).

### **Toys and Personal Items**

In the case of loveys, blankets, pacifiers, etc. we want your child to be comfortable but we will also encourage your child to put such items in your child's cubby as the day progresses. This will prevent mix-up, loss and hurt feelings. Consult your child's teacher for the best way to handle this issue.

From time to time the teacher may designate a time for your child to bring things to share or to show their friends; items such as books, pictures, articles from nature or stuffed animals and non-violent toys are acceptable. Also, please make sure that toys are all also of a reasonable size – preferably something that can

fit in a backpack. All items should be marked with the child's name. We cannot be responsible for items that have been lost or broken at school.

We ask that, other than specified above, toys be kept at home. Toy weapons are not allowed and money, gum, jewelry and balloons should not be brought to school.

### **Supplies**

The vast majority of supplies for your child will be provided by the program. In our attempts to keep our tuition low, we typically send home a wish list of additional supplies that would be nice to have if you are able to provide them. You are certainly not obligated to purchase any of the items. You will receive such a list at the beginning of the school year, and perhaps in January. If you would like to donate additional items, they will be gladly accepted.

### **Visitors**

Parents and other family members are welcome to visit the classroom although we suggest checking in with the teacher beforehand in order to avoid scheduling conflicts. No one other than a parent will be allowed to pick up your child unless specific written permission has been given.

# Health Policies

## Emergency Procedures

The staff will keep a file indicating how to get in touch with parents, who to call if parents are unavailable, and the name of their physician, hospital, and dentist. Current parent work, home and cell numbers must be in each child's file.

***If there are any changes to your personal contact information such as address and/ or phone numbers, make sure to notify the teacher so that information can be kept current.***

## Illness and Attendance Guidelines

The health of each child in our program is very important to us. Please do not bring your child to the classroom if he/she shows signs of illness. We hope you understand that we have a responsibility to all the children and parents.

The following are guidelines to help you determine whether or not you should allow your child to attend school, and of course, they are not comprehensive; the final decision rests with the Director. If you have any doubts, please contact the Director. If symptoms manifest during the school day, we may have to contact you to pick-up your child; ***please be sure to have a plan in place in case of sudden illness.***

**Cold.** Mild, no temperature, feeling okay. If there are no other symptoms, and if discharge from the nose is clear, then your child may attend school if able to follow the daily routine which includes outside time, weather permitting. Please do not send your child if they have an excessively runny nose.

**Fever.** If your child has a fever, then you must keep your child at home for 24 hours after it goes down to 98.6 degrees.

**Sinus Infection.** Greenish discharge from nose might be a sign of infection. Child needs to stay home until clear or return with written approval from your doctor.

**Coughing.** If the cough is minor, your child may still attend school.

**Coughing.** If the cough is chronic, deep, or hacking, it might mean an infection. Child needs to stay home until gone or return with written approval from your doctor.

**Sore Throat.** If mild, child may be in school.

**Sore Throat.** If child appears to have one of the following: swollen tonsils or glands, white spots in throat, hurts when swallows and/or complains of not feeling well, child needs to stay home until well or return with written approval from your doctor.

**Rash.** Child needs to stay home until gone or return with written approval from your doctor indicating that there is no risk of other children contracting it.

**Stomach Ache.** Light stomach ache, no diarrhea, vomiting or temp. May return to school when gone.

**Diarrhea.** If a very loose bowel movement accompanied by nausea or two loose bowel movements within one hour or after the third really loose stool or if hard cramping. Child must stay home 24 hours after last episode.

**Eyes.** Redness or discharge from one or both eyes. Indicative of conjunctivitis (*Pink Eye*) which is very contagious. Your child needs to have a doctor's release before returning, and if diagnosed with pink eye, will need to be on medication for 48 hours to return to the school.

**Ear Infection.** Sustained complaints of ear hurting. Needs to be on medication and have a normal temperature with no pain before returning or return with written approval from your doctor.

**Head Lice.** If we detect the nits or lice you will be required to pick up your child. Child may return after he/she has been treated with a medicated shampoo and certified in writing to be nit free by a medical professional.

**Allergies.** Runny nose and slight congestion. Your child may remain in school.

**Flu.** You must keep your child home for 24 hours after the last symptom.  
**Vomiting.** You must keep your child at home until 24 hours after he/she last vomits.

**Stomach Ache with Additional Symptoms.** Vomiting and/or severe cramping. Must be kept home for 24 hours after last episode.

If your child is absent due to an illness, please call us so that we can keep an account and, if necessary, notify other parents about communicable diseases. If you have any questions about the health policy, feel free to discuss with the Director.

### **Immunizations**

All immunizations should be current.

### **Medications**

If you must bring medication for your child, please bring it to the teacher and fill out the Permission to Administer Medication Form. A medications release form must be filled out with your name, amount and dates to be administered. All medications must be kept in their original container.

The following information comes from the North Carolina Day Care Licensing Handbook and will be the procedure used in our program:

*All medication for children enrolled in day care must have specific instructions and written permission for administering medication. Instructions must be completed by the parent, or if prescription, by the physician, and meet the following additional requirements:*

#### **Prescription Medications**

- 1. Must be in the original prescription container.*
- 2. Prescribed in name of child.*
- 3. Directing how much is to be given.*
- 4. Directing what time the medicine should be given.*
- 5. Directing how often the medicine is to be given.*
- 6. Directing for what length of time medicine is to be given.*
- 7. And which must have complete instructions on the label or else be accompanied by written and signed instructions from a health professional detailing all of the above. NOTE: INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE SPECIFIC; "AS NEEDED" IS NOT SUFFICIENT.*
- 8. Medication cannot be administered after its expiration date.*

#### **Over the Counter Medications:**

- 1. Should have the individual child's name written on the packaging.*
- 2. Must be in original container bearing the original label.*
- 3. Must have written instructions from the parent or physician.*
- 4. Must have written permission from the child's parents.*
- 5. Can be administered only to the person specified in written instructions from the parent.*
- 6. A doctor must give instructions about dosage if the dosage conflicts with the instructions on the packaging.*
- 7. Medication cannot be administered after the expiration date.*

*Written instructions must be followed by the school when administering all medications. Medications cannot be and will not be administered in any manner that is contrary to the instructions on the container or the physician's instructions. Leftover medication will be returned to the parents after treatment is completed. Medicine can be kept and given to a child only for the length of time noted on the instructions, and never after its expiration date. Medications will be kept in separate locked storage as required by the sanitation regulations. **Medication is not to be left in a child's diaper bag or cubby, but must be left with the teacher.***

Sunscreen, baby powder, diaper ointment, etc., are considered medications and must be handled as all other medications. We prefer that parents use a once a day sunscreen and apply it before arriving at the preschool.

## **Discipline Policy**

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, First Kids practices the following discipline policy:

### **WE**

1. DO praise, reward, and encourage children.
2. DO reason with and set limits for the children.
3. DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems.
5. DO listen to the children.
6. DO redirect children and provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior.
7. DO provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. DO treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. DO ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. DO explain things to the children on their levels.
11. DO use short supervised periods of time-out.
12. DO stay consistent in our behavior management program.

### **WE**

1. DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. DO NOT make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. DO NOT shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. DO NOT deny food or rest as punishment.
5. DO NOT relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. DO NOT leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. DO NOT place the children in locked rooms, closets or boxes as punishment.
8. DO NOT allow discipline of children by children.
9. DO NOT criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.



## Dates to Remember 2014-2015

August 28	Meet the Teacher
September 2	First Day of First Kids
September 17	No curb-side pick up
September 25	Grandparents Day Lunch
<b>October 2</b>	<b>Field Trip to Sky Top Orchard</b>
<b>October 27-28</b>	<b>Buncombe County Teacher Work Days - No School</b>
<b>October 30</b>	<b>Costume Parade</b>
<b>October 31</b>	<b>Fall Family Festival</b>
November 4	No curbside pick up
<b>November 11</b>	<b>Veterans Day – No School</b>
November 25	Thanksgiving Program and Lunch
<b>November 26-27</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holidays</b>
December 18	Christmas Celebration
<b>Dec. 22-Jan. 2</b>	<b>Christmas Holidays</b>
<b>January 19-20</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Holiday /Buncombe County Teacher Workday – No School</b>
February 12	Doughnuts for Dads
March 11	No curb-side pick up
March 26	Easter Egg Hunt
<b>March 30-April 6</b>	<b>Spring Break/Easter Monday Holiday</b>
April 22	No Curbside pick up
<b>April 23</b>	<b>Field Trip to the Nature Center</b>
May 7	Muffins for Mom
<b>May 25</b>	<b>Memorial Day Holiday</b>
May 28	End of the Year Celebration/Graduation