



Parent Handbook

2025-2026

First Kids Preschool

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

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Hours

First Kids Preschool operates Monday through Thursday from 9:00 to 12:30pm. Classrooms open at 8:50AM. There is an Early Bird option that begins at 8:15AM for an additional cost of \$5 per child/per day.

Calendar

The calendar year for First Kids Preschool is about 132 days. This year, we begin on Monday, August 25, 2025 and end on Thursday, May 14, 2026 unless there is a need for snow make up days. For our general schedule during our school year, we follow the Buncombe County Schools calendar. A list of important dates for the 2025-2026 school year is included at the end of the handbook.

Mission and Purpose

First Kids Preschool is an early childhood education program and ministry of First Baptist Church of Asheville. We serve children ages one year (must be a year by August 31) through Pre-K.

First Kids Preschool 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. We believe that children are gifts from God, and as such, we value their feelings, desires, thoughts and needs.

First Kids Preschool exists to help prepare young children to be good citizens and to be ready to enter Kindergarten. To that end, we strive 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.
- 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 loves me.
- God made me.
- God knows me.
- God made the world.
- God hears me pray.
- God is always with me.
- God gave me my family.
- God loves everyone.
- The Bible is God's word to us.
- God wants us to love and care for one another.
- Observance of the two major Christian holidays: Christmas and Easter.
- Observances are done sensitively with careful attention to the developmental capacities of children.
- Developmentally-appropriate chapel services are conducted

Curriculum

First Kids Preschool does not use a specific curriculum for instruction. However, we do base our instruction on the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development and NAEYC guidelines.

Inclement Weather Policy

When there is inclement weather that causes hazardous road conditions, there may be a delay or closing for the preschool. All families are automatically entered into our REMIND 101 alert messaging system for the best communication about delays and closings. In addition, you may receive information by watching WLOS-TV Channel 13 or visiting www.wlos.com; we will be listed as *First Kids Preschool*.

Our decision to delay or close is based predominantly on the Buncombe County Schools decision, but other factors are considered as well. There will be times that the preschool will delay opening until 10:00AM or 11:00AM. Whenever we delay until 10:00AM we will dismiss at regular time – 12:30PM. Whenever we delay until 11:00AM, the preschool will dismiss at 1:00PM. Announcements about delays or closings will be specified in the alerts that are sent out via REMIND 101, TV, and Internet.

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. For the 2024-2025 school year – if more than 5 days are missed, then the year will extend into the week of May 19. Make up days will be Monday, May 19, Tuesday, May 20, Wednesday, May 21, and Thursday, May 22.

Arrival and Departure of Children

Experts and experience indicate that children will feel more confident if parents do not extend the farewell process. In order to limit the number of people in the classroom, we ask that children are dropped off at the door of the classroom. If you have any questions or concerns, we will be glad to discuss them.

Teachers will be available to greet students at 8:50AM. 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. In the case of a delayed start, our classrooms will NOT open 10 minutes before the hour as on regular days. They will open at 10:00AM or 11:00AM depending on the delay.

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 \$75 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 15th 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**.

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.

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

Furthermore, if your child attends less than four days per week, we are not able to offer make up days on the days that your child does not regularly attend. This is in fairness to families who pay for four days and do not have this flexibility. For example, if your child is signed up to attend on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and your child is ill, out of town or there is inclement weather, you may not bring them on Monday or Thursday to make up the lost day. The ONLY exception to this is in the event of one of our special programs such as the Family Open House. On the weeks that we have a special event that does not coincide with your regular day, you may choose to come on that day instead of one of your regular days.

If there is a special circumstance/emergency and you need your child to attend on a day that is not regularly scheduled, you must coordinate with your child's teacher to make sure that day may be accommodated. A fee of \$30 will be charged to your tuition for each additional day. Likewise, if you would like to add additional days for your child to attend on a regular basis, we will be happy to accommodate that request for you and adjust your tuition accordingly.

Discounts

We offer a sibling discount that allows for additional children from the same family to receive a 10% discount on tuition.

Summary of 2025-2026 Fees and Tuition

- **Registration/Supplies Fee - \$75 per child**
- **Two Days (Toddler Class Only): \$280 per month or \$2520 per year**
- **Three Days: \$310 per month or \$2790 per year**
- **Four Days: \$340 per month or \$3060 per year**
- **Early Bird Drop Off - \$5 per day/per child**

*****Tuition is for the year and divided into 9 monthly payments. You are welcome to pay in full at the beginning of the year if you choose to do so.**

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) 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

Children should wear comfortable, school appropriate clothing that is washable.

Please keep the following in mind when choosing clothes for your child to wear to school:

- Costumes should not be worn unless otherwise specified by the preschool.
- Pajamas should not be worn unless otherwise specified by the preschool.
- Clothes that you do not want to get dirty should not be worn to the preschool.
- Athletic-type shoes are preferred. 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**. 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 do not wish to utilize this option, please let your child's teacher know 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.

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.

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 limited refrigeration available so we ask that you do not send foods that require heating or need to be kept cold; instead, we ask that if you desire a warm meal for your child, you send pre-heated foods in thermos bottles or provide an icepack to keep things cool. Children are not allowed 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.

Please note we are peanut free. Please do not send in food made with peanuts or that may contain peanuts.

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

Potty training is a process and does not happen overnight. Your child's teacher will work with you on this process however, please be aware that potty training in a classroom with multiple children is a challenge. Accidents will happen. Please refer to our Potty-Training Policy Packet for more information.

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

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. Toy weapons are not allowed. Money, gum, jewelry and balloons should also not be brought to school. Please make sure that toys are of a reasonable size – preferably something that can fit in a backpack. All items should be marked with the child's name.

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 his/her backpack 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.

We ask that, other than specified above, toys be kept at home.

We are not responsible for items that have been left, lost, or broken at 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 containing contact and emergency contact information. ***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. Children should be kept at home if they have symptoms that keep them from participating fully in our program. **Children must be symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT MEDICATION before returning to school.** 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. 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.

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.	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.
Fever. If your child has a fever over 100 degrees, then you must keep your child at home for 24 hours after it goes down to 98.6 degrees without medication-.	Eyes. Redness or discharge from one or both eyes. Indicative of conjunctivitis (<i>Pink Eye</i>) 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.
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.	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.
Coughing. If the cough is minor, your child may still attend school.	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.
Coughing. If the cough is chronic, deep, or hacking, it <u>might</u> mean an infection. Child needs to stay home until gone or return with written approval from your doctor.	Allergies. Runny nose and slight congestion. Your child may remain in school.
Sore Throat. If mild, child may be in school.	Flu. You must keep your child home for 24 hours after the last symptom. Doctor's note may be required.
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.	Vomiting. You must keep your child at home until 24 hours after he/she last vomits.
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.
	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 Medication 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 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.***

Covid Protocols

Along with our church's full-time Child Development Center, First Kids Preschool follows the guidance from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) in regards to helping prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The ChildCareStrongNC Public Health Toolkit last updated March 4 2022, no longer requires exclusion due to exposure and no longer requires masking indoors. This means that we no longer have to close a classroom after an exposure nor exclude children due to exposure outside of the school whether in home or elsewhere. This also means that masking for both staff, parents, and children is only required for exposures, testing positive for Covid, and illness. Of course, all those who choose to continue to wear a mask are welcome to do so.

Symptoms

Children and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and contact their health care provider or other available testing sites for diagnostic testing and care. Staying home when sick is essential to keeping infections out of child care settings and preventing spread to others.

The presence of any of the symptoms below suggests the person may need to be tested for COVID-19:

- Fever (temp of 100.4 °F or higher) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting

Protocols for Exclusion

If a child has symptoms and tests positive for Covid, his/her first day of symptoms is day 0. They must quarantine for 5 days following that first day. After that 5 days, he/she must be fever free for 24 hours without medication and symptoms must be improving in order to return to school. He/She must also wear a mask for 5 days (only 2 years and older) upon returning to school.

If a child is asymptomatic, but tests positive for Covid, day 0 is the day of the positive test. They must quarantine for 5 days following that first day. After that 5 days, he/she must be fever free for 24 hours without medication and symptoms must be improving in order to return to school. He/She must also wear a mask for 5 days (only 2 years and older) upon returning to school.

If there has been a known exposure, and a child has symptoms (fever, severe cough, runny nose, congestion etc.) but tests negative for Covid - we still assume positive. They must quarantine as described above.

If there has not been a known exposure, but a child exhibits symptoms as listed above, he/she needs a negative test in order to return to school. In addition, he/she must be fever and symptom free without medication for 24 hours.

If there is a classroom exposure, we will notify parents of children in the classroom. As long as a child in the classroom is symptom free and has a negative test (rapid, home tests are accepted), he/she is allowed to come back to school. Verbal confirmation is all that is needed.

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

2025-2026

Thursday, August 21

Monday, August 25

Monday, September 1

Thursday, October 2

Monday, October 13

Thursday, October 30

W-TH, November 26-27

Thursday, December 18

Dec. 22-January 2

Monday, January 19

Thursday, February 12

Monday, March 2

April 6-10

Thursday, May 14

Meet the Teacher

First Day of First Kids

No School. Labor Day

Family Open House and Lunch

No School. Teacher Work Day

Costume Day and **No curb-side pick up**

No School. Thanksgiving Holidays

Christmas Celebration

No School. Christmas Holidays

No School. MLK Holiday

No curb-side pick up

No School. Teacher Workday

No School. Spring Break

End of the Year Celebration/Graduation **(Please note that this date could change to Thursday, May 21 if we need snow make up days)**