

First Baptist School Early Childhood & Child Care Parent Handbook



Distinctly Christian - Academically Excellent

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1

Vision and Mission Statement
Admission
Hours of Operation
Admission/Enrollment

Page 2

Health and Safety
Absences
Animals
Clothing
Food

Page 3

Gang-free Zone
Hearing and Vision Screening
Health Checks
Illness
Immunizations

Page 4

Medications
Medical Emergencies
Release of Children
Safety Programs
School Closing

Page 5

Traffic and Parking
Policies and Procedures
Discipline
Mothers with infants/toddlers
Parent Involvement
Personal Items
Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

Page 6

Update Contact Information
Visits to the Classrooms
Withdrawal
Special Activities
Field Trips
Parental Notification
Physical Activity and Screen Time
Water Activities

Page 7

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Licensing Information
Parents' Acknowledgement

FIRST BAPTIST SCHOOL

VISION

First Baptist School, a model of Christian and academic excellence, will provide a challenging and creative curriculum based on Biblical truths. Christian education goes beyond physical, intellectual, and emotional development to encourage spiritual growth of students and families leading to a lifetime walk with Christ.

MISSION STATEMENT

First Baptist School is a ministry and cooperating part of First Baptist Church. Every child is challenged to achieve their academic excellence and their spiritual awareness through the opportunity to know Jesus Christ as Lord. All FBS staff are vital team members in developing the whole child. All FBS team members are encouraged to continually grow as a Christian role model through: a devotional life, a prayer life, and being an active member in their local church.

First Baptist School is an advocate of the family. Families are the center of faith development for their child. FBS partners with families in the child's faith and intellectual development.

First Baptist School: Distinctly Christian ~ Academically Excellent

Admission

Hours of Operation

First Baptist School's Early Childhood and Child Care Department is a year-around program and is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. A yearly calendar will be printed and available showing all school and childcare holidays. Early Childhood Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. **All students must be escorted into the building by an adult and the adult must sign in the child on the Sign-in/Sign-out Form in the classroom.**

Admission/Enrollment

Registration forms must be completed, including the signing of the parent contract, and must be turned into the office along with the registration fee. Parents will receive a copy of the First Baptist School Early Childhood & Child Care Parent Handbook explaining the policies and procedures. Parents are asked to read, sign, and return to the office, the acknowledgement at the end of the Handbook. The Director has an open door policy for parents to review and discuss any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures. Parents are invited to address all concerns and compliments to the Director at any time during our hours of operation. Parents will be notified, in a timely fashion, on the school website and/or in writing of any policy changes.

First Baptist School does not discriminate on the basis of race or religious creed in administration of its educational or admission policies. In order to comply with state licensing requirements, all children in attendance must have current health information, including an up-to-date immunization record on file in the office.

Although First Baptist School has something special to offer in the field of education, it cannot meet the needs of all students. The curriculum is geared to the average and above average student. Resources are not available for children with severe physical, mental, learning, emotional, or behavioral problems.

Health and Safety

Absences

Please notify the school office if your child is absent due to illness or a family emergency. Also, notify the school office if your child will be absent for an extended period of time.

Animals

Due to allergy concerns, classroom pets, other than fish, are not allowed.

Clothing

For the children's safety, closed, secure shoes are a must. Flip flops and loose fitting shoes can cause children to slip or trip on the playground. Also, girls wearing dresses or skirts should wear shorts underneath. Children should wear comfortable play clothes and have a complete change of clothing available at school in case it is needed.

Food

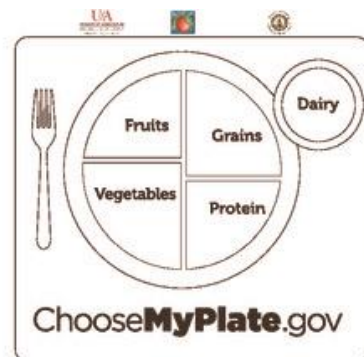
Mid-morning snacks are served daily to preschool and pre-kinder children and afternoon snacks are served to all children in attendance after 3:15 p.m. **Students may not bring breakfast from home into the classroom; this must be eaten before arriving at school.** The charges for the school snacks are included in the tuition. Lunch is served to all half and full-day children. Lunch tickets are purchased in the school office. Lunch menus are sent home monthly. Children are encouraged to eat the nutritional meals prepared at school which meet the children's daily food needs. Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees F are kept out of the children's reach. Parents who choose to provide the child's meals and/or snacks from home must understand that First Baptist is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily food needs. If your child brings his/her lunch, please remember that your child's daily food needs for lunch and snacks (which is ½ of their total daily food needs) include: 1 serving from the milk food group, 1 serving from the meat/meat alternative food group, 1½ servings from the vegetable food group, 1 serving from the fruit food group and 3 servings from the grains food group. To ensure the safety of food brought from home, hot food must be in thermal containers and cold food must either be in a thermal container or protected by an ice/cold pack. Milk and a serving of a fresh vegetable or a serving of fruit are available for children who bring lunches.

Due to possible allergic reactions, all meals and snacks prepared and provided by First Baptist School are nut free.

Prepared food for special occasions, such as birthday and holiday celebrations, that is brought into the school by parents to be shared among children must be commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health official.

Staff do not reward good behavior or clean plate with foods of any kind.

Parents are encouraged to visit the ChooseMyPlate.gov-LearntobeHealthy.org website for helpful information on daily food plans and other healthy eating and activity tips.



Gang-Free Zone

A gang-free zone is the designated area around our school and child care center where certain gang related activity is prohibited and is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. Certain gang-related criminal activity that occurs within **1000 feet** of our school or child care center is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

Hearing and Vision Screening

An on site, certified staff member/screener will conduct hearing and vision screening for all children from Pre-kinder and older within the first school semester. Parents will be sent documentation of the results if additional screening is required.

Health Checks

Health checks are conducted by the classroom teachers when students arrive and as needed throughout the day when a child's behavior indicates that something is affecting his/her health. The teacher greets the child and looks for breathing difficulties, severe coughing, discharge from the nose or eyes, changes in skin color, bruising or swelling, cuts, sores or rashes; gently feels the child's cheek, forehead or neck checking to see if the child feels unusually warm or cold and clammy; and asks the child questions. "Daily Health Check" forms are available in every classroom and are filled out if there is anything to denote. Completed forms are kept in the individual's classroom student file. Communication between the teacher and parents concerning any changes in a child's sleep, eating and drinking, toileting habits, mood and behavior at home or at school is very important for the child's well-being. All staff members at First Baptist School have CPR and 1st Aid training and receive instruction on conducting health checks.

Illness

Sick care is not available. Children with fever of 99.4 (armpit) or 100.4 (oral) or higher and/or symptoms and signs of possible severe illness must not be brought to school and must be picked up from school as quickly as possible if fever or symptoms develop during the day. Children cannot return until they have been fever-free (with no medication) and symptom free for 24 hours.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled must meet the immunization requirements as set forth by the Texas Department of Health. Children must have all immunizations needed for their age by the date of admission. If this is not possible, First Baptist School will grant a one week grace period for immunizations to be completed. If they are not completed by the end of the grace period, the child will not be able to return until this requirement has been met. Parents will be notified if and when Tuberculin testing becomes a requirement for Nueces County.

The safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount. We currently recommend that our employees who are not exempt due to medical conditions or reasons of conscience receive the following immunizations: Influenza (annually) and Pertussis (TDaP). When immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases are received by employees, documentation is required and is kept on file. First Baptist School encourages the use of protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease. The protective medical equipment includes gloves, masks, and antibacterial soap. The use of protective medical equipment will be based on the level of risk the employee presents to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure to children. Employees should not be in direct contact when they are ill or exhibiting signs of illness. There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illness. All employees are required to sign an "Employee Immunization Policy" and failure to sign the policy will result in the employee not being able to work directly with children.

Medications

Parents must fill out a medicine form in the school office when it becomes necessary for the child to receive medication during school hours. The student may not keep medicine in the classroom whether it is prescription or over-the-counter (this includes insect repellent, sunscreen, chap-stick and cough drops). Students must be given medication in the office by authorized office personnel. Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to school.

Medical Emergencies

If a child is seriously ill or injured, First Baptist School staff will contact the child's parent and emergency services or, if necessary, take the child to Driscoll Children's Hospital emergency room. If a parent or emergency contact person is not reached, the child's physician as listed in the records is contacted.

Release of Children

Children are to be picked up from their classrooms. The authorized pick-up person will sign out his/her child and record the time. Always be prepared to show picture identification in the event a staff person does not recognize you. A person who is not on the pick-up list, but has been given permission by the authorized parent/guardian, must show picture identification and sign the child out in the office before the child is released from their classroom. Once the child has been signed out in the office, the pick-up person will be given an "*Authorization for Release*" form to hand the child's teacher.

Safety Programs

Several programs have been put in place to help ensure the safety of all our students:

- A. **All students must be escorted into the building by an adult and the adult must sign in the child on the Sign-in/Sign-out Form in the classroom.**
- B. A fire drill is conducted regularly.
- C. A "suspicious" stranger drill takes place when scheduled. The teacher locks the classroom door, and the children assemble in the corner of the room away from the window in the door and await the all-clear signal.
- D. A "bad-weather" drill includes filing into the hall where there is no glass, sitting quietly with backs against the wall until the all clear is sounded. The teacher may be instructed to take the students to Elmore Hall. In the event of an actual "bad weather" emergency, parents may be required to pick up their child in Elmore Hall. When picking up your child be sure to sign him/her out with the teacher.
- E. If evacuation of the school becomes necessary, teachers and students will relocate to the Recreational Center or to the Friendship Room at the Koinonia Apartments at 3113 Ocean Dr., Corpus Christi, TX, 78404. Parents will be called, e-mailed, sent a text message to pick up their children at the designated location.
- F. During a "shelter in place lock down for chemical emergency," the school will be locked down, windows shut, and air conditioners turned off. **Parents will not be allowed into the building until the all clear is given.**

A complete Emergency Preparedness Plan is given to every staff member and training is provided annually.

School Closing

If the school must close due to weather conditions or any other unsafe or unsanitary reasons for any length of time, parents will be notified through the School Messenger Phone Bank System. Also, a notice will be given to the local TV stations if the school must be closed for an extended length of time.

Traffic and Parking

Please observe the “Handicapped Parking” areas. If you are ticketed by the police for a violation, there is a fine assessed. Do not leave valuables, such as purses, in your vehicle or your engine running while you enter the school building. **DO NOT leave children unattended in vehicles in the parking lot.** Please park only in marked stalls and observe all safety rules.

Policies and Procedures

Discipline

All staff members use positive reinforcement to continually encourage children to make good choices. Discipline will be individualized and consistent for each child; appropriate to the child’s level of understanding; and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. All staff members will only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child’s age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child’s age.

There will be **no** harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child.

Sometimes behavior problems occur because a child is not ready to be in a group setting and is in need of consistent one-on-one attention. Repeatedly hitting and/or biting other children and/or staff members could result in dismissal of the child if the First Baptist staff feel that the child would benefit from being in a different setting.

Mothers with infants/toddlers

There is a comfortable, quiet place in the Ladies’ Lounge on the second floor which is provided to enable a mother to breastfeed her child. Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in the care of a licensed child care facility.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to attend the PTO meetings and become PTO members. The PTO meetings, Family Fun Nights and other special events are announced and held throughout the year at First Baptist School.

Parents and/or teachers who would like to schedule a parent-teacher conference are welcome to notify the Director who will schedule the conference at a time that is convenient for both the parents and the teacher. Toddler teachers will send home daily reports for each child to keep parents informed of their child’s daily activities. All teachers will send home progress reports for each child at the end of each semester and will provide an opportunity for parent conferences to keep parents informed of their child’s development.

Personal Items

Items from home such as toys, Game Boys or game systems, videos, CD’s, DVD’s, music players (i.e. IPod), cell phones, etc. are NOT allowed to be brought to school. First Baptist School will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

All managers and caregivers upon hiring and annually thereafter receive one hour or more of training in prevention techniques for and the recognition of symptoms of abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and the responsibility and procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect.

In order to increase employee and parent awareness of issues regarding child abuse or neglect, including warning signs and prevention techniques, we post on our Parents and Staff Info board information from the TDFPS website “HELP FOR PARENTS. HOPE FOR KIDS.” and urge staff, parents and others to visit the site also.

The strategy for coordination between First Baptist School and appropriate community organizations will always be through and upon advisement of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and our current Child Care Licensing Representative.

For assistance and intervention, parents and others can contact DFPS 1-800-252-5400 or 1-800-4-A-CHILD or online www.txabusehotline.org Be prepared to give as much information as possible when reporting suspected abuse or neglect.

Update Contact Information

Parents may update their contact information at their convenience by e-mailing the information to ecdirector@fbscorpus.org.

Visits to Classrooms

Parents are always welcomed to visit the classrooms, to observe their child, the child care center’s operation, and program activities, without having to secure prior approval.

Withdrawal

Parents must submit in writing their plans, including dates, for withdrawing a child from the First Baptist School Early Childhood program. Charges will continue to incur until such notice is received by office personnel.

Special Activities

Field Trips

Every summer during the Summer JOY program, pre-kindergarten thru 5th grade participate in First Baptist Church Vacation Bible School. This is called an In-house field trip and notification and permission slips will be sent home at least 48 hours in advance.

Parental Notification

Important information regarding school activities, events, etc. is sent home with the children. Parents must make sure to check children’s individual cubbies when picking them up from school. The school principal and the child-care director post a newsletter and calendar on the school’s website: www.fbscorpus.org. Updates to the Parent Handbook are posted on the school website. It is the parent’s responsibility to check the website frequently for updates.

Physical Activity and Screen Time

Outdoor play times are scheduled for every age group with limited mixing of ages. Every class has an assigned 30 minute outdoor time for the morning and for the afternoon. When the gym is available, and additional 30 minutes of physical activity is scheduled.

Watching television is not allowed. Every class has a computer center and teachers may specify in their lesson plans a learning game which will be available for the children to choose at center time.

Water Activities

First Baptist School will occasionally provide water play activities, which would include use of water tables and sprinklers on the school playground. Parents must complete the section on water activities on the registration form in order for their child to participate.

**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Licensing Information**

First Baptist School is a facility licensed by the *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*, also known as *Childcare Licensing*. All rules or regulations followed are to be in compliance with *TDFPS Minimum Standards* and the *Texas Department of Health*. Standards set by these entities are “minimum” requirements; any other practices or regulations of First Baptist School are considered to increase the quality of care and set us apart from other facilities.

Parents may obtain information on minimum standards in the child care office or online on the TDFPS website. Current licensing reports are posted on the Early Childhood Bulletin Board in the hallway of the Early Childhood Department for parent’s convenience.

For more information on Childcare Licensing, CPS abuse hotline (1-800-252-5400), or the TDFPS website, contact the local Licensing office at:

**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
5155 Flynn Parkway, Suite 623
Corpus Christi, TX 78411
Phone: 361-878-3451
Fax: 512-934-9982**

Please sign and return the bottom portion of this page.
Thank you for choosing First Baptist School for your child.

Sharon St. Peter, Director

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Parents’ Acknowledgement

I have received, read and agree to abide by the policies set forth in the **First Baptist School Early Childhood and Child Care Parent Handbook including the policy on discipline and guidance.**

My child’s name is _____.

Date: _____ Parents’ Signature: _____