



2026-2027 Parent Handbook

2350 Central Avenue
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901
501-624-7083
501-318-1930 (Fax)

firsthotsprings.com

Join us on Facebook at First Baptist Preschool

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH STAFF

Jonathan Kelley, Pastor

Heather Murphy, Children's Pastor & Preschool Supervisor

Dave Johnston, Executive Pastor

FIRST BAPTIST PRESCHOOL STAFF

Director

Mandy Jackson

Assistant Director

Mindy Williams

Teachers

Shannon Biles

Lesley Dodd

Hannah Floyd

Caitlyn Gordon

Kayla Tillery

Lily Butler

Kailey Weaver

Stephanie Foshee

Support Staff

Karen Griffin

Cook

Donna Self

New Hope Therapy

Dawson Co-op Educational Services

Kid Source Therapy

Preschool Board

Jill Heard

Melynda Gidcomb

Jennifer Winters

Tiffany Dews

Lauren Warren

Kristi Clay

Handbook Revision

First Baptist Preschool reserves the right to revise, remove or supplement any provisions of this handbook when it deems such changes necessary. Policy changes will be posted in the office for 30 days.

Table of Contents

A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

1. Introduction to First Baptist Preschool	p.5
2. Enrollment & Tuition	p.5
3. Drop Off & Pick Up	p.7
4. Communication	p.8
5. Health & Safety	p.9
6. Discipline	p.11
7. General Policies & Procedures	p.11

A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear First Baptist Preschool Families,

We are so blessed that you have chosen us to be part of your child's early education and care during these precious preschool years. Here at FBP we work to nurture the whole child-socially, spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, and physically all taught from a biblical worldview. New and exciting things are happening here at FBP, and you have chosen an amazing place for your child to expand their educational and spiritual journey

As a human, family member and an educator, I understand the many emotions you are juggling right now. I share many of those with you as well. Oftentimes in life, as we plan and prepare in our lives God will arise and change those plans. My professional journey began here at FBP many years ago. During college and even after I became a teacher, I worked at FBP in various roles as a substitute, part time teacher, an aide, and an afternoon administrator. Through my journey to follow God's plan and purpose, I am blessed to be back as the director here at FBP. I have extensive background in early childhood education and operational experience that spans from working as a member of the church and staff as well as years of experience in education. My goal is always to be a beacon of God's love to all that I encounter. I continually seek new training and knowledge and work daily to apply all that I learn. It is because of these goals that I can assure you that I will work to provide a high level of care and education to the children, families, and staff at First Baptist Preschool.

Along with our FBP school board and our staff, I am excited to be part of your child's future. I look forward to working with the parents/guardians and families to establish and build positive relationships. Trust, communication, and understanding are vital parts of these relationships. I strongly believe in open communication, and I welcome conversations regarding your child(ren) to ensure a successful school year.

I am blessed beyond measure to serve your child and family. I believe that through collaboration and trust, your child will grow and learn in many aspects of their life. Together, I and the entire staff at FBP will work collaboratively to ensure that every child and family can grow, learn, and be loved this school year.

I look forward to getting to know each of you!

In His Love,

Mandy Jackson, Director of First Baptist Preschool

1. INTRODUCTION TO FIRST BAPTIST PRESCHOOL

FBC “nursery school” started as a day school (Mother’s Day Out) and was held in the mornings only. In 1993 the preschool as we know it today was started. The first class had 70 students. We are an outreach of First Baptist Church. We are here to help prepare children and their families for kindergarten and beyond, while sharing the love of Jesus with every family!

The goal of First Baptist Preschool is the development of the whole child; promoting physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth in a Christian environment. As your child’s first educational experience away from home, our program is intended to help build a foundation for learning, build self-esteem, and successful social skills.

It is our sincere desire to prepare your child to be successful in kindergarten through academics, structured playtime, and social interaction with classmates. We establish and present educational concepts and work habits based on kindergarten requirements set forth by the Arkansas Department of Education.

During the school year, your child will be introduced to:

- ❖ Social, emotional, and physical health skills
- ❖ God’s love and word
- ❖ Alphabet
- ❖ Numbers and number concepts
- ❖ Shapes
- ❖ Music & Movement
- ❖ Art

2. Enrollment & Tuition

ENROLLMENT

We have open enrollment for the upcoming summer session and school year. Registration is open to current students and siblings first, followed by the public. **A child is not considered enrolled until all registration forms are completed, a copy of immunization records is provided, and required fees are paid.**

ENROLLMENT: A child must be 2.5, and he/she **MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY TRAINED** to qualify for our three-year-old class. A child must be four years old by August 1st, and he/she **MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY TRAINED** to qualify for a four-year-old class. We are not licensed for children who are not potty trained. We, of course, encourage the children to use the restroom numerous times all throughout the day. When accidents do occur, they will be documented.

The following steps must be completed for enrollment:

- 1) Completed registration form
- 2) A copy of immunization records
- 3) Pay first week's tuition (non-refundable)
- 4) Pay any fees due

TUITION

Tuition Costs

Full Time \$170.00 per week

3 days M/W/F – \$120.00 per week

2 day T/TR – \$100.00 per week

Tuition includes lunch, 2 snacks, chapel, music, and other activities.

Your first week of tuition must be paid to hold your position, and it is non-refundable. Without a 2-weeks' notice, you will be expected to pay even if your child does not attend. Tuition is based on the weeks in each session, not on your child's attendance. If your tuition falls more than 2 weeks behind, you will be required to add a credit/debit card to your account. Your account will then be billed every Monday automatically. Late fees will apply. If you are unable to add an auto draft your child may be dismissed

Tuition is due on Wednesday of each week for all students. **Tuition is considered late if it is not paid on Wednesday of each week.** Tuition is considered past due at the end of day Friday if you pay weekly and if you are, paying monthly your account is due the first week of each month. A \$25 late charge will be added to your account for each day your account remains past due. Monthly tuition payment can be figured by counting each Monday of the month (some months do contain 5 Mondays) and payment is due the first of each month. Tuition will not be charged for the weeks the preschool is closed for holidays or scheduled breaks. **If your tuition is not paid on time, your child will not be allowed to return to school until the past due amount is paid in full.** Tuition is paid regardless of days your child misses due to illness, vacation, inclement weather, power outages, flooding, or other causes.

Your tuition payment holds your child's position here at the school. We cannot hold a place for your child if tuition is not paid. Unpaid tuition of one week can result in the dismissal of your child.

*Tuition will **not** change for closures due to inclement weather or emergency situations

ENROLLMENT CHANGE: A two-week written notice and a \$10.00 administration fee are needed for a child to change class attendance. Parents planning to withdraw a student before the end of the school year must give a two-week written notice. Tuition for the two-week notice period must be paid regardless of student attendance.

Drop-in days can be inquired about but are based on availability.

Drop ins are \$40 per day.

MAKING PAYMENTS: We ask that one party be responsible for tuition payments. Payment must be made for your child on time regardless of “who’s turn it is” to pay. This is to ensure that your child is not dismissed from our program for late or non-payment of tuition. You can make payments on your Procure account, by check, credit/debit card, or cash.

HOLIDAYS: Please review our school calendar for all holidays and school closings. Our closings are aligned with the public schools as closely as we can. Tuition will **not** change for closures on government designated holidays.

TAX STATEMENTS: If you need an end of year tax statement, please email fbpreschool@firsthotsprings.com or call 501-624-7083 and we will get one to you. Statements can also be printed from your Procure account.

3. DROP OFF AND PICK UP

DROP OFF:

Drop off between 7:00am-9:00 am You will enter from the south side of the church. When you approach the preschool, we ask that you do so slowly. Put your car in park when you come to a stop, this is for the safety of all. We will come out to your vehicle, and you will sign your child in and we will get your child from the car and take them inside or you will be directed to the playground.

If you drop off after 9:00, you will need to park and walk your child to the door.

If you drop your child off after 9:00 am without prior approval, you will be charged a \$15.00 late fee. You will also not be allowed to walk them to the classroom at this point. We take pride in being a preschool, not a daycare. We are trying to help prepare your child to become independent, confident and successful for kindergarten and beyond. To do that and to ensure their highest level of learning, punctual and consistent attendance is important. Most of our prime instruction and learning takes place first thing each day.

PICK UP

Pick up before 2:30 Please call the office and let us know when you are coming. We will try to have your child in the office and ready. You will park, come in and sign your child out.

Pick up after 2:30 You will need to park and come in to sign your child out. You will then be instructed to the room or playground to get your child. We know they have missed you all day and will be excited to see you come get them.

Students must be picked up no later than 5:30. **Students not picked up by 5:30 will receive a late fee of \$5.00 for EVERY MINUTE past the pick-up time.** Your promptness in picking up your child by 5:30 p.m. is expected and important, as our teachers have obligations to their own families after that time. **After two late pick-ups, your child is subject to dismissal from our program.**

Your child may leave only with those persons authorized on his/her registration form and/or pick-up list. If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child, please notify the office in advance. Please make sure that we have the name and number of the person who will be picking up your child. Persons not known to the preschool staff will be required to show a picture I.D., even if their name appears on your child's enrollment form.

PLAYGROUND PICK UP & DROP OFF When you approach the playground gate, please do not open it. The gate will be opened by staff. Your child will not be let out of the gate until your attention is fully on your child.

From time-to-time children are having a hard time and guardians will pull over and children could pull away or just be excited and run to us. Please always exercise extreme caution and vigilance when driving.

YOU MUST sign your child in every morning and sign them out when you pick them up. This is to ensure that requirements are being met per DHS as well as ensure your child's safety. Please do not drop off or pick up your child at the playground until AFTER you have signed them in or out.

4. Communication

Communication between home and school is so important! Please try to let us know when your child is going to be out (sickness, vacation, fun day, doctor's appointments). Teachers plan each day around the children in their class and we miss your child when they are not here!

Procure: We use Procure for daily communication. To ensure that you are getting the updates and information you need, it is very important you download and login to your child's Procure account. Teachers can send pictures, reminders about upcoming events, etc through Procure. You will also receive text alerts for school-wide events, school closings, etc. There may be days when you will not receive a daily report. In that case, remember that no news is good news.

We have a Communication Board in the foyer and hallways. Please check this for updates, information, or changes.

If you need to speak with your child's teacher via phone call or conference, the best time is during naptime. If you call the preschool office, we will have your child's teacher come to the office to take a phone call or meet with you. When wanting to have a phone or in person conference, notifying and scheduling this ahead of time will better ensure the availability of the teacher.

If you need to reach the office, the best time to do that is between 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. Before and after those hours we are usually assisting in other areas. You can send messages through Procure, email, or Facebook and we will respond as quickly as possible. If you call and we do not answer, please leave a voicemail message and we will get back to you.

Phone:	501-624-7083
Email	fbpreschool@firsthotsprings.com
Facebook	First Baptist Preschool
Website	firsthotsprings.com/preschool

5. HEALTH & SAFETY

We are licensed by the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. We must abide by all rules and regulations outlined by the state.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

Parents must make other arrangements for the care of their children when they show symptoms of any deviation from normal health. Children will not be permitted at our school if they obviously not well or with any one or more of the following conditions:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher.
2. Any communicable disease or contagious infection.
3. Vomiting within the past 24 hours.
4. Diarrhea – three or more loose bowel movements in a 24-hour period.
5. Undiagnosed rash.
6. Eye discharge or Pink Eye; children can be readmitted after medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial or viral infection, or after 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.
7. Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.
8. Open sores and scabs, unless properly covered and 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.
9. Head Lice – until treatment is effective and a follow-up evaluation has been made by our staff.
10. Any one or more of the following: earache, signs of irritability or confusion, sore throat.

When a child becomes ill or injured at school, the staff's priority is to meet the child's physical health needs. In case of illness, we will take the child's temperature, as well as perform an overall visual health assessment. A phone call to parents will be made when the school deems it necessary. If parents are requested by the school to pick up their sick child, they must do so within one hour, and the child may not return to school for 24 hours following the time sent home and until the symptoms subside.

Parents are advised to make alternate plans for care if the child becomes ill and is not able to attend school. If a sick child is not picked up within one hour of being called, we may call your alternate contact to request pick up. Failure to pick up a sick child in a timely manner, or disregard of this policy by parents, may result in the removal of your child from school. While a physician's note may be helpful, it does not guarantee that a child may return to school. Final decisions on allowing a child to return are made by an Administrator

Basic First Aid:

Through the course of normal supervised play, children occasionally get injured. In the case of a minor injury or accident, our staff will administer basic first aid. Any cuts will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water; ice will be applied to any bruises, bites, or other injuries. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and shared with parents.

We may call and ask parents' permission to apply a topical antibiotic or anti-itch ointment as necessary to treat or prevent infection in minor skin wounds or alleviate itching.

Emergency Medical Care:

In case of a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), we will call 911. Our staff has been trained in Pediatric and Adult First Aid and CPR and will administer it as appropriate. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. In case of an injury or accident in which an ambulance is not needed, but immediate professional care is required, we will contact the child's parents. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency contacts will be notified. Injured children shall be transported for medical aid by parents or by calling 911 for an ambulance. The child may be transported to a hospital by ambulance for emergency treatment when necessary.

Administration of Medications: A consent form must be filled out and given to office staff. Medications should never be left in backpacks or given to teachers. This consent form must be completed for any prescription or nonprescription medications. Please do not send cough drops with your child, they would also need to be given to office staff.

FOOD: A morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack will be served to the children daily. Please let us know if you would like to bring something special for your child's birthday or regular snack time, all items brought to be shared must be store bought.

NO PEANUT BUTTER OF ANY TYPE CAN BE BROUGHT INTO THE PRESCHOOL.

We have several children with allergies and sometimes the allergies are severe.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency plans for fire and tornado are written and posted by each main classroom door. Emergency plan procedures are practiced monthly. Additional drills like evacuation and lockdown will also be practiced.

6. DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE POLICY First Baptist Preschool does ***not*** implement corporal punishment or spanking. Instead, we incorporate methods designed to bring attention to right behavior instead of emphasis on the wrongdoing. Steps in discipline include:

- 1) Use of encouraging words to remind the child of correct behavior.
- 2) Remove the child from the situation and/or redirect the child's attention.
- 3) Child is placed in a private setting and the teacher will discuss what rule was broken, and what better behavior or choice could have been made. The child may be placed in a private setting to allow them space and time to calm down first and then the teacher will address the behavior and goals.
- 4) If the above methods have been applied and the child persists in ignoring requests by the teacher, then parents will be contacted via incident report, a phone/in person conference or possibly to pick up the child. ---If after two conferences are held and there is no change in behavior, the child may be dismissed from the school.

We reserve the right to dismiss or send home a child for the following reasons:

- a) If we are unable to influence a student to thrive in a classroom situation.
- b) If a student cannot adjust to our preschool program.
- c) If child is not potty trained.
- d) Biting will not be tolerated. It is not only a disciplinary issue, but a health hazard.
- e) If a child is abusive towards other children, staff or preschool property.

We will try everything in our power to help a child adjust, feel welcomed and loved. We will work hard every day to teach positive, safe, and loving behavior. We will provide many opportunities for each child, and we understand that some behaviors require time to change, and we will always do everything we can to work with the child and the family. Dismissal is a last resort.

7. GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SECURITY AND SAFETY: We are continuing to advance our security and safety measures. Our church has always been very supportive and wants our school to have the safest environment possible.

Some of our safety measures include mag lock door with shatter proof glass, cameras covering every entrance and exit, cameras in our classrooms (cameras record 24 hour a day), panic buttons, emergency and safety drills. Our goal as a preschool and church is to keep our families safe.

Children may be subject to interviews by licensing staff, child maltreatment investigators, or law enforcement officials for the purpose of determining licensing compliance or for investigative purposes. Child interviews do not require parental notice of consent. (Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements 200.201.4)

PARKING LOT/DRIVEWAY: Our parking lot (crosswalk) and driveway are blocked daily during school hours. This is to protect our children and teachers. We are sorry for any inconvenience, but the safety of our children is very important at First Baptist Preschool. Our driveway will be blocked even during rain.

POTTY ACCIDENTS: We understand that even potty-trained children will occasionally have toileting accidents. Accidents are unusual incidents and should not happen frequently. In these instances, the teachers help children to change their clothes, encouraging independence as much as possible. Please dress your child in clothing that can be undone and changed easily. Please send a complete change of clothes appropriate for the season in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it. Parents will be notified if a child has an accident. If accidents continue to happen, you may be called to come and change your child out and meet with the director. If the accidents continue after that, your child may be dismissed.

Your potty-trained child must be able to:

- Tell the teacher he/she needs to use the restroom.
- Can go to the bathroom (urinating or bowel movement) on his/her own. This includes being able to remove clothing, sit on the toilet, wiping self, putting clothing back on, flushing the toilet, and washing and drying his/her hands.
- Is aware of the need to use the toilet without reminders from the teachers (teachers do make requests of children at various times throughout the day).
- Will not be in diapers or pull-ups at all. He/she must be in regular underwear, even during naptime.

CLOTHING: Washable play clothes are most suitable. We will get dirty! Please do not send children in their best clothing or clothing that is too restrictive. Children must be able to maneuver in and out of their clothing on their own and with ease. For girls, we do ask that if they wear a dress or skirt, they should have a pair of shorts/pants/leggings under. As they play, sit on the floor, or lay down at rest time, we want to ensure we are creating a modest environment for everyone. For your child's safety, we encourage children to wear closed-toe shoes. Non-skid soles are also recommended for indoor/outdoor safety.

Coats and sweaters should have the child's name written inside in a visible place. In cold weather, please dress your child accordingly. Make sure they have warm outerwear for outside play. Please change out your child's extra clothing according to the season, so that it is appropriate for the weather. Some children may need a light sweater or jacket to be kept in the classroom.

TOYS: The preschool will provide a sufficient number and variety of toys for all children.

Children may not bring personal toys to school except for special days that the teachers specify. They may bring one "sleep buddy." We encourage cooperative, constructive play and discourage play with guns, swords, and other toys of a violent nature.

We are not responsible for items that may become lost or broken.

Please do not send sentimental items to school. When sending blankets/sleep buddies, only send items that can remain at school for the week.

PHOTOS: We take photos all year long. These photos are used on our slide show for the end of year program, our website, and our Facebook page. We do not post a child's name or personal information. During our end of year program parents take pictures of their children and post them to social media. If you choose to have your child participate, we are not responsible for your child's photo being placed on social media.

INCLEMENT WEATHER: If the preschool is forced to close due to inclement weather, the decision to close will be based on road conditions, other school closings, safety concerns, and safe availability. The final decision to close will be made by the preschool supervisor. If we have no electricity or water regardless of other schools being open, the preschool will be closed as mandated by DHS. Please check our Facebook and/or you will receive a notification regarding school closings through Procure, texts, and/or email.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS: Children are allowed to have a small celebration with **store bought treats** in their class during the snack time with advanced notice to your child's teacher and the preschool office. Items need to be brought the morning of the celebration. Please check with your teacher to schedule a celebration. Please let the preschool know if you would like to send party invitations through us. Due to HIPAA, we will not be able to provide personal names/information regarding another student.

We may not accept a child, and/or dismiss a child if:

- 1) We feel we cannot medically provide for or meet his/her medical needs.
- 2) We cannot adequately care for a child with individualized needs beyond the ability and training of our staff
- 3) There are realistic limitations in certain medical situations that may arise.
- 4) A child is not potty trained.
- 5) If a parent is verbally or physically abusive to any preschool staff and/or a student.
- 6) Failure by parent to submit required documentation
- 7) Failure to pay tuition and/or fees

Our goal at FBP is to ensure that your child receives the highest quality of care they deserve, through the teachings of God's love. We hope that your child gains life skills and the academic skills to be successful in kindergarten and in their future. We want the very best for your child and we are thankful that you are entrusting him/her to our care.