

FBCDS PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

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PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

1. The First Baptist Christian Day School of First Baptist Church of Springfield shall be a self-supporting, non-profit organization governed by, and shall exist as a part of, the church. Its purpose shall be to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Christian education into the homes of the community.

The church shall at all times have supervision and control of the school, the school board, the administration, and faculty.

2. The First Baptist Christian Day School was established to provide a Christian atmosphere and environment for the physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual development of children.

Recognizing that each area of development is dependent upon the other for growth, teacher planning aims to be responsive to the children in all facets of their growth and development.

The faculty of the First Baptist Christian Day School seeks to create an atmosphere of Christian love that will permeate the activities of the school and be a daily witness to the children about the love of God. Bible stories and a weekly chapel service support the spiritual guidance. The faculty strives to help each child discover God in the world around him/her, to encourage the child to turn to God for help in daily living, and to thank God for all things. Because young children understand actions and expressions more than words, the faculty includes praying in the classroom as a way to ask for healing, ask for help, seek guidance, and thank God for His many blessings. By our actions, we hope to show God's love for children.

What children think of themselves helps to determine how they work and play with peers. The staff members at the First Baptist Christian Day School want to help each child develop a positive self-image and become comfortable, relaxed, and confident in a school setting where Christian principles are shared. Children will see that an adult teacher is talking with each child or group of children, showing genuine concern for their welfare and individual needs. "Good programs carefully, consciously, confront children with the most significant experiences available. Then, consciously, sensitively, teachers help children learn the most possible from these experiences."¹

Recognizing the value of large- and small-muscle development to all areas of a child's development and recognizing the value of activity and supervised play time for the young child, the faculty strives for a balance in physical activities and more quiet time. Adults tend to think of learning as being restricted to a desk and book; young children know they learn numbers, colors, letters, and a multitude of other wonderful things about our world through observation, stories, games, songs, and play. Children learn in a variety of ways. That's wonderful! The Day School staff hopes to stimulate children's learning through the use of games, books, puzzles, music, on-site field trips (special events), and discussions of the world around them, so their appetite for exploring new areas of knowledge is whetted during these

¹ "Teaching the Child Under Six," James L. Hymes, Jr.

preschool years. Since children learn in so many different ways, and since a child has very little cushioning between his spine and the hard back of a chair, teachers plan for learning in centers, circle time, songs, and games.

Two-, three-, and four-year-old children are enrolled in the school. Classes for each age group are unique, designed for the child enrolled and his/her age group. Developmental characteristics and needs vary greatly with each child and age, so curriculum plans and types of equipment vary by class. The teacher-pupil ratio is low enough for teachers to provide for these individual differences.

“Children under six years old must use their minds, and they want to. They must learn, and they want to. The challenge to good education is to find the content and the methods of teaching that fit the young child.”² This is our aim at First Baptist Christian Day School for the two-year-old, the three-year-old, and the four-year-old.

The child who is two is beginning to express himself/ herself with words. The two-year-old is showing growth in large-muscle development and gaining coordination. These skills can be observed through mastery of a riding toy, descending stairs, or catching a ball. While the child may not be able to interact with peers as a three- or four-year-old might, the company of classmates, as well as teachers, is enjoyed. Books, pictures, and magazines become part of a child’s world as one masters holding them, turning the pages, and sharing with parents what perhaps has been shared with him/her. In the two-year-old program, we first want to provide a loving, secure place away from the child’s home, a place where the child feels safe and comfortable away from family. We want this school to be a place where teachers reflect a child’s worth, a place where teachers share about God’s love in ways and words appropriate for the young child’s learning. The teachers will strengthen skills and share information about God’s world, using a variety of books, pictures, records, puzzles, blocks, crafts, games, and many different activities.

Three-year-old children thoroughly enjoy pre-school. They delight in the company and conversation of friends; they are loving and responsive with their teachers. They are curious about all the world around them, wanting to know the why and how about all things. The coordination in the hands, eyes, legs, and body has greatly improved by this age. Teachers, aware of this, plan activities for the three-year-old and his/her capabilities.

The four-year-old is prepared in a number of ways for kindergarten while at First Baptist Christian Day School. Letters are learned for writing names. Recognition of colors and shapes is reinforced. Cutting and pasting skills are enhanced. Taking responsibility in the classroom is part of the daily routine. Working with puzzles, beads, pegs, and other manipulative toys, the four-year-old participates in activities both for large- and small-muscle development. A parent’s influence makes the greatest initial impact on a child. A child’s first learning experience begins at home. What children observe and live at home is reflected in the world around them.

“As a parent, you may want your three-year-old to learn to read, but I would rather have mine playing in his sand box. You may want your eight-year-old to have his nose buried in a math book before he turns out his light at night; I would rather mine be reading Stuart Little. You may want your ten-year-old to take [a] Saturday morning to be tutored in academic subjects; I would rather have mine scuffling with his neighborhood playmates.

² Ibid.

“For in the mysterious phenomenon of becoming, there is a time for things to take place. And if they do not take place when they should, then the organism seems doomed to reach out hungrily to satisfy that need for as long as it lives. Real maturity is blocked, and the person who was not allowed to be a child becomes a childish adult.

“Childhood is the time to live splendidly as a child, and if it is denied we shall, in the years to come, pay a very exacting price, for one must drink deeply of childhood if he is to become a man.”³

³ From an unpublished address by the author, Duane Manning, “What Is Worth Teaching?” (Elementary Education Conference, University of Wisconsin, River Falls, Wisconsin, March 1974.)

ENROLLMENT

1. The pupil-teacher ratio shall not exceed sixteen (16) students to one teacher and one assistant teacher. The ratio, however, varies from class to class:

- **Two-Year-Olds**

The two-year-old classes have a maximum of ten (10) students with a teacher and an assistant.

- **Three-Year-Olds**

The three-year-old classes shall not exceed fourteen (14) students with a teacher and an assistant.

- **Four-Year-Olds**

- The **two-day** classes will not exceed sixteen (16) students with a teacher and an assistant.

- The **three-day** classes will not exceed sixteen (16) students with a teacher and an assistant.

- The **four-day** class will not exceed eighteen (18) children with a teacher and an assistant.

2. The enrollment shall not exceed more than one hundred (100) children at one session. This is a requirement of the Fairfax County Fire Department.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. The First Baptist Christian Day School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

2. The program is not structured to provide for children with physical or mental limitations who demand a lower teacher-pupil ratio for their optimum development.

3. The Day School Board of Directors reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any child for any cause deemed sufficient by the Day School Board of Directors and/or the teaching staff.

4. Children must be two (2) years old by April 30 to be eligible for enrollment in the two-year-old program. Children attending this class do not need to be potty trained.

Children must be either three (3) or four (4) years old on or before September 30 to be eligible for enrollment in the three- and four-year-old programs. Children attending these classes **MUST BE DAY-TIME POTTY TRAINED.**

5. Each year, a registration form must be completed for each student. At the time of registering, proof of the child's identity and birth date will be required. This proof may include a birth certificate, birth registration card, or passport.

6.(a) New enrollees must have a current physical examination, including an up-to-date record of immunizations (documented on a Virginia School Entrance Health Form) completed by a licensed physician no more than ninety (90) days prior to enrollment. This form is in compliance with the Fairfax County Code (MuniCode) chapter 30, Article 2 (Section 30-2-4) (Immunity Code) as part of the minimum Private School and Child Care Facility Standards.

6.(b) ALL students must have a Virginia School Entrance Health Form—including a current record of immunizations, signed by a licensed physician—on file in the Day School office within thirty (30) days of enrollment.

7. A Fairfax County Health Inspector visits our school and examines all facilities. He also checks medical records of every child, ensuring every child was examined by a physician within a year and is current with inoculations. The First Baptist Christian Day School is licensed both by the Fairfax County Health Department and the Board of Zoning.

8. A child will not be admitted to school until all required forms have been completed.

FEES

1. A registration fee must accompany a child's registration form. It is a non-refundable payment (unless the child moves out of the area) that ensures the child a place in the school and includes payment of the child's school insurance.

2. The yearly tuition fee is paid in nine (9) installments, not determined by holidays, snow, or a child's attendance.

3. Each time a child re-enters after withdrawal, a registration fee will be required.

4. The registration fee and tuition fee will be re-evaluated each year based upon rising costs.

5. Tuition is due the first of each month. There will be a **\$15.00** late fee charged after the 15th of each month. Envelopes for payment of fees are attached to the newsletters and distributed the last school day of each month. Tuition payments should be placed in the envelope and deposited in the tuition box in the Day School office.

6. The school requests parents notify the school thirty (30) days before withdrawal. Families requesting withdrawal after March 15 will still be responsible for completing the year's tuition payments. Exceptions will be considered by the Day School Board.

7. Tuition payments will be paid one month in advance. Therefore, the first tuition payment will be due August 15, and if the payment is not received by that date, the opening will immediately become available to another student. Parents enrolling children by August will make monthly tuition payments August through April. Parents enrolling children after August will make arrangements for payments September through May.

8. When two children from one family are enrolled, tuition for the child attending the fewer number of days will be reduced by fifteen percent (15%).

9. The registration fee for those children entering after February 1 is reduced by one-half, or fifty percent (50%).

10. ECHO children will continue to attend tuition-free. Scholarships for ECHO may be established at the Board's discretion.

11. A canvas bag for each child will need to be purchased in the Day School office. Currently, the cost is \$2.00 each. (A canvas bag will better serve to carry a change of clothes, notes, artwork, Show-and-Tell items, library books, etc.)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. The completed Virginia School Entrance Health Form, including a current immunization record, must be on file in the Day School office within thirty (30) days of enrollment.

2. **A notarized form must be on file in the Day School office giving a licensed physician permission to treat your child in case of an emergency.**

3. An authorized "Child Release" form—naming those adults (over 18 years of age) to whom the child may be released from the classroom—must be signed and on file by the first day of school.

4. Should anyone pick up the child other than the parent, the teacher must be informed **in advance**. If you cannot provide advanced notice, you must call the Day School office and provide a name as well as a brief description of the person picking up your child. We will ask for identification at the classroom door if we do not know this person.

5. An adult (over 18 years of age) must accompany a child to and from the parking lot to his classroom.

6. Drivers must observe the parking/driving restrictions (orange cones will be in place to direct traffic flow). In addition, parallel parking along the side of the building is prohibited during Day School hours.

7. If your child develops a fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting while at school, you will be called to come for your child.

8. **Your child should not be brought to school when he/she is manifesting symptoms of a communicable disease like cold, flu, strep throat, chicken pox, etc., or has had a fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting within the past 24 hours.** This policy is to protect your child from becoming sicker or from spreading an illness to other children and/or staff members. We reserve the right to daily screen children for illness as they come to school. If we feel your child is ill, you will be asked to take him/her home.

9. If your child will miss class(es) due to a contagious illness, please notify the Day School office.

10. Please advise us of any allergies your child may have. Be sure to complete this portion of your enrollment form.

11. We are required by the Commonwealth of Virginia to report any suspected incidents of child abuse.

12. If a child causes injury to another child or adult in the school more than two (2) times, an evaluation of each situation by the Day School staff will take place. A possible suspension or expulsion could be recommended.

ATTENDANCE

1. **School hours are 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Children are to arrive at the school no earlier than 8:50 am, and are to be promptly picked up at 12:00 noon.**

The first day your **two-year-old** comes to school in September, you will deliver your child to the classroom, and then you will attend a “coffee hour” with the director and other parents. The following school days, your child will attend class (without parents, nannies, etc.), and the class time will increase by thirty (30) to forty (40) minutes each successive school day until they stay at school for the prescribed three (3) hours.

The first day your **three- or four-year-old** comes to school in September, you will deliver your child to the classroom, and then attend a “coffee hour” with the director and other parents. The second time your child comes to school, you will leave him/her at school for two (2) hours (without parents, nannies, etc.). The third time, and every school day thereafter, your child will attend school for the full three (3) hours (without parents, nannies, etc.).

2. The Day School observes the Fairfax County Schools’ schedule for holidays and observes **most** federal holidays. The Day School is closed in June, July, and August.

3. The Day School is closed for snow when Fairfax County Schools are closed. When Fairfax County Schools open two hours late, the Day School will **not** open.

4. Snow make-up policy:

- Classes that meet two (2) days a week must begin to make up snow days after two days of school have been missed.
- Classes that meet three (3) days a week must begin to make up snow days after three days of school have been missed.
- Classes that meet four (4) days a week must begin to make up snow days after four days of school have been missed.
- If the children miss any additional days due to inclement weather, the classes will make up one (1) day for every two days that are missed, which also follows Fairfax County regulations.

5. If your child will miss more than one (1) class in a row due to travel, visiting family or friends, or otherwise, please notify your child’s teacher.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The Day School does not provide transportation; however, the director and teachers will assist parents to organize neighborhood carpools, when possible.

2. Parents are encouraged to dress their children in comfortable play clothes. Parents should consider outdoor play when weather permits. Indoor activities include climbing, playing active games, painting and clay. Shoes with non-skid soles are safer than leather-soled shoes. Do not send your child to school dressed in an expensive outfit. We try very hard to cover up children's clothing when painting, but sometimes the cuffs get into paint. Also, PLEASE do not send your child to school with expensive jewelry or items that cannot be replaced. **The Day School is not responsible for lost or damaged belongings.**

3. Each day the children are served a healthful snack along with water. Parents of a child with food allergies need to inform the teacher of alternatives. Fresh fruit, half of a sandwich, etc., are welcomed treats from parents anytime, but especially for birthdays. Please check with the teacher to make sure that any special treat has not already been scheduled by another parent.

4. One evening before school begins, we will have a Parents' Night. The parents of the children attending First Baptist Christian Day School will come together to meet the teachers, to learn about the daily routine, and to see the classrooms. This is the only school event to which the children are **not** invited. You will be notified by letter of this meeting.

5. Lunch boxes may be sent to school for Lunch Bunch provided a "cold pack" is inside to prevent food from spoiling. Non-perishable lunches may be sent in a paper lunch bag clearly marked with your child's name.

6. Make sure your emergency home/work/mobile telephone numbers and your address are kept up-to-date at all times with the Day School office.

7. **All items of clothing (e.g., outerwear, boots, hats, gloves) and personal property (umbrellas, Show-and-Tell items, etc.) should be labeled with the child's name.** It will save time and reduce confusion when there are duplicate items in the classroom.

8. Please enter the school from the back parking lot. Please drive slowly and carefully at all times. The back door of the church building remains locked at all times EXCEPT when school begins and ends. Just ring the doorbell and tell the "voice" you are here for the Day School (the Church Office Administrator answers the bell), and the door will be unlocked.

9. The Day School is required to conduct at least nine (9) fire drills in compliance with the Fairfax County Fire Marshall's office.

10. **If you need to pick up your child early, please come to the Day School office first.**

11. The staff of First Baptist Christian Day School are members of the Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education (VAECE), the Southern Association for Children Under Six (SACUS), and the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Current reading is studied, shared, and used to continually improve the program. The staff members are also required to attend at least one workshop per school year to keep professionally current and receive CPR and first-aid instruction.

12. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires all children up to the age to eight (8) to be properly secured in approved child-restraint devices when riding in vehicles. We will, therefore, not take any

off-site field trips. We will have special events at the school for the children, including: the Visiting Pet Farm and Pony Ride, the Story Time Express Lady, and Kay Dee Puppets.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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