

First Presbyterian Church Of Belmont

Weekday School (Full Day and ½ Day Preschool)

Parent Handbook

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Let the children come to me, and don't try to stop them! God's kingdom belongs to people like these. Matthew 19:14

On our worst days, we don't have time for children. We are neck-deep in important business. Little hands and feet just get in the way. "Maybe I'll read you a book tomorrow night," we say, "if everything else gets done first."

Unfortunately, this is also all too often the case in the Church. We too are neck-deep in important business. Little hands and feet seem to get in the way. "Maybe we'll start a program for you next year," we say, "once everything else is done."

We, in First Presbyterian Church, Belmont, are proud to claim this Weekday School program as the fruit of one of our better days. It's a sign that we want to take time with children - not only ours, but those of our community. It's a reminder that we may learn as much from them as they do from us - about the things that truly matter.

Please trust that we take this task seriously. Our Weekday School Board and Administration work hard to provide your child with excellent teachers, clean and safe facility, and a stimulating and developmentally appropriate curriculum. Please know that we are concerned for the spiritual development of your child as well as her/his intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth. We want your child to know that she/he is loved by God as well as by family, other adults, and other children. Please know that we recognize the immense responsibility this places on our head, hands, and hearts. We will need your help and support in order to succeed.

Remember, we cannot make this program better for you and your family if we don't hear your suggestions. Talk to your child's teacher often. We see this work as a mission - for you and for us - and no mission should be taken on alone.

Again, we thank you for letting your child come to us. We'll try our best not to stop her/him (unless it's necessary)! Surely there is no more important business around.

Yours in Christ,

Sam Warner
Senior Minister, First Presbyterian Church

Weekly Calendar

First Presbyterian Church, Belmont

Sunday Morning

Morning Prayer in the Chapel – 9:00 a.m.

Children and Adult Sunday School classes – 9:30 a.m.

Youth Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall – 9:30 a.m.

Youth Sunday School – 9:45 a.m.

Worship Services – 10:50 a.m.

(Summer Schedule: Morning Prayer – 9:00 a.m.; Sunday School- 9:15 a.m.;
Worship Service – 10:00 a.m.)

For children under 15 months, care is provided during Sunday School and Worship

For toddlers through the 5th grade, Sunday School classes provide an opportunity
for Bible study and spiritual growth

Sixth and Seventh Graders take a journey through the Old and New Testament

Eighth Grade students participate in our Confirmation Class

Senior High students delve into real life and current events through a Christian perspective
which strengthens their walk of faith.

During worship, the two's may remain in a nursery while the 3's and 4's participate in the
service until the Children's Sermon after which they attend P.A.W.S. (Preschoolers At Worship
Service) in the Education Building.

Sunday Evening Youth Programs

Middle School Youth (grades 6-8) 5:00 -6:00 p.m.

Youth Choir 6:00-6:30 p.m.

Youth Supper -6:30 p.m.

Senior High Youth (grades 9-12) 6:45 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesdays at First Presbyterian

Worship On Wednesdays (WOW)

Children, ages 3 through 5th grade, meet on Wednesday afternoons during the school year from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for WOW. During this time children rotate through Mad About Missions, Goofy Games, Savvy Scripture Scramble and Awesome Arts and Crafts. Children's Choirs also meet during our Wednesday afternoon activities. There is a Handchimes choir that meets following WOW for 3rd-5th graders from 6:00-6:45. We invite all children from our church and our community to participate in WOW each Wednesday during the school year.

The third Wednesday of each month during the school year we have a Fellowship Supper in the Fellowship Hall. Registration for this meal is always the Monday before the meal by noon. You may register online at our website www.fpc-belmont.org or by filling out a meal registration card found in the pew rack in the sanctuary, or by calling the church office at 704-825-3357.

Adult Choir rehearsal is every Wednesday evening at 7:15 p.m. in the Choir Room

Wednesday Mornings

Chapel time for the Weekday School Students is at 9:15 a.m. in the sanctuary. Reverend Sam Warner, Suzanne Fairbairn and Robin Russell lead the children in songs and Bible time.

First Presbyterian Church offers Scouting opportunities for both girls and boys.

First Presbyterian Church is a participant in the Stephen Ministries program.

If you are not already worshipping with another congregation, we invite you to join us for Sunday morning worship and/or any of our other ongoing programs.

Dear Parents,

We welcome you to First Presbyterian Weekday School and are pleased that you have chosen us to share in the nurturing of your most treasured possession, your child(ren).

Our program exists to help children grow physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. We believe these goals are best accomplished in a Godly environment that is safe, fun and accepting of every child. Therefore, we will strive to:

- Provide challenging activities and learning situations that enable children to develop a healthy self-esteem.
- Provide a flexible program, which allows children to grow according to their own developmental level, without force or pressure.
- Encourage children to think for themselves and to solve problems in such a way as to maintain their integrity yet recognize and respect the rights of others.
- Encourage our staff to develop and improve their teaching skills in order to improve the quality of our program.
- Partner with parents (the child's primary and most important caregiver) in the development of their children.

We welcome your visits, your participation, and your concerns. If you should have any questions or compliments, be sure to share them with us. We want the First Presbyterian Weekday School to be the very best place for your child!

Sincerely,

The Administration and Staff of FPWDS

First Presbyterian Church Weekday School Mission Statement

The First Presbyterian Church Weekday School is a mission of the First Presbyterian Church of Belmont, North Carolina. Our central purpose is to provide the children of our church and our community with a strong Christian education in a loving and nurturing environment. Our goal is to help our students develop spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Our program is open to all children regardless of racial, economic, and religious background.

About Our Program

The First Presbyterian Day School opened its doors on August 12, 1985. The Preschool program was added in 1995.

The Weekday School is under the authority of the Session of the Church and is a responsibility of the Session. The Board sets specific policy for the Weekday School. The Board is composed of Church officers, Church members, and parents. The Senior Minister or Associate Minister, Director of Christian Education, and the Weekday School Director and Assistant Director serve as ex-officio members.

Our Day School offers full-day classes and is a licensed 4-Star facility by the Office of Child Day-Care Licensing for the state of North Carolina.

The First Presbyterian Weekday School curriculum is thematic, child-centered, and developmentally appropriate. It has been designed to build self-esteem, stimulate curiosity, encourage creativity, and instill a love of learning in each child.

Weekday School students, ages 3 & 4, attend a chapel time weekly. In addition, Cyber kids (computer program) and dance classes are offered for an additional monthly charge.

WEEKDAY SCHOOL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our early childhood program will give each child the opportunity to:

Learn that "Jesus loves me" through music, Bible verses, and Bible stories; to see God's love in a nurturing, loving environment; thus, enabling them to develop creatively, responsibly, and spiritually.

Live happily with other children in a large group. To work and play with others in a program of learning activities that provides daily practice in sharing possessions, taking

turns, and assuming responsibility. To stick to a job, to put away toys and equipment, and to participate in-group activities as a leader and a follower. To give up some of their individual wishes or plans for the good of the group.

Develop a sense of security and a good feeling about themselves.

Express him/herself creatively through the use of materials such as paper, paste, scissors, paints, clay, crayons, finger-paints, blocks, toys, etc. The use of these materials constructively will result in increasing initiative, creative power, and independence.

Establish and practice desirable health habits, such as toilet routine, hand washing, and desirable attitudes toward nutritious foods.

Care for their own possessions; coats and hats should be placed in the proper space, tools placed on the designated shelf, and housekeeping responsibilities carried out to make school an organized and pleasant place to be. All such activities further physical, social, and emotional growth.

Develop motor skills and coordination through play with appropriate apparatus such as blocks, jungle gym, swings, slide, etc.

Respect authority and develop self-control.

Express him/herself freely and in a courteous manner. To learn and use new words and enjoy conversation and discussion.

Develop an appreciation for books.

Participate in rhythms, games, and dramatizations. Enjoy taking part in creative play by making up songs and dances.

Actively participate in age-appropriate experiences that will help each child “grow into reading” and develop readiness for further learning experiences.

What Is A Developmentally Appropriate Program?

Martha Ross, Ph.D.

Picture a classroom for preschool children.

What are the children doing?

What is the teacher doing?

If you picture children sitting quietly all day...

If you picture the teacher doing all the talking....

If you picture the children doing worksheets or coloring books...

If you picture children reciting the ABC's...

If you picture all the children doing the same thing at the same time....

*You have an image of a classroom that is **NOT** developmentally appropriate for
Preschool aged children!*

All programs for young children should be developmentally appropriate. This means that the way teachers talk with children, the materials and toys that are available, the way the room is arranged, and the amount of time children spend in various activities are determined by the way preschool children are. Preschool children do not learn like infants, older children or adults. Preschoolers learn in special ways. They act in special ways. They need to be taught in special ways.

A developmentally appropriate program for preschool children is one that provides each child with the "good life". A good life when you are two, three or four is being in a place that is safe and healthy and being involved in activities that provide "job satisfaction". The preschool child's job is to grow physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially, and the way he or she does this best is by being in a program where the emphasis is on what they can do rather than on what they know.

A developmentally appropriate program will provide many real experiences. There will be animals and plants to care for, sand and water play, blocks to build with, tools to use, jobs to do, children and adults to talk and play with, puzzles, pegs, scissors, clay, climbers, swings, tricycles, musical instruments, trips within the community, recipes to make and food to taste. Preschool children learn by doing, by touching, tasting, hearing, smelling, and seeing things that are interesting to them - not by hearing a teacher tell them about these things.

They need many experiences with people and things in their world and they need time to think about these experiences.

A developmentally appropriate program will have books, songs, poems, pictures stories, graphs, charts and labels about the experiences children have had at home, opportunities to see how these skills are useful and how they relate to the real experiences of everyday life.

A developmentally appropriate program for preschool children is one in which they are allowed and encouraged to play. As children dress up, play mother, father, firefighter or doctor, build with blocks, use miniature figures, play with clay or play dough, paint, reenacting, or anticipating their real experiences. By playing out these experiences, they are organizing and beginning to understand their world.

In a developmentally appropriate program the teacher's job is to prepare the classroom by making many materials and experiences available to each child. The "good" teacher stands back and observes the way the children use the materials, moves around the room to ask a question of a child or small group; provides words or additional materials without interfering with the children's thinking. She will not lecture or drill them on meaningless facts. The teacher will help children support and talk to each other about what they are doing and feeling and will model skills for getting along with others. The teacher will avoid doing things for children which they can do for themselves.

In a developmentally appropriate program there are large blocks of time for children to choose their own activity among many kinds of materials. Children are not expected to do projects in a particular way. The day is not divided into small time blocks for math or reading or language. All these subjects occur all the time. Children are not expected to sit still and be quiet. There may be a short story or circle time but for the most part children will be busily playing individually or in small groups.

We know too much about the unique way that children think and learn and feel to provide them with a program that is designed for older children's or adult's way of thinking. Readjust your image; repaint the picture of a preschool classroom. Children need your help to ensure that they have the "good life".

The Parent's Role

Parents can be of great assistance to the child and teacher by:

Having your child arrive and depart on time.

Helping your child look forward to school as a place where he will find new and happy experiences.

Providing a rich background of experiences by:

Attending class field trips and special events

Planning family outings and events that are enriching

Reading and telling stories

Choosing constructive toys and encouraging sharing

Including your child in family planning and conversation.

Encouraging independence by permitting your child to:

Make decisions at his own level

Accept responsibility at home

Do simple chores, such as putting away toys, hanging up clothes, etc.

Sending your child to school in a happy frame of mind.

Encouraging good, clear speech by:

Speaking clearly when talking with your child

Listening courteously to what she has to say

Allowing him to express his own ideas

Avoiding mention of any speech difficulty

Showing her in a pleasing way how to make sounds correctly.

***Take a look at a list of "What Can You Do to Help?" located at the end of this handbook.*

Weekday School Policies and Information

*Note: FPWDS = First Presbyterian Weekday School
FPDS = First Presbyterian Day School
FPPS = First Presbyterian Preschool*

Arrival and Departure

FPDS:

During the next year to 18 months, the First Presbyterian Church will be undergoing construction and renovation which will affect the arrival of departure of children to the WDS. Specific information regarding parking and arrival/departure will be shared with families as these changes take place.

State law requires that you accompany your child to his classroom and check in with the teacher each morning. Parents must sign their child in and out each day on the classroom log. Please provide all pertinent information.

At the end of the day, you (or a designated adult) should come to the classroom to pick up your child.

FPPS:

Children may be dropped off no earlier than 8:20 a.m. All children must be walked to their classroom and signed in. Please be prompt in dropping off your child each day. The teachers must be in their classrooms and ready to start the day at 8:30 a.m. If your child arrives late for preschool, please walk him/her to the classroom and notify the teacher of his arrival. For safety's sake, please do not permit your child to enter the building unattended.

Departure

No child will be permitted to leave with any person other than those designated by the parent (s). If you are unable to pick up your child and want another party to do this, written consent must be given to the teacher in advance. In such cases, the designated person must provide photo identification before the child will be released to him/her.

Parents are requested to check their child's cubby, daily at pick-up. You may find your child's daily progress notes and artwork, important information regarding the Dayschool, and/or papers that require your signature. Thank you for taking the time to attend to this avenue of Parent-School communication.

Attendance and Hours of Operation

FPDS:

First Presbyterian Day School is open Monday through Friday beginning at 6:30 a.m. In order to establish a routine for families and teachers, please try to have your child(ren) present by 9:00a.m. Please do not bring your child (ren) prior to the 6:30 AM arrival time.

In the event that your child will be absent, we ask that parents notify the Center office on or before the morning of the absence by calling, 704.825.8225. Please call by 9 AM; this helps us plan for staffing and meals.

FPDS closes at 6:00 p.m. We ask that all children be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. so that doors can be locked and our staff can go home to their families. Beginning at 6:01 p.m., a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged until the child is picked up.

Upon late arrival, the parent will sign a Notice of Tardy form indicating the time of arrival. The late pick up fee will be assessed to the tuition account.

Habitually late pickups will warrant a written notice from the Director which may include notice of termination of the enrollment of your child.

FPPS:

The Preschool will be in session Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Regular attendance at school is most important. Children attending the Mother's Morning Out program will attend on Mondays and Wednesdays. Children attending the Two-year-old program will attend on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Please make every effort to have your child at school every day that they are well enough to attend.

Behavioral Guidance & Discipline

Behavioral guidance and discipline is an important part of the development of the child. Teachers at FPWDS help children as they learn self-control, problem solving, and communication skills. Children learn that everything is safe at school - our feelings, our bodies, our toys, etc. Our goal is to **redirect** behavior before problems arise.

Our behavioral guidance technique is developmental in nature. By giving each child choices, using positive directions and being consistent, we hope to deter most unacceptable behavior before it begins. Encouragement and praise for acceptable behavior is more effective than punishment for unacceptable behavior.

When a situation arises for discipline "time-out" may be used as a last resort as the child and teacher talk about how to "fix" the problem. Each day is a new day and a fresh start

for the children as they become more successful in applying the social skills related to taking turns, negotiating, cooperating, dealing with frustration or disappointment, and internalizing self-control. Physical punishment will never be used. We will work closely with parents as we help children develop these very important skills.

Aggression in children is a normal part of a child's development. Examples of aggression are: biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling, verbal abuse, etc. When an altercation between two children occurs, a teacher will help both children talk and/or relate to each other, and to figure out a non-aggressive solution that works for both children.

Any time that a child is injured by another child, an incident form is filled out for both the parents of the aggressor and the parents of the child who was injured. This is to keep parents fully aware of their child's behavior and to notify parents each time their child has been hurt; just as we would for an accident. For the confidentiality of both families, the names of the aggressor and the child who was injured are NOT disclosed.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very important to young children, and we do our best to make your child's birthday special with a simple celebration. Your child will receive a special birthday crown or some other form of recognition and we welcome parents to visit on that day. If you wish, you may provide a small treat (cupcake, doughnut, cookie, Popsicle, etc.) for each child in the class. All treats must be store-bought. Please be sure that treats contain NO PEANUT OR OTHER NUT PRODUCTS.

Please do not ask teachers to pass out birthday party invitations at school unless all the children in the class are invited.

Child Abuse or Neglect

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child is abandoned. North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county Department of Social Services. In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4527 or 1-800-859-0829 and make a report of suspect child abuse or neglect in a child daycare operation. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith.

Children with Disabilities

FPWDS does not discriminate against any children who is diagnosed with a disability, or for whom learning or activities are more challenging.

There are many sources of the problems that can make learning challenging for children. Federal and state laws now require these children and their families be given the services they need from birth- in the belief that with proper care and education every child can reach his or her full potential. Some examples of “educationally significant” disabilities include delayed or atypical development or behavior; hearing, health, speech-language and /or visual impairment, among others.

Early intervention is important in providing the best education for a child with special needs. We are committed to helping parents of a child with a disability secure that assistance. At times, experience and classroom observation may lead a staff member to recommend an evaluation from an outside professional.

It is our expectation that we will work together to provide the best possible system of support for one another as we plan for our children.

If you have a child with a disability or suspect a special need or requirement, please make an appointment with the director to plan a system of support for these needs.

Cleaning and Maintenance

We strive to keep our facility as clean as possible. Teachers are assigned daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning duties. In addition, we have a janitorial crew that cleans on a daily basis.

Clothing

Please send children to school in play clothes so that they can participate in all activities. We enjoy sand, water, paint, play dough, and other materials that do not call for fancy clothes. Please dress your child in comfortable clothes that do not call for “being careful.”

As seasons change, please send an appropriate coat because we go outside everyday except in extremely cold or stormy weather. Outdoor play is an important part of our daily curriculum and required by the State. If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, they are not well enough to attend the Center.

Please mark all clothing with your child’s name.

Rubber-soled or non-slippery shoes are necessary for participation in the activities of a

school day and playing safely on playground equipment. **No open-toed shoes (backless sandals, flip flops, jellies, etc.) are allowed.**

An “accident”/change of clothes (pants/shorts, shirt, underwear, and socks) should be sent to school the first day of school. Please place this change of clothes in a Ziploc bag with your child’s name on it.

If spare clothes go home, please return them the next day your child attends school.

Communication

Parent-Teacher Communication

We place a high value on direct and open home-school communication. Each quarter you will receive a classroom calendar of events and a Center Newsletter. We also use a system of email notifications to families. Please ensure that we have a current email address on file for you. Additional information regarding other avenues of communication is listed below:

Please keep teachers well informed of changes, concerns, special events, etc., taking place in your home. This helps us tremendously as we try to provide the best possible care for your child.

Please send a note when your child is going to the hospital, is having special medical treatment, has any allergies or fears, or is going to be out of town/absent for several days.

In case of emergency, please contact the Director or Assistant Director (704-825-8225).

FPDS: Please provide teachers with a list of your carpool children and drivers. Please send all messages to your child’s teacher in writing, rather than asking the child to “tell the teacher.”

Please send money for field trips in a sealed envelope with your child’s name on it. Please send the exact amount – cash only.

Parent Visits and Conferences

We have an open-door policy at FPDS. Parents are invited to visit their child’s class at any time; no appointment is necessary.

Teachers will conduct an evaluation for each child using a developmental checklist during the year prior to your child entering Kindergarten. You will be asked to attend a conference and the results will be shared with you.

Conferences will be conducted at the discretion of the Director, teacher, and/or at the parent's request. Any minor problems that arise should be discussed with your child's teacher(s) before being brought to the attention of the Director.

Parent Meetings

The goal of parent education is to provide for and involve parents in continuing education for themselves and their children. We will plan both structured and unstructured events throughout the year. Some of these will include informal parent group meetings, early childhood topical workshops, a time to celebrate the Week of the Young Child, and other special events. We encourage parents to participate in as many of these activities as possible.

Dismissal Policy

Our first priority is to provide quality care with Christian compassion for all children enrolled in our program. Realizing that we may not be able to meet the needs of every child, when deemed necessary by the staff and/or consultants, we may ask that your child be removed from the program.

Prior to any notice of dismissal, there will be a review of the situation with written documentation. A probationary period will be determined by the Director and classroom teachers to correct the situation. FPWDS maintains the right to terminate the enrollment of any child with a two week written notice.

The parent/guardian will be notified by the Director if and when situations occur that could eventually lead to a child's dismissal if not remedied. This communication will be documented, in writing.

The Director of FPWDS may discontinue a child's enrollment in our program for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure on the part of the parent to keep current physical and immunization records for their child (ren).
2. Repeated failure by the parent to pay regular tuition or late fees on time.
3. Habitual abuse by the parent of any of the program policies stated within this handbook.
4. Falsifying any documentation required for their child's enrollment within the program.
5. Habitual late pick up.
6. Failure to adapt - if a child fails to adapt/respond to our program, after every possible effort has been made by the Staff and parents to

integrate him/her into the program; the child's parents may be asked to find alternate care. This process will be documented and handled with the utmost of confidentiality.

7. Any degree of abuse from a parent or family member that results in a threat or harassment toward any employee of FPWDS.
8. Other reasons as deemed necessary by the Director.

Emergency Contact Information

Parents must complete the Emergency Information portion of the Child Enrollment form. This information is required by the State and will be vital in the event of an emergency involving your child.

It is your responsibility to notify the Administration immediately when changes are to be made, throughout the time that your child is enrolled at our Center.

Emergency information includes (but is not limited to): each parent's address and phone numbers for home and work, your child's known allergies and any pertinent medical information, and the names and phone numbers of your designated Emergency contact persons.

Failure to keep your child's emergency information current could result in your child's dismissal from our program.

Enrollment and Classroom Assignment

First Presbyterian Day School offers full-day classes for children six weeks old until kindergarten.

To ensure your child's successful transition into our program, we recommend the following:

- Parent (s) tour the Day School and observe our program;
- Parent (s) review entrance requirements;
- Parent (s) and child visit classroom and meet teacher (s);

Every effort is made to ensure appropriate placement for each child. We reserve the right to assign classrooms based upon a combination of the following considerations while adhering to State guidelines and regulations:

- Child's chronological age,
- Child's developmental needs, and
- Ongoing Teacher/Administrator assessment and observations.

FPPS:

First Presbyterian Preschool offers half-day classes for two, three, four, and five-year old children, and a Mother's Morning Out for 9 months – young two's. To be eligible for these classes your child must turn the appropriate age on or before September 1.

Registration for the next school year is held in the spring. Priority is given to children in the following order:

1. Children and their siblings currently enrolled in First Presbyterian Weekday School
2. Children of church members not currently enrolled
3. Other children within the community, not currently enrolled

A non-refundable fee is due upon registration. The registration fee covers in part the cost of insurance, supplies, refreshments, and other general expenditures.

Field Trips/Transportation

Field trips are a part of our program that both the children and teachers especially look forward to and enjoy. Children may be transported either in the FPWDS bus or by private car. Children being transported on field trips will always wear a seat belt or will be in a car seat/booster seat.

North Carolina's Child Safety Seat Law states:

- Children 8 and under and weighing less than 80 pounds must sit in the back seat if the vehicle has an active passenger side air bag and a back seat that can accommodate the child-safety seat.
- Children 8 and under and weighing less than 80 pounds must be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system at all times.

In other words, in order to travel without a child-restraint system, a child must be 8 years old and weigh more than 80 pounds.

A child will not be allowed to participate in a field trip if her child safety seat is not provided.

The staff member who transports the children will be 25 years of age and have a valid North Carolina driver's license.

If children become rowdy or too loud during the operation of the bus, the driver will pull off the road at the first safe place and regain control of the children before continuing to the destination.

There will be a cell phone available for each field trip in case of an emergency.

Field trips will be announced in advance. Parents are encouraged to participate as chaperones. If you do not wish for your child to participate on a field trip, please make

other arrangements for your child that day.

Fire Drills

Center-wide fire drills are held monthly. The date of the drill and time taken to evacuate the building is documented. The classroom sign in/sign out sheet and your child's emergency information is carried out of the classroom by the teacher. Attendance is taken once the children are outside and again when they return to the classroom.

Health Information

A current health certificate and immunization record is required and should be filed in the Weekday School office by the first day of your child's attendance.

The State mandates that children with any of the following must be excluded from care:

- Fahrenheit temperature over 100 degrees underarm, 101 degrees orally, or 102 degrees rectally
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started
- 2 or more episodes of vomiting within a 12 hour period
- A red eye with white or yellow eye discharge until 24 hours after treatment
- Scabies or lice
- Chicken pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional states that the child is not infectious
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
- Pertussis (whooping cough), until five days after appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice
- Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern and with increased stool water.
- When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child is separated from other children.

Please do not bring your child back to school until they have been fever and/or diarrhea-free for twenty-four hours.

Slight injuries at school will receive first aid from a qualified staff member. In the event of serious injury, parents will be notified immediately and necessary steps taken to obtain medical aid. If hospital care is required, transportation will be via ambulance.

The school will always make every effort to contact the child's parents in case of illness or accident or to secure any necessary medical care or treatment that may be warranted by the circumstances. In cases of emergency, the school will attempt to reach in the following order: parent (s), emergency contacts listed on the application

form, physician, and hospital. It is important that parents keep their work, home, and emergency numbers up-to-date.

All injuries will be documented fully by the teacher on an Incident/Accident Report, which will be signed by the parent.

Your child may be given prescription medicine while at FPDS provided the medicine is in its **original** container and labeled with your child's name and prescribed dosage. Your child may also be given non-prescription external medications for a specific reason (diaper rash cream, sunscreen, and anti-itch cream.) Other non-prescription internal medications (cold medications and pain relievers) can be given to your child as prescribed by a doctor or according to dosage prescribed by medication's manufacturer. **We do not give fever reducer to children in order for them to remain at school.**

In the event your child does need medicine while at FPDS, **a Medicine Form must be completed.** The staff member who administers the medication will sign and date the form to show the medication was administered in accordance with the parent and/or physician's instructions.

Detailed copies of our medicine policy and health procedures are provided in the application packet.

Communicable Disease Policy

The FPWDS director is to be informed at once if a child contracts or has been exposed to a communicable disease. Since the risk of contracting an infectious disease in any school community exists, FPWDS recognizes the need to guard against the health and safety threat to the school community. When a child is diagnosed with any communicable disease including but not limited to measles, mumps, chicken pox, hepatitis, tuberculosis; is infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV); has Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS); or has been exposed to these or other health threats, information about a child's condition must be provided to the Director (only).

Holidays

FPDS opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 6:00 p.m., five days a week (Monday - Friday), fifty two weeks per year, with the following exceptions:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day

- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Holiday's are subject to change each year, parents will be notified each November for the upcoming year of holiday closings.

FPPS follows the Gaston County Schools' calendar, including holidays and teacher workdays.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the Weekday School will follow the Gaston County Schools schedule.

When GCS start on a two-hour delay, the WDS will open at 8:30 a.m.

When GCS start on a one-hour delay, the WDS will open at 7:30 a.m.

*When Gaston County Schools dismiss early due to inclement weather, the Weekday school will close **no later than 4:00 p.m.***

FPPS:

When GCS start on a two-hour delay, the PS will be closed.

When GCS start on a one-hour delay, the PS will open at 9:30 a.m.

Infant/Toddler Information

Due to the nature of the needs of our youngest participants, parents with children in the infant and toddler rooms have a few additional pieces of information and procedures to follow:

Diapers/Wipes

Parents are responsible for providing diapers and wipes for their child(ren). If you require diaper crème to be applied to your child at diapering, you will need to supply that as well as fill out a medication permission slip.

Extra Clothes

Parents of infants and toddlers need to supply two extra changes of clothing. Please label these with your child's name or initials.

Food/Meals

NC State Childcare rules & regulations require that each parent fills out

completely a feeding schedule for his or her child, up through 15 months of age. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the feeding schedule up to date, making changes/updates, regularly.

All infant food or formula being brought into the center must be labeled. Mothers who are nursing will need to make sure that we have an adequate supply of breast milk. All containers (bottles, bottle caps, sippy cups, sippy cup tops) must be labeled with your child's first and last name and current date.

Sleep/SIDS prevention

A copy of FPWDS' Safe Sleep Policy shall be given and explained to the parents of an infant aged 15 months or younger on or before the first day the Infant attends the Center. Each parent shall sign a statement acknowledging the receipt and explanation of the policy.

Insurance

Your child is covered by accident insurance while at FPWDS. However this is **SECONDARY COVERAGE**, and you must submit your own insurance first before filing a claim under our school's insurance policy. He or she is also covered while on field trips away from the campus.

Meals/Snacks

It is important that good eating habits and positive attitudes toward food are established at an early age. For young children, eating a nutritionally balanced diet is essential if he is to grow and develop normally. Eating is a social activity we all enjoy. Good eating habits are acquired through imitation, practice, encouragement and guidance.

Daily nutrient intake judged by the National Research Council to be adequate for maintaining good nutrition has been formulated and is called the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA). The RDA is based on the age, sex, weight, and height of an individual.

FPDS offers breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack daily. Please do not bring in food from outside sources for your child. This creates a difficult situation for the teacher and disrupts the nutritional balance for the day as a whole.

If your child has a food allergy, please notify in writing the Director, the Food Service Manager, and your child's teacher.

Copies of the Breakfast, Lunch and Snack menu for each Month are posted at the Center entrance and available for pickup at the Parent Information table.

Naptime

Naptime for toddlers through Preschool is approximately 1 and ½ to 2 hours, after lunch time, each day. The Center provides children with their own cot and cot sheet. The sheets are washed weekly and when/if soiled.

Children are encouraged to bring a special blanket and one stuffed animal or “lovely” from home. Our teachers help the children settle down while soothing music plays, assisting each one as they transition to sleep. NC State Childcare Rules & Regulations stipulates that teacher/child ratio must be maintained during naptime in the young/old tots’ rooms. For groups of children ages two years or older, the staff/child ratio during nap time is considered in compliance if a least one caregiver is in the room with the children.

If your child is a non-napper, quiet activities will be provided for them.

Parent Committee

The FPDS Parent Committee is made up of parents, teachers, the Director, and Assistant Director. Its purpose is to support and enhance the program of the FPDS. You are encouraged to become a part of this committee and to attend the monthly meetings.

Parent Comments/Grievance Policy

Open communication is critical to the parent-teacher relationship at FPWDS.

1. Any and all concerns that you may have regarding your child should first be discussed with your child’s teacher(s).
2. If after talking with the teacher(s), you still have concerns; you may present those concerns to the Director or Assistant Director. Face to face conversation is preferred, but a signed letter or phone call will be accepted and addressed. The Director and/or Assistant Director may convene a meeting of all persons involved, if they deem necessary.
3. If after speaking to your child’s teachers, and then to the Director or Assistant Director, you feel that your issue is not resolved, you may present your signed concerns in writing to the Chair of the FPWDS Board of Directors. You may also include a written request to address the Board or you may ask the Board Chair to speak on your behalf. Your written concerns will be carefully and confidentially reviewed at the next regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting. You will receive a telephone call from the Board

chair and/or designee if your presence is required at that meeting.

After the Board reviews your issue in Executive Session, the Board Chair will respond to you in writing within 7 business days regarding the FPWDS Board's final position/decision.

4. Each and every parent's concern brought to the attention of the teachers, administration and Board of Directors at FPWDS will be taken seriously and kept in the strictest of confidence. All information pertaining to each and every child at FPWDS and their parents/guardians, including all reports, records, conversations, and data is considered confidential. Any and all information pertaining to children enrolled in our program will not be released in any format without the expressed written permission of the child's parent or guardian; unless required by statute, court order, or licensing mandate.

Any and all information about the health or abilities of any FPWDS child or their family will be considered as confidential. Such information will only be shared with the classroom staff in direct service to that child, as is necessary to meet the educational and social/emotional needs of the child.

5. The FPWDS Parent Committee promotes open communication between parents, teachers, the Director and Assistant Director and the First Presbyterian Church of Belmont. The Parent Committee is charged with the responsibility of organizing activities and fundraising opportunities to benefit staff appreciation, parent/staff fellowship, and to help meet the needs of the Weekday School program.

The FPWDS Parent Committee is not the forum to discuss classroom concerns regarding a specific child, group of children, or parents of those children. You may request a private conversation/conference with your child's teacher(s) and/or the Director or Assistant Director at any time.

Payment of Fees

Registration

A registration fee of \$ 65.00 (\$55.00 for members of First Presbyterian Church) is due upon initial enrollment of your child in the Day School. Additionally, an annual instructional fee of \$65.00 (\$55.00 for church members) is due the first week in September for each child continuing in our program. This registration/instructional fee cover the cost of insurance, supplies, and materials. It is non-refundable.

If your child enrolled in the Day School after May 1st, the (Annual) September instructional fee will be adjusted as follows:

Enrolled after May 1st: September instructional fee is \$35.00.

Enrolled after June 1st: September instructional fee is \$20.00.
Enrolled after June 30th: No September instructional fee is due.

(This schedule assumes payment of initial registration fee is made upon enrollment. The following September, upon completion of one year's enrollment, payment of the full amount is required.)

FPPS:

Tuition is due on the first day of the month to which it applies. Notices are not sent unless the payment is overdue. **After the 5th of the month, a \$25 late fee will be charged.** If your child enters school as a new student after the first of the month, tuition will be based on a pro-rated weekly basis for the remainder of that month. **Each month's tuition must be paid even though your child may be absent for all or part of the month.** There is a **\$25** charge for returned checks. Failure to submit payments/fees in a timely fashion may result in a written notice of dismissal of your child from our program. When the verbal and/or written requests for payment are ignored, the outstanding balance will be reported to the Gaston Credit Bureau.

Transfer of Services Fee

FPWDS strives to provide the very best staff to care for your children. We hope that you, as parents, will build a relationship with your child(ren)'s teachers so that together we can make your child(ren)'s time with us stimulating, thought-provoking, and engaging. However, in building a relationship with the staff at FPWDS, please recognize that the staff has a duty to care for each and every child in our program. Therefore, please refrain from hiring FPWDS staff to care for your child(ren) during those times that they would normally be committed to working at the Center.

In the event that you, as parents, hire a FPWDS staff member to care for your child(ren) outside of the Center during those times that they would normally be committed to working at the Center, then you, as parents, will be charged a Transfer of Services Fee. In the event that your child(ren) continue to be enrolled in the FPWDS program, this Transfer of Services Fee will be two times the pro-rated weekly (FPDS) or monthly (FPPS) tuition amount paid per child. In the event that you, as parents, withdraw your child(ren) from our program or your child(ren) is/are dismissed from our program pursuant to the policies set forth by the FPWDS Board AND you, as parents, hire a FPWDS staff member to care for your child(ren) outside of the Center during those times that they would normally be committed to working at the Center within sixty (60) days of your child(ren) being withdrawn or dismissed from the program, then you, as parents, will also be charged a Transfer of Services Fee in the amount of \$750. This fee will be due and payable at the time of the withdrawal/dismissal and/or the staff member's resignation and collection thereof will be pursued.

Potty Training

Three and four-year-old preschool children will be potty trained before entering or moving up to those classrooms.

Potty training is a team effort, involving both the caregivers and the parents. Training begins in the Older twos classroom. The child must be able to pull his/her pants up and down and able to verbalize toileting words. There is absolutely no force associated with toilet training. Effective training often takes weeks or months to accomplish. We ask that you send two complete changes of clothing and an ample supply of training pants.

Children in the learning process may still wear diapers or pull-ups during rest time. However, it has been our experience that prolonged use of diapers or pull-ups slows the process of learning.

The goal of training is for children to independently use the toilet when needed, not merely when directed to the bathroom. Toileting accidents are a normal and expected part of the process. The biological ability to control the urge to urinate and defecate is dependent both on physical development and on experiences. Our staff will remind children periodically to try to go potty, but also help your child change if they forget or have not yet understood their own internal cues.

The most anxious participants in the process are usually the adults. Becoming potty trained is one of the many important milestones in a child becoming autonomous and self-regulating.

When your child is potty training, please be prepared with extra patience and extra dry clothing. Our staff will be there to help you and your child in this sometimes frustrating and challenging but ultimately liberating process. Being free of diapers is a welcome accomplishment to children, to parents, and to our staff.

Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag, sealed and labeled with your child's name. We ask that you take this home as you pick up your child at the end of each day.

Required Child Care Documents

In accordance to the state's requirements, each childcare facility must keep accurate records on file. The following documents are REQUIRED for all students:

1. *Child Application* - to be completed by the first day of attendance, filled out completely, leaving nothing blank.
2. *Discipline Policy Form* - to be read and signed by the first day the child attends the Center.

3. *Child's Health Assessment* - should be submitted by due date given at enrollment or registration.
4. *Immunization Record* - each child must have a record of immunization on file at the Center by due date given at enrollment or registration.
5. *Permission form for Play Outside Fenced Area* - to be completed by the first day of attendance.
6. *Receipt of Policies/Handbook* - to be signed by the first day of attendance.
7. *Receipt of Summary of Child Care Law pamphlet* - to be signed by the first day of attendance.
8. *SIDS/Safe Sleep Policy* - (if age appropriate) to be read and signed by the first day of attendance.

Note: *Failure to return any of the required documents in the amount of time indicated above will result in your child's termination of enrollment.*

Safety Practices

The FPWDS is inspected quarterly by the NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Environmental Health, annually by the local Fire Inspector and the State consultant for the NC Division of Childcare.

These inspections ensure that all health and safety regulations are met and that the Center adheres to high quality standards regarding teacher requirements, adult/child ratios, curriculum, nutrition and other administrative practices.

Sign-in, Sign-Out Procedures

It is required by the State that **every parent** or authorized representative **must sign in and sign out their child each day**. The sign-in sheet is located on a clipboard in your child's room. You need to write your name and the time you arrive, and upon pick-up, the time that you depart with your child. During monthly fire drills and in case of an emergency or disaster, we use the sign-in/out sheet to verify the presence of every child in attendance. It is most important, for your child's ultimate safety that this log be as accurate as possible.

Throughout the year, we are audited by various local, state, and federal agencies. This

is one of many documents that they review.

Habitual refusal to sign your child in and out may result in written notice of dismissal from the Center.

Space Deposit

Two weeks advance tuition is required upon enrollment. This can be paid in full or in four weekly payments during the first month of care. The space deposit is refundable upon withdrawal provided your account is in good standing and you have given two weeks' notice of withdrawal.

Staffing

The majority of our Staff members have years of experience in Early Childhood care. All staff complete a criminal background checks, including fingerprinting. Each staff member, including the Administration, attains CPR and first aid training, annually. Health certificates and tuberculosis tests are required for all staff members.

The State requires all daycare staff to complete a certain number of hours training, yearly, according to each person's level of education and number of years of early childhood employment experience.

Additionally, each of our staff members is dedicated to the profession of childcare and genuinely enjoys working with your child.

The Day School is State licensed for a maximum capacity of 122 children. The State ratio of caregivers to children is as follows:

Age	State Teacher : Child Ratio	State Maximum Group Size	FPWDS' Teacher : Child Ratio
0-12 months	1 : 5	10	1 : 5
12-24 months	1 : 6	12	1 : 6
2 years old	1 : 10	20	1 : 9
3 years old	1 : 15	25	1 : 10
4 years old	1 : 20	25	1 : 10
School age	1 : 25	25	1 : 13

Television/Video Policy

A TV/VCR/DVD is available for checkout by the teachers to show approved educational videos to your child no more than 1 time a month. This opportunity must relate to the weekly theme indicated in their lesson plans.

FPWDS supports the philosophy that children learn best through active interaction and involvement with their environment. This knowledge, coupled with the understanding that television, as a rule, is not an interactive medium, is the foundation for the policy that FPWDS does not provide open television viewing for your child.

Things We Welcome at Dayschool

To eliminate feelings of possession and envy, and to prevent lost or broken personal items, please keep toys and other personal objects at home. FPWDS cannot be responsible for lost items. Please keep all valuables at home (i.e., toys, money, makeup, purses & bags, expensive coats and other items of personal value or attachment).

Children will be assigned show and tell days. On these days teachers welcome objects that relate to the current thematic study unit, only. Appropriate show and tell items are books, records, tapes, photographs, souvenirs, and special discoveries (bugs, shells, and other items from nature). **Please leave toys at home on other days.** Please send insects, plants, etc. to school in plastic or cardboard containers - no glass containers.

Children should not feel pressured to bring something to share. If you are in doubt about sending an item, please ask your child's teacher (s).

Things to Leave at Home

Please do not allow your child to bring money (unless requested for a special purpose); candy, chewing gum, (or that bagel or Fast Food biscuit that didn't get eaten at home or on the way to school); jewelry or matchbox cars (which are easily lost or mixed up with classroom items). Guns, army toys, weapons, etc., are not allowed at school.

Transitioning and Separation Anxiety

Transitioning to the Program/Classroom

We will work with parents to help children, new to our program and/or classroom, to ease into the room and routine. We recommend a few short visits, gradually lengthening the visit time, prior to full-day enrollment. This helps your child become familiar with the environment and also helps them get acquainted with their teachers and new classmates. You are welcome to stay with your child during these initial visits, keeping in mind that separation will eventually need to be made.

For the child moving up to the next age level, parents will be notified in writing before that transition begins. Typically, children will visit the new classroom for a period of time in the morning and afternoon, for the week prior to the date of move-up.

Each child is unique in their pattern and ease of adjustment to new situations. Be sure to talk with the classroom staff daily during this transition phase. A consistent daily schedule (including arrival and departure routines) will help your child adjust more readily to the new routine and environment.

Separation

Young children sometimes have difficulty letting go of their parent at arrival to the Center. This is typical behavior which, over time, should decrease as they become more secure in their new environment. Here are some suggestions to help ease separation:

Allow adequate time in the morning for arrival adjustment at the Center before you need to leave for work. When rushed, children feel hurried and anxious.

While traveling to the Center, talk to your child about their classroom, who will be there, etc. This may help to prepare your child for what's going to occur.

When you arrive, help your child get "settled in" by becoming involved in play.

Once your child is playing comfortably, tell your child it's time for you to go. It's okay if they see you leave, the teacher(s) will assure them at that moment, and throughout the day, that you will return. Usually children calm down and begin to play and interact with their classmates and caregivers soon after you leave.

You are welcome to call during the time your child is in our care, (704.825.8225).

Waiting List

When a space is not available for a child, parents are welcome to place his/her name on the appropriate age waiting list. We have a priority that we follow affecting the position on that list. First priority is given to our Staff members, followed by in-house parents and church members, and then the public.

Parents are called when a space becomes available and must notify us of acceptance within 48 hours. If they decline, we then call the next person on the list. It is the responsibility of the persons on the waiting list to notify us with any changes in phone numbers.

Names left on our voicemail will not be added to the waiting list. Information must be given in person or taken by an Administrator during an actual telephone conversation.

Weekly Tuition Fees

Tuition payment is required weekly for each child enrolled. If you prefer, tuition can be paid in advance at the beginning of the month or bi-monthly. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Weekday Day School (FPWDS) and may be placed in the drop-box located in the Weekday School office. Please make a note of your child(ren)'s name(s) in the memo section of the check. Credit card and automatic draft payments are also accepted. Please see the Director or Assistant Director for information on automatic draft plans. A \$25.00 late fee will be charged to accounts unpaid, weekly, as of Wednesday at noon.

Tuition is not refunded due to illness or other absences (holidays, family vacations, etc.) Additionally, First Presbyterian Day School does not refund tuition for any day that the school is closed due to inclement weather, power outages or other circumstances beyond our control.

There is a \$25.00 charge for a returned check.

Your weekly tuition provides ten hours a day for child-care services. Any child that stays longer than the ten-hour maximum will be charged an additional charge. Please contact the Director if this will affect your child.

Failure to submit payments/fees in timely fashion may result in a written notice of dismissal of your child to our program. When the verbal and/or written requests for payment, are ignored or not attended to, the outstanding balance will be reported to the Gaston Credit Bureau.

Day School Tuition/Fee Schedule

Day school fees are posted by the tuition box in office. Tuition/fees may be paid in the form of cash, check or money order and made payable to FPWDS. Please include your child's name to insure proper credit. Payments may also be mailed to the following address:

FPWDS
P. O. Box 1499
Belmont, NC 28012

The Board of Directors of the Weekday School of First Presbyterian Church of Belmont sets all tuition and fee amounts; reserving the right to adjust all rates with a written

notice to parents within 30 days of the effective date of increase. See attachment in the back of this handbook for current tuition rates.

Withdrawal (by the parent/guardian) Policy

Your child's registration fee is non-refundable

Parents are required to give the Director or Assistant Director a minimum of two (2) weeks notice, in writing, prior to withdrawing their child (ren). Verbal notification will not be accepted. Written notification of withdrawal of less than 2 weeks will result in the forfeiture of the initial two-week space deposit.

What can you do to help?

Parent involvement is very important to us!

1. Keep your child's teacher informed as to your child's needs or concerns so we can meet those needs appropriately.
2. Attend a Parent Committee meeting; while at that meeting, ask, "How can I help?"
3. Sign up to help on at least one field trip during the school year.
4. Volunteer to help the Parent Committee with Center fundraising.
5. Ask you child's teacher if you can help with classroom projects by providing recycled materials or helping to cut out materials the teacher sends home periodically.
6. Donate clean usable clothing your child has outgrown for us to stock our "Oops, I had an accident!" box.
7. Participate in Staff appreciation lunch days by baking or cooking a food item.
8. Carefully read each notice and newsletter that is sent home.
9. Volunteer to help at the annual Easter Egg Hunt or the End of the Year Family/Staff Picnic.
10. Recommend our Weekday School Program to a friend or neighbor.
11. Submit your email address to the Weekday School office to receive Center news via the FPWDS e-news list.

2009 - 2010 Weekly Tuition Rates & Annual Fees

FPWDS Program

Registration Fee \$65
\$55, First Presbyterian Church member

Annual Fee \$65
\$55, First Presbyterian Church member

Weekly Tuition Rates

Infants: \$155. weekly
Young Tots: 150. weekly
Old Tots: 150. weekly
Young Twos: 145. weekly
Old Twos: 145. weekly
Threes: 140. weekly
Fours: 140. weekly
Young Whiz Kids: 80. weekly
Old Whiz Kids: 80. weekly
Summer Whiz Kids: 120. weekly

Payment of the full amount of tuition is required weekly, regardless of the number of days the child is in attendance. (See pg. 33 of this handbook).

Late tuition payment fee: \$25 charge if payment not received by Noon on Wednesday of each week.

Returned check fee: \$25.00

Preschool Tuition Rates

Mother's Morning Out \$130. monthly
Two's 140. monthly
Three's (MWF) 155. monthly
Three's (5 days) 215. monthly
Four's 215. monthly
Five's 230. monthly

Appendix