



Est. 2001

**Growing Children for Jesus**

*Afterschool*

**Parent & Student Handbook**

**2024-2025**

First Christian Preschool is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Defuniak Springs

225 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street, DeFuniak Springs, Florida

**Dear Parents,**

**Welcome and thank you for choosing us to provide a safe, comfortable, and effective learning environment for your child. We expect all our students to make great progress here, and all efforts will be made to prepare your child for great success!**

**Because we are a ministry of First Baptist Church of DeFuniak Springs, God and His son Jesus are made a central part of each day. Regardless of any cultural shifts that may have occurred in recent years, we will simply not teach or encourage ideas, behaviors and lifestyles that are inconsistent with the Bible.**

**Biblical truth will be taught, but so will grace, mercy and understanding. As a result, we welcome all students and families who wish to attend here...even those which may not fully agree with, or adhere to, the teachings of the Bible. As long as mutual respect and love for one another is shown, we can all watch as our children grow and mature in accordance with God's plan for them.**

**Sincerely,  
April Murphy  
FCP Director**

**Our Mission Statement**

**Our mission at FCP, is to use our love of Christ and the Gospel to guide us in educating and nurturing all the children entrusted to our care. We do this by providing a Christ-centered and age-appropriate environment that is fun, loving and safe for young children. It is in this context that we see valuable educational opportunities flourish. We are a place who knows and understands that all children deserve to be loved and respected equally.**

### Open Door Policy

Here at FCP we want to be in partnership with the parents and family. We accomplish this by making sure we communicate with our families. Communication is extremely important to the life of a school and to the relationship that is created between parents, student, teacher and administrative staff. As a result, we have an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to visit their child at any time of the day. We encourage you to participate in special events and activities. You will also be invited to periodic parent conferences to keep communication lines open between teachers, students, and parents. We also ask that you inform your child's teacher of any changes in your child's home environment (e.g., divorce, job change, illness, etc.) so that we may have a better understanding of how to meet your child's needs.

### Open Admissions

FCP offers equal access to enrollment and does not discriminate based on race, creed, sex, ethnic background, or physical disability. As it is a faith-based organization, FCP does reserve the right to make decisions based on, and consistent with, its religious beliefs and teachings.

### Waiting List

The resources and facilities of FCP are not unlimited. As a result, there are only so many students we can accommodate in a given enrollment year. Recognizing that the number we can accommodate is often less than the number of interested families, FCP maintains a waiting list. Families and students who cannot be accommodated at the beginning of

the year can be placed on the waiting list for the next available slots to come open. Typically, the waiting list operates on a first-come-first-served basis. Exceptions to this procedure are made from time to time when the circumstances warrant. For example, when a single family has one child currently enrolled at FCP but other children wish to enroll (and are on the waiting list). In this scenario, this family's non-enrolled children will be given priority when slots become available. In addition, FCP, FCA and FBC members will be given first priority.

#### Signing Out

You will be asked to sign your child OUT each day your child attends Preschool. You will also be asked to sign in and out each time you volunteer at FCP. Only those listed on the child's enrollment application are authorized to pick up your child.

The only exception will be when the authorized parent or guardian notifies the FCP Director or staff **in writing** if someone other than those listed will pick up the child. Written notification **must** be provided by an authorized parent or guardian. If teachers or staff does not recognize a person or persons attempting to pick up your child, we will require an ID to verify that the person or persons are on the pickup list.

#### Pictures, Videos & Digital Media

I understand that, from time to time, one or more pictures and/or recordings of my child may be taken and/or made for me and/or for FCP's own use. I expressly grant FCP exclusive license to utilize such image or recording in its promotional and educational materials. Further, I waive and release any and all rights and/or claims for damages I may have against FCP (or against its agents, employees, volunteers and contractors)

from any and all claims, damages or actions of any nature whatsoever as a result of such use or display (including, but not limited to, claims pursuant to Chapter 540, *Florida Statutes*).

#### First Aid

If a child needs First Aid, an accident/incident form will be filled out by staff and signed by the parent. Our top priority is to keep your child safe, however, we cannot always see everything. If a teacher does not witness an incident, we will check the child over for injuries and research and assess the incident. If your child causes an accident requiring another child to receive First Aid (or biting incident), an accident/incident form will be filled out and must be signed by the parent.

If any accident occurs and requires treatment, the parent will be notified to pick up the child. In the event that your child is seriously injured, we will call 911 then notify you immediately. In the event that we are unable to reach you or the individuals you have authorized to make medical decisions, immediate decisions will be made by the EMS personnel.

#### Head Lice

If head lice are discovered on your child while they are at school, you will be called to pick them up. The child must be treated with an over-the-counter head lice remedy. When your child returns to school, please bring in proof of purchase such as an empty box and receipt. The child must be checked and cleared by a school employee before being readmitted to class. This means they must be free of all nits and live lice.

#### Medication

FCP will not administer medication in the after school program.

No Smoking

First Baptist Church and First Christian Preschool are smoke free zones. Please refrain from smoking on church property.

Firearms

Firearms are not permitted on First Christian Preschool property.

Safe Transport

FCP staff **WILL NOT** release children to any adult who appears to be impaired (under the influence of drugs or alcohol) or for some reason deemed unable to adequately care for the child. Staff will instead contact the parent, guardian, or other authorized adult immediately and contact law enforcement as deemed necessary.

Abuse and Neglect

All children have a right to live free from abuse. Children depend on their parents, family members, teachers, and childcare providers to love, nurture and protect them. As your child's Childcare Provider, we are required by law, Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes, to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. **Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE**

Enrollment Requirements

- Children must be a student of FCP or FCA. FBC members will be permitted with arranged transportation.

- Parents must provide FCP with an official Florida Dept. of Children and Families Health Certificate updated within the last two years. (school form)
- In most cases, parents must provide an immunization record updated in the last year. (school form)
- Enrollment fee of \$50 due at time of enrollment.
- An FCP enrollment packet must be completed.

#### Teacher/Parent Communication

Communication between teachers and parents is crucial. Sometimes this communication will come in the form of in-person conferences. If such a conference is needed, parents will be contacted to schedule the meeting. Parents or Guardians who wish to schedule a conference are encouraged to do so. That said, please do not simply show up during or after the school day and expect to have such a meeting. This is typically not productive as it prevents the teacher and the leadership from being ready to fully address the issues at hand. Instead, please contact the FCP office to schedule the conference. Every effort to schedule a meeting promptly will be made.

#### Withdrawal Policy

If you wish to withdraw your child from FCP after school, a two-week written notice is **required**. The final two weeks' tuition charge must be paid regardless of attendance.

#### Afterschool Hours

Daily: 2:30 pm- 5:30 pm

When FCP or FCA is closed there will be no afterschool care.

### Termination Policy

FCP reserves the right to discharge a child for reasons such as, but not limited to:

- Failure to pay fees in a timely manner
- Lack of cooperation on the parent's part
- Special services needed; further evaluation needed
- Repeated disciplinary actions
- Repeatedly not picking child up in a timely manner
- Failure to provide up to date immunization and physical
- Failure to adhere to the code of conduct
- Ungovernable behavior
- Open, public and/or disruptive behavior on FCP property or during FCP events. This includes, but is not limited to, public behavior which is contrary to the beliefs, teachings or doctrine of FCP and/or the First Baptist Church of DeFuniak Springs

A Two-week written notification will normally be given to any family that is having the above issues. If it is a matter of safety, an immediate termination will be given.

**All terminations will be at the discretion of the Director and FCP board.**

### FCP Monthly Tuition

Tuition is due on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payments may be made by cash, check or money order (make payable to First Baptist Church). If payments are not paid by the 10th, you will incur an additional late charge of \$30.00.



If payments are not received by the 15th, your child will not be permitted back until your account is made current (including late fee).

Receipts will be given for cash payments; all other forms of payment receipts may be given upon request. Payment arrangements (other than those set forth in this Handbook) will typically not be permitted. Exceptions may be made for situations such as a parent's loss of his or her job, a death in the family or severe sickness.

**Remember, all payments not made by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month will result in a \$30 late-fee being assessed each time.**

Please note that parents are charged even when the child is absent, on vacation, or for school closings, because the FCP operating expenses do not change.

Tuition is nonrefundable and nontransferable. Late fee assessments and returned check fees will be applied to a delinquent account. Any student whose account is delinquent in payment may be dismissed from the school.

*Scheduled tutoring will be available for an additional fee- More info TBA*

#### Monthly Payments

#### School age Aftercare Program

5 days a week: \$200.00

Daily rate: \$25.00 *\*Based on availability.*

***\*\* fees may be placed in the blue payment box in the afterschool area.***

#### FCP Fees

\$50.00 Annual Registration fee is due at the time of enrollment.

**All fees are non-refundable.**

- A returned check will incur a \$35.00 returned check fee in addition to the monthly tuition in the form of cash or money

order for the total payment. After two returned checks, you will then be required to pay by cash or money order only.

- Children not picked up by their scheduled pick-up time will be charged an additional fee of **\$1.00 per minute** past the scheduled time. Repeated late pick-ups will be subject to dismissal.
- Payments made after the 10<sup>th</sup> will incur a \$30.00 late fee (see above).

#### Preschool Accident Medical Insurance

This insurance is included in the tuition and provides benefits for covered injuries sustained during the hours and days when school is in session and while students are attending or participating in school sponsored and supervised activities on or off school premises.

#### Tax Receipts

According to the Internal Revenue Service, all childcare expenses paid to a provider outside your family are tax deductible for working parents. Tuition totals and our FEIN number will be provided each year to parents no later than January 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### Safe and Secure Campus

For safety reasons, FCP is a closed campus. Doors are kept locked, and access is typically restricted during school hours to FCP leadership, staff and students only. Parents and visitors are encouraged to visit. All visitors must check-in at the office upon arrival and, for the sake of fairness and classroom continuity, visitor observations must be scheduled in advance with the Director.

### Dress Code Policy

The afterschool dress code will follow the same policy as First Christian Academy

### Snacks

For snack time, please send snacks in your child's lunchbox daily for afterschool snack.

### ILLNESS

Please do not send your child to school if any of these symptoms persist:

#### **24 hours home without any symptoms**

fever  
unexplained pain  
unexplained rash  
green/yellow nasal discharge  
red & watery eyes  
chills  
earache  
diarrhea  
vomiting

If a child becomes ill while at FCP, the child will be isolated from the other children and parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately. **Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or higher will be sent home.** Please notify staff of any communicable illnesses (such as chicken pox) so other parents can be notified.

### COVID 19

Children who have a COVID -19 exposure or close contact, but have no symptoms, are not required to quarantine and can remain in the classroom. If a child is COVID-19 symptomatic or COVID-19 positive, they should stay home while symptoms persist. The child will be able to return to the classroom after 5 days have passed since the onset of symptoms and are fever free for 24 hours after an exposure, close contact, or positive COVID-19 diagnosis, a negative COVID-19 test is not required for a child to be able to return to school. Children are not required to wear a mask or face covering.

### Emergency Preparedness Plan

To ensure the safest possible campus, FCP will perform various safety drills from time to time. Should you ever have a question about our

safety procedures and protocols, feel free to contact the FCP office and schedule a time to speak with the Director.

### Emergency Closings

Please watch and listen to local news stations concerning early dismissals and closings. If Walton County schools are released early or are closed, First Christian Preschool will release early and/or close. School closures and/or early release due to illness or other unforeseen reasons are always a last resort, however sometimes necessary. These decisions are made at the discretion of the FBC Pastor, FCP Director and FCP board.

### Discipline Policy

At FCP, it is our belief that children can be influenced by their surroundings. If the environment is not developmentally appropriate, children can become frustrated. To alleviate this, we will provide a developmentally appropriate program with plenty of opportunities for the children to make their own choices. However, conflicts will arise, and teachers will respond in a positive, appropriate manner.

Teachers will use behavior management techniques such as setting reasonable and positive expectations, offering choices, and providing children an opportunity to verbalize their feelings, which encourages children to develop self-control and problem solving through understanding. There are times in which the child will be incapable of responding to these techniques and will need extra time to gain their self-control. During these times, the teacher will direct the child to a quiet place within the classroom (i.e. the library area) for some time away from their peers to give the child the opportunity to calm down.

This time away will take place within the teacher's view and will not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age. Teachers or staff will not use discipline associated with food, resting, toileting and/or active play at any time!

Corporal Punishment is not permitted on the premises of First Christian Preschool by parents, family, teachers, or staff. Extreme behavior will result in the child being removed to the Director's office. Parents may be contacted and asked to pick up their child if extreme behavior persists.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are to abide by school rules and regulations to establish a productive, positive learning environment. Parent support and involvement is integral to students' attitudes and adherence to standards. The administration acknowledges

the responsibility to God and parents to build good citizenship, self-control, and character in each student. School and home must partner cooperatively to instill Christian principles.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR STANDARDS Students are to

- Be respectful of administrative staff, teachers, students, and visitors, displaying Christian standards of courtesy, kindness, and honesty;
- Be discreet and Christian in manner, refraining from public displays.
- Be respectful of school property and other students' property (Eph. 4: 28-32);
- Leave all distracting or dangerous items at home, as well as electronic items
- Respect authority, abiding by rules and teacher instructions (Heb. 13:17, I Thess. 5:12-13);
- Do their own work, not giving or receiving help on tests or homework. Honesty is to be displayed.
- Avoid plagiarism;
- Apply school rules on all field trips and at all school-sponsored events; and
- Refrain from negative speech (vulgar or abusive) and interaction (name calling, aggression, or fighting).

Such speaking and acting is harmful and not appropriate or conducive to moral and spiritual development (Eph. 4:29).

## CLASSROOM CONDUCT

The teacher will establish and enforce classroom rules. Any student who fails to follow the teacher's rules or instructions will receive disciplinary action from the teacher. If a student's behavior impedes a teacher's ability to teach or an ability to maintain an effective learning environment, the student may be removed from the

classroom and sent to the director's office. Disciplinary action will be taken. The student will return to class only when the negative behavior can be controlled.

## CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS

If after instruction, warnings, and counsel have been given, the student continues to violate school rules and standards of conduct,

or if the behavior is serious in nature, further disciplinary action will be taken. To deal with violations, the administration reserves the right to employ age appropriate consequences as follows:

- Take classroom disciplinary action;
- Conference with students;
- Contact and conference with parents or guardians;
- Use in-school and after-school detentions / PE or lunch isolations;
- Use suspensions.

Disciplinary referrals will be kept on file. Parent/Guardian will be notified when the student is assigned after-school detention, suspended,

or recommended for expulsion. Suspension and/or expulsion may occur for chronic or gross misconduct or for continued infraction of rules, regulations, and standards of conduct. If suspended, the student is not allowed to attend school/school events. The student will not attend school until restored by action of the School Board.

The Director and staff will work alongside the Parents, students, FCA teachers and admin to help maintain positive behavior and keep the FCP environment safe. The dismissal of a child from our program is at the discretion of the Director and the FCP board. It is required that all FCA code of conduct rules and procedures as listed above will be followed by all students.

First Christian Preschool is a religious organization governed by a Board of Directors. These Directors are approved by the voting membership of First Baptist Church of DeFuniak Springs. They are all members of First Baptist Church and are empowered to set policy and procedures for FCP. As such, the operation of FCP is, and shall always remain, consistent with the beliefs, teachings and doctrine of FBC DeFuniak Springs.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEW AND RECEIPT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge and certify that on this date, \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ I received, read and understood the preceding Parent & Student Handbook provided by First Christian Preschool ("FCP").

By signing this receipt, I understand and agree to the following:

- This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks or policies I may have previously received from, or have been advised of by FCP.
- The policies and conditions contained in this parent/student handbook can be changed by FCP at any time.
- It is my responsibility to follow the guidelines in this handbook and be informed as to its contents.
- My child is permitted to attend FCP only so long as my child and his/her parents abide by the policies contained in the handbook.
- Should my child or his/her parents refuse to abide by such policies, my child's enrollment may be terminated as set forth in the handbook.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

