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First Baptist Learning Center and Preschool

INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

First Baptist Learning Center and Preschool was established to support the home and extend the ministry of the church by providing faith based, age-appropriate education for preschoolers.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

As a Christian Learning Center, we are committed to instruct our children as Jesus grew: intellectually, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

Through the guidance of Christ, as a unified staff working side-by-side with parents; we agree to provide our children with a loving and caring environment. We will provide suitable learning experiences which will meet each child's individual needs. *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."* Proverbs 22:6

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe...

...that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

...that man was created by God in His image.

...in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

...that Jesus Christ was the Incarnate Son of God, born of a virgin.

...that He shed His blood and died on the cross as the Atonement for the sins of mankind.

...that He rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven.

...that He sits on the right hand of the Father as our Advocate.

...that salvation is through faith by grace, not by works.

...that Jesus Christ must be the Lord of our life.

...in the Second Coming of Christ to take all believers home to Heaven.

Biblical Principles on the Education of Young Children

1. The education of young children is the primary responsibility of parents. *(Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:18-21; Psalm 78:1-7; Psalm 127:3; Proverbs 22:6; Malachi 2:13-16; Ephesians 6:4)*
2. The education of young children is a 24-hour-per-day, 7-day-per-week process that continues from birth till maturity. *(Deuteronomy 6:7; Matthew 28:19-20)*
3. The education of young children must have as its primary goals the salvation of and discipleship of the next generation. *(Psalm 78:6-7; Matthew 28:19-20)*
4. The education of young children must be based on God's Word as absolute truth. *(Matthew 24:35; Psalm 119)*
5. The education of young children must hold Christ as preeminent in all of life. *(Colossians 2:3, 6-10)*
6. The education of young children must not hinder the spiritual and moral development of the next generation. *(Matthew 18:6; 19:13-14; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17)*
7. The education of young children must be done so with utmost care to ensure that all teachers follow these principles. *(Exodus 18:21; 1 Samuel 1:27-28; 3:1-10)*
8. The education of young children results in the formation of a belief system or worldview that will be patterned after the belief systems or worldviews of the person's teachers. *(Luke 6:40)*

Licensing and Certification

First Baptist Learning Center and Preschool is inspected by the Hillsborough County Child Care Licensing Program and accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). We have also been inspected and approved by the Hillsborough County Health Department and the Plant City Fire Department.

Staff Information

- We are a Christian Learning Center; therefore each staff member has signed a Doctrinal Statement of Faith stating that they uphold Christian values and beliefs.
- To insure the safety of our students, a background screening has been conducted on all teachers and staff.
- Teachers are required to meet annual in-service training hours.
- We encourage every staff member to be CPR and First Aid Certified.
- In addition, staff meetings are held monthly for continued awareness in the preschool field.
- Staff members attend ACSI Early Education Conference annually.

Hours of Operation

6:30am-6:00pm

Preschool Morning Program- follows the Hillsborough County School's holiday schedule

VPK	Monday-Friday	8:30-11:30
Pre K 2	2,3 or 5 days per week	8:30-12:00
Pre K 3	3 or 5 days per week	8:30-12:00

Preschool Plus Extended Care- students may attend on holidays except when the center is **CLOSED**

6:30-8:15 Early Arrival

12:00-3:00

12:00-6:00

Please Note: Late pick up of children after 6:00pm will result in an additional charge of \$5 for every 5 minutes.

The center will follow the recommendation of the Hillsborough County School Board regarding school closings due to inclement weather.

Tuition and Payment of Fees

Tuition may be paid on a monthly or yearly basis. We offer several ways to make payments which include Debit or Credit online at www.fbcpc.com or through the FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH PLANT CITY app on your smart device. If necessary, you may pay by check or money order payable to: FBLC. No cash is accepted.

Registration Fee: The registration fee is required to reserve a spot for your child. The fee is used at the beginning of the school year to cover expenses therefore it is non-refundable and non-transferable. If your child starts after the school year has begun, the Registration fee will be prorated.

Tuition Charges:

Monthly Payments: The tuition will be paid on the child's first school day of each month.

Yearly Payment: The registration fee is waived for all yearly payments made at the beginning of the year.

Sibling Discounts: A 10% discount will be applied to additional siblings. The discount will be applied to the sibling(s) with the lesser tuition fee(s).

Late Payment Fee: If a payment becomes ten days past due, a \$10 late fee will be applied. If payment is still not received, your child will be asked to withdraw from school until a payment is made. The Preschool Board will determine if you may reenroll your child after the full amount has been paid.

Late Pick-up Fees: Late pick up of children will result in an additional charge of \$5 per hour after scheduled pick up time. If your child stays until 6pm the charge will be **\$5 for every 5 minutes after 6pm.**

Returned Checks: An attempt will be made to resubmit a returned check without penalty. However, more than three returned checks will place the account on a money order basis.

Refunds: No refunds will be given for absences and/or holidays when the center is closed.

Note: *We accept payments ahead of the due date.*

Enrollment Policy

Registration applications are accepted on a non-discriminatory basis. A new application must be completed and submitted to the Learning Center office each year for the Fall and the Summer program. **The Registration Fee is due upon enrollment and is non-refundable and non-transferable.**

The center conforms to state law regarding school entrance age requirements. In order to enter a class, the child must be 2, 3, or 4 by September 1st.

Before beginning school we must have the following items in your child's records:

- **Registration/Student Information Form**
- **Registration Fee (non-refundable)**
- **Tuition Payment Agreement**
- **Immunization and Physical Forms**
- **Copy of Birth Certificate**
- **Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment**
- **Influenza Virus form**
- **VPK Certificate of Eligibility (VPK only)**

Withdrawal Policy

If possible, we ask that you inform the Learning Center office 30 days prior to withdrawing your child. You will continue to be billed your monthly tuition unless the Learning Center office is informed of your child's withdrawal. There will be no reimbursement for partial attendance during that month.

Health and Medical Requirements for Preschool

State regulations require that a physical examination form and immunization form must be current and kept on file at all times for each child. Your child's physician will provide these forms. The immunization form and physical exam form must be submitted upon enrollment. The immunization record must indicate a complete expiration date, and the form must be signed by the physician or authorized person. Parents are responsible for keeping these records updated. As a courtesy, the center will send a reminder when immunization or physical forms have expired. **Failure to submit Health records by the expiration date may result in your child's dismissal from the center until the medical requirements are met.** *Some parents may opt for an immunization exemption.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the overall development of your child. Children should also be on time in order to benefit fully from all planned activities and curriculum and to prevent disruption to other students. If you know your child is going to be absent, please call the office. **Please note: Regular attendance in the VPK program is expected and required.**

Infection-Control Policy **UPDATED**

PRECAUTIONS: A healthy school begins and ends at home!

- If your child is showing signs of illness, keep them home and contact FBLC. This greatly reduces the spread of illness at school and also helps assure that your child recovers.
- Teach your child to sneeze/cough in his or her sleeve and to wash hands often. Teach them to keep their hands away from their face. We will be teaching these behaviors and modeling them throughout the year.

UPON ARRIVAL/DROP OFF:

- Until further notice, parents will not be allowed to enter the building at drop off. We know that this is hard for parents. It is hard for us too. We love parent involvement! However, everyone's health and safety are most important. Parents are encouraged to use the carline from 8:30-8:45. If you are not using the carline, you may park and walk your child to the Learning Center glass door. A FBLC employee will escort your child to his/her classroom. **Please do not leave your car unattended in the carline area between 8:15-8:45.**
- The person dropping off your child should not be positive for COVID-19 nor should they have any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Your child's temperature may be checked prior to entry. In addition, the staff member will do a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing, fatigue or extreme fussiness.
- Your child will use hand sanitizer prior to entering.

DURING SCHOOL:

- FBLC is cleaned daily by the FBC custodial staff.
- Tables, changing tables, door handles, light switches, sinks etc. will be sanitized regularly by the FBLC staff.
- Mouthed toys will be removed from circulation for sanitizing.
- Disposable cups will be used instead of water fountains.
- Frequent and proper handwashing will occur.
- FBLC has low teacher to student ratios which means smaller class sizes and more room for students to spread out.
- Masks will not be required by students or staff. Masks may be worn by employees that directly interact with parents.
- Water bottles (clearly labeled with your child's name) may be brought from home.
- You must provide a morning snack for your child. Refer to the section on 'snacks'.

- Any child who is suspected of having a communicable disease or who develops fever or any of the symptoms below shall be removed from the Center. We ask that you come for your child as soon as possible after receiving our call regarding your child's illness.
 - a. A fever of 100.4 or above – the child must be free of fever for 24 hours **without medication** before returning to school. **If COVID-19 is suspected, FBLC will follow the most current guidelines from the Health Department.**
 - b. Dry cough
 - c. Shortness of breath
 - d. Diarrhea or vomiting – the child must be free from these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.
 - e. An unexplained rash
 - f. Heavy nasal discharge
 - g. Eye drainage or symptoms of Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
 - h. Symptoms indicative of contagious conditions such as head lice, ringworm, etc.

AFTER SCHOOL/PICK UP:

- Students will use hand sanitizer as they exit the building.
- If your child's school day ends at 11:30 or 12:00, he/she will be brought out in carline. Parents of Extended Care students will go to the main Learning Center door, ring doorbell and sign out your child. If it is raining, an alternate door will be designated.

Sick children shall not return to the center until the signs and symptoms are no longer present. The center retains the right to dismiss or refuse admittance to any child if there is reasonable cause to believe he/she is infected with a communicable illness. Communicable diseases such as measles, pink eye, impetigo, hand foot mouth disease etc., shall require a doctor's written release in order for the child to return to the center. Please notify the center right away if your child is diagnosed as having a communicable illness.

Children returning to school following an illness or surgery are expected to be well enough to participate in the preschool routine. Remember that outdoor play is a part of our daily schedule. If children are well enough to attend school, they should be well enough to join the other children in daily outside play.

Discipline Policy

Teachers and Staff at First Baptist Learning Center and Preschool are instructed to use the positive discipline approach that is described below.

1. Provide an environment that encourages self-discipline.
2. Use positive methods to guide individual children.
3. Help children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways.
4. Redirect children to acceptable activities.
5. Use simple, positive reminders to restate rules.
6. Anticipate problem behaviors and plan ways to avoid them.
7. Let children know what they are allowed to do.
8. Be polite to children at all times.
9. Help children solve their own problems.
10. Help children understand the consequences of their actions, and if appropriate, help them make amends.
11. Use words to guide children's behavior.
12. Set clear simple rules and limits.
13. Remind children of rules by using positive statements that tell children what to do.
14. Apply rules consistently while also considering individual needs.
15. Work with parents to develop a plan for responding to challenging behavior.

Note: First Baptist Learning Center and Preschool has the right to dismiss any student for the following reasons:

- If after a reasonable period of time a child or the child's parents are unable to adjust or accept preschool routines and procedures.
- If a child is persistent in hurting or injuring other children or staff.
- If there are special needs the Center is unable to meet. (See Procedure for Identifying Special Needs page 10)

Child Care Licensing Law requires that parents are notified in writing of the disciplinary practices used by the child care facility. The parent's or legal guardian's signature verifies the parents or guardians have been notified in writing of the disciplinary practices of the child care facility.

Procedure for Identifying Special Needs

Researchers have developed norms for specific developmental milestones for each age group. These norms can assist parents and teachers in recognizing stages and milestones in a child's developmental progress. However, all children are unique and have special, individual needs. We feel that each child's development will progress within the limits God has established.

The FBLC staff receives ongoing training regarding the varying needs of the preschool child. When a student appears to need assistance beyond that which we are equipped, the following steps may be taken;

- Pray for the child and note their strengths and abilities
- Administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)
- Parent/Teacher Conference
- Recommendation for the child to attend a Developmental Screening through the Early Childhood Council of Hillsborough County (ECC) and the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS)
- Referral to Inclusion Support Services
 - With parent permission, Inclusion Support Services will send someone out to observe the student in the classroom setting.
 - After observing the student, the Inclusion Support Staff will devise an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for the student.
 - The Inclusion Support Staff will work with the teacher and parents to accommodate the needs of the student.
- A list of additional resources can be provided to the parents. (Available in the FBLC office.)

Biting Policy

In the sensitive case of biting, there are necessary boundaries that have been established by the First Baptist Learning Center for the benefit of every child enrolled in the preschool. It is important to understand that biting is a common stage among children who are around the age of two years old. Beyond that age, it is not common. Continued biting after the age of two may be an indication that something physically, emotionally, or mentally is a source of the biting. Thus, any child who is biting will be closely monitored.

In all cases of biting, immediate first aid and comfort will be given to the child who was bitten.

A report of all incidents will be made. Parents will be required to sign the document and return to school to be placed in the child's file.

The following steps will be taken in the event of a biting incident.

1. *A child biting any toy or play objects* will be closely monitored.
2. *A child biting art supplies or any non-play material* will be redirected. Loving verbal guidance will be given about what is not okay to put in his/her mouth.
3. *A child biting him/herself* will be redirected. Loving verbal guidance will be given about what is not okay to put in his/her mouth.
4. *A child biting another person* will result in immediate redirection. Verbal guidance will be given about what is not okay to put in his/her mouth, and the parents of both children will be notified.

Consequences for biting another person:

First Incident:

No visible mark-Written warning given to parent.

With visible mark-Parent phoned, parent/teacher conference at time child is picked up.

With visible open wound-Parent phoned, child brought to office for immediate parent pick up, parent/director conference.

Second Incident:

No visible mark-Parent phoned, parent/teacher conference.

With visible mark-Parent phoned, child brought to office for immediate pick up, parent/director conference; child is removed from the preschool for one day.

With visible open wound- Parent phoned, child brought to office for immediate pick up, parent/director conference; child is removed for 1 week.

Third Incident:

No visible mark-Parent phoned, child brought to office for immediate pick up, parent/teacher/director conference.

With visible mark-Parent phoned, child brought to office for immediate pick up, parent/teacher/director conference; child is removed from program 1 week.

With visible open-wound-Parent is phoned, child is brought to office for immediate pick up, parent/director conference; child is removed from the program for the rest of the school year.

If at any time, the safety of another child is at stake, the Director has the right to immediately remove a child in order to protect the other students in the class. All incidents of biting will be documented and placed in the students' file. At no time will the names of the children involved be released to other families.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures

Drop off-Parents may go through the car line to drop off their child between 8:20-8:45. (We **strongly** encourage VPK students to arrive by 8:20.) When dropping off your child, please remain in your car and a Learning Center employee will get him/her out. It is helpful if you position your child's car seat on the passenger side of the car for easy access and safety. If you arrive before or after this time, you must walk your child up to the LC door and sign him/her in. Please remember that smoking (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited on the premises.

Pick up-We have two pick up carlines. The VPK carline is at 11:30. The two's and three's pick up carline runs from 11:50-12:05. A car tag with your child's name will be provided to hang on your rearview mirror. A Learning Center employee will walk your child out but the parent/guardian must buckle your child in his/her car seat. **Florida law states: Children 5 years old or younger must be secured in a federally approved child restraint system: Children 3 years old and younger must use a separate car seat or the vehicle's built-in child seat.** If you arrive after 12:05, you must walk up to the LC door and sign your child out. Please remember that smoking (including e-cigarettes) is prohibited on the premises. *As a courtesy to your child, cell phone use is not allowed during drop off and pick up times.

Release of Children

Children will be released only to the persons listed on the application form. Please notify the Center in writing if there are any changes in who will be picking up your child. Identification will then be required in order for the Center to release your child.

Medication

Whenever possible, ask your physician about prescribing medications that can be given at longer time intervals so that the dosages can be given at home. It is our discretion as to whether or not medications will be dispensed that have not been prescribed by a doctor (aspirin, cough medicine). All medication must be in the original container and labeled with your child's name. If your child requires medication to be given during school hours, we must have an Authorization for Medication slip. The authorization for medication slip and the medicine are to be given to the Director or Office assistant.

Accidental Injury

In case of an accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will call one of the persons listed as an emergency contact person on your child's record. Please make sure that you keep your child's records up-to-date. We ask that you notify us of any changes in phone numbers, emergency numbers, persons to contact, etc. Any minor accidents/incidents will be documented on an Accident/Incident report.

Parent Communication

Methods of communication may include; phone calls, face-to-face conferences, texts, website/facebook posts, newsletters, memos and emails or the use of a classroom app. Please read all correspondence, so that you will be informed of school matters.

Conferences

Conferences between the parent(s) and teacher are strongly encouraged. This allows for mutually agreed-upon goals to be established, discussed and reviewed. Please plan to meet with your child's teacher at least twice a year; at the beginning of the school year and again in the spring. Feel free to call and schedule a conference at any time you have a concern that you would like to discuss. **Please keep in mind that our teachers are busy with their students during preschool hours and are unable to speak or text parents during this time.** Please try to schedule a time that would be convenient for both of you. Of course, any immediate concerns or emergencies should be reported to the Director.

If there is anything at home that may be affecting your child's behavior, please let us know. Having a strong partnership with you is invaluable in allowing us to know how to help your child.

Parent Complaints and Concerns

FBLC continually strives to be the best center that we can be. Therefore, we appreciate and value your comments, concerns, suggestions and complaints. Your input will be solicited at the end of each year via a parent survey. However, if at any time during the year a parent feels he/she has a complaint or concern, we ask that you first pray about the situation and then go directly to the Director. The Director and staff welcome your input. It is God's will that we live and work together in harmony. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34-35) Jesus gives His formula for solving person-to-person problems. It has been referred to as "the Matthew 18 principle" for solving school problems. The following are the words of Jesus:

Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a tax collector.

If you do not feel that your complaint or concern was properly addressed by the Director and others involved, you may speak with a Learning Center Board Member or a Church Administrator.

Parent Involvement

Parents are a vital part towards their child's success in school. Therefore, we warmly welcome parent involvement. There are numerous ways to become involved. For example, you may volunteer to cut out patterns at home, help your child's teacher with a special project, help at a class party or program, attend a field trip, join a committee, send in needed supplies, etc. **We love our volunteers!** We ask that you please sign in at the front desk when you are on our campus. **Due to COVID-19, involvement may be limited and may require temperature/wellness checks.**

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is special to us! If you would like to send store-bought refreshments for your child's class to share, please speak to your child's teacher. We would like to suggest sending simple cookies, cupcakes, pudding, ice-cream etc. Candy, balloons and party favors are not necessary. Your child's teacher will add special activities to make this a special time for your child.

Snacks

Children enrolled in the morning Pre-K program should eat breakfast at home before coming to school. If a child is signed up for the Early Arrival Extended Care, he/she may bring in breakfast until 8am. We ask that parents provide a morning snack for their child daily. Healthy snacks are encouraged. (Banana, apple, granola bar, crackers...) You may provide a drink or the LC will provide water in a disposable cup. Please check with your child's teacher regarding any classmates with food allergies. For students in the Extended Care Program, FBLC will provide an afternoon snack.

Toys and Sippy Cups

Toys should be left at home so that they will not get lost or misplaced. Check with your child's teacher for information regarding items, which may be brought to school for 'Share Day'.

Many sippy cups and water bottles look alike to preschoolers. Therefore, to avoid the spread of germs the Learning Center provides disposable cups for their use. If you prefer to send in a cup or water bottle, be sure it is clearly labeled with your child's name.

Potty Training

We do not require our Pre K 2 students to be potty-trained. However, by age 3 your child is expected to be trained. If your child is in diapers, you will need to supply the Learning Center with diapers/pull-ups and wipes. Our facility is a wonderful place to learn as our toilets and sinks are 'just the right size'.

Clothes

Some of the best learning activities and materials are sand, water, paints, and play dough. FBLC makes every attempt to use smocks and washable supplies. However, it is wise to dress your child in easily laundered 'play' clothes that he/she can be comfortable wearing for all preschool activities.

A change of clothing (shirt, shorts/pants, underwear/panties, socks) must be sent in a plastic Ziploc bag with your child's name on the Ziploc bag. This change of clothes will be kept in your child's bag in case your child needs a change of clothes. ***Please label all clothing items.** You may want to bring in a new set when the weather turns cooler.

Please help your child by providing appropriate shoes for safety. We recommend tennis shoes for your child. Boots, flip flops, and dress shoes are slippery and may cause falls or accidents. Girls wearing skirts/dresses should wear leggings, shorts or bloomers over their panties. **If your child wears jewelry or hair accessories, please know that we are not responsible for any losses.**

FOR EXTENDED CARE ONLY

Nap materials

Parents need to provide a non-permeable nap mat each year. These can be found at Walmart under the brand 'Kindermat.' Do not put your child's name on the mat. You should also provide 1 blanket. A small pillow with a washable pillow case and a soft toy may also be sent in if desired. Nap supplies brought to the Learning Center must be sent in a bag with the child's name written on it. The bag should be no larger than a grocery bag.

Each Friday the nap supplies must be taken home, washed, and returned in a bag with your child's name on it. Items not taken home on Friday, due to absence can be picked up in the office to be washed on Monday. Please remember to send alternative sleep items to be used when this happens until the others are cleaned and returned. **Please label all nap items with child's name.**

Lunch

Children should bring a lunch and a drink from home. Your child's lunch should include something from each of the four basic food groups. We suggest a sandwich, salad or cut raw vegetables, cut meats, cheese, hot meals in a thermos, fresh or canned fruit, crackers, pudding, oatmeal cookies, etc. We ask that you do not send carbonated beverages, candy or gum. Please be warned that foods like hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, hard candy and popcorn can be choking hazards. The center cannot be responsible for the refrigerating or heating of any foods. An afternoon snack will be provided by the Learning Center. Please let the center know of any food allergies that your child may have.