

# First Presbyterian Weekday School



**PARENT MANUAL**

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# History & Philosophy



### **Introduction**

For over 70 years, First Presbyterian Church has offered a superior Christian preschool for area children. First Presbyterian Weekday School is committed to the quality of your child's daily experiences.

Our school is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC has developed 10 standards for high-quality early childhood education. Programs that meet these standards provide a safe and healthy environment for children, have teachers who are well-trained, have access to excellent teaching materials, and work with curriculum that is appropriately challenging and developmentally sound.

Although religiously exempt from state licensure, the Weekday School voluntarily complies with regulations specified by the Virginia Department of Social Services. We adhere to state accreditation standards for room and playground space, staff to student ratios, and the type of program equipment and learning materials used.

### **Weekday School Mission Statement**

As a ministry of First Presbyterian Church, the mission of the Weekday School is to provide child-directed and teacher-nurtured learning experiences in a Christian setting. The Weekday School strives to support each child's individual growth and development through maintaining best practices in Early Childhood Education.

### **Core Values**

We believe that every child is a unique creation and gift from God. We believe that God's Son, Jesus, demonstrated a love and appreciation of children in a time and society when this was not the standard. Therefore, all that we do in our Weekday School is supported and guided by strong Christian principles. Every child has the right to expect a loving, healthy, and safe environment; an attractive and well-functioning facility; a warm, caring, qualified and Christian staff who treat the children and each other with compassion, kindness, and respect; and the professional, intelligent execution of a curriculum which meets individual and group needs of a Christian, creative, academic, and social nature. This school is open to young children regardless of race, color, creed, or nationality.

In keeping with the core principles of Christianity within the Presbyterian tradition, the Weekday School will seek to foster a spirit of Christian love and welcome the value of each person in God's sight, toleration and respect for differences, cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflict, and strong ethical and moral principles. Children of all faiths and backgrounds are welcome at the school. Although explicitly Christian teaching is part of the school, there is no intention to proselytize or disrespect other traditions.

## **Weekday School Staff**

The Weekday School staff are credentialed educators that have experience in Early Childhood Education with related coursework. All staff members receive at least 16 hours of continuing education in the field of Early Childhood Education each year. Topics are presented by credentialed educators that cover classroom management, instructional strategies, child development, assessment, first aid/emergency care, school safety, Conscious Discipline, and emotional intelligence, among others.

## **Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Weekday School is to meet each child at their current stage of development; while offering activities, materials, and resources that encourage continued growth and development. We approach the whole child looking to stimulate growth and interest in all areas. The teaching staff is reflective in their approach – highlighting topics the children show interest in while incorporating new information that will foster excitement and learning.

### **Cognitive and Language Development**

Jean Piaget explains that there are four stages of cognitive development (2 for young children) that are generally accompanied by language use. In the first stage, children are using their senses to coordinate their understanding of the world, language assists in meeting their needs. In the next stage, children's use of language supports their growing conceptual knowledge and concrete understanding.

### **Social and Emotional Development**

Erik Erikson's eight stages of socioemotional growth provide a helpful framework for understanding social development. During the early childhood years, children navigate three of the eight stages. They learn:

1. to trust outside their families.
2. to gain independence and self-control.
3. to take initiative and assert themselves in socially acceptable ways.

The environment at the Weekday School encourages both autonomy and self-control. Children learn to handle their feelings in acceptable, socially appropriate ways. They are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and they learn that what they say and do is important and has an effect on others. By setting clear, age-appropriate expectations for behavior and letting children know what is expected of them, our teachers can engender success and minimize frustration.

### **Physical Development**

As children grow, their muscles develop and mature. Children are able to perform more complex and refined actions. Both gross and fine motor development are important, although gross motor skills usually come before fine motor development. At the WDS, students have the opportunity daily to use large muscles when running, climbing, pedaling, and other playground activities. Fine motor skills are enhanced through the use of classroom materials such as playdough, blocks, manipulatives, and writing materials.

## Spiritual Development

We know young children are very concrete thinkers and therefore find abstract concepts difficult to grasp. Thus, the faith values that we wish to instill in children are better “caught than taught.” Our chapel program is a very important example of one approach. On a biweekly basis, the children have the opportunity to have an interactive Bible experience using the Godly Play© Curriculum led by our Chapel Coordinator.

# Curriculum



## **Weekday School Curriculum**

The Weekday School offers a developmentally appropriate curriculum that according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), should delineate classroom content, identify the processes through which children achieve goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occur. We believe everything we do in the classroom is learning and thus part of our curriculum.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development through an integrated approach and includes activities that are based on children's interests and developmental level. It emphasizes learning as an interactive process. Learning activities and materials are concrete, real, and relevant to young children's lives, providing a variety of experiences that increase in difficulty, complexity, and challenge.

### **Creative Curriculum®**

The Creative Curriculum® provides a framework for our learning and teaching at the Weekday School by considering *how and what children learn, how children develop, the learning environment, the teacher's role, and the family's role.*

### **Conscious Discipline®**

Conscious Discipline® is an emotional intelligence program. This program allows children to make choices, be assertive, offer encouragement, and experience natural consequences. It teaches them that their actions and behaviors affect others – this program asserts responsibilities on all of the individuals in an interaction.

## **Curriculum by Classroom**

The infant program is interactive and stresses the importance of infancy by setting the stage for ongoing growth and development. It is the teacher's role to recognize the periods when a child is ready for interaction and when the child needs rest. Daily routines such as diapering and feeding are seen as teaching opportunities for language, physical, and social development.

In our toddler and two year old classes, we provide an environment which promotes social relationships and facilitates each child's individual growth. Daily activities are designed to foster active learning by allowing these children to choose activities or materials. During center times, your child may choose to paint, use sensory materials, do puzzles, participate in dramatic play activities, or look at books. These activity times provide opportunities to play alone, near peers, and/or with peers and teachers.

The preschool classes (3y and older) enjoy the same benefits as the younger classes with themes, concepts, and skills scaffolded into their daily interactions, activities, and materials. Problem solving, collaboration, and exploration are encouraged as pathways to knowledge and understanding.



## Child Assessment

A vital component of our program is on-going developmental assessment. The staff at the Weekday School is continually assessing the growth of your child through daily observation of their interaction with materials, classroom routines, peers, and adults. While the classroom teacher is the primary assessor, observations made by the assistant teacher and other Weekday School staff are incorporated through documentation and anecdotal records.

Formal school-based assessments are applied in a play-oriented fashion when teachers identify an area of strength or weakness. We currently use the Teaching Strategies GOLD© to guide our assessment of developmental milestones.

Though we are available to discuss your child's progress at any pre-arranged time, you will be invited once in the fall and once in the spring to a conference that shares your child's strengths and emerging progress. Parents receive written documentation at each conference.

In addition to documenting individual student growth and progress, this process allows our administration and staff to assess our instructional and administrative policies. We engage in on-going assessment to ensure we are providing a current and evolving curriculum.

## Policy Regarding Discipline of Children

We follow the principles of Conscious Discipline®, an emotional intelligence program based on the most current brain research. Fundamental to this theory is the assumption that children's brains are best prepared to learn when they feel safe and are a contributing member

of a community. Rather than administering punishment for poor choices, we teach children better ways to handle strong emotions or stress. These are skills they will be able to use throughout life. Teachers provide clear, consistent, and age-appropriate limits and help children learn to become increasingly responsible for themselves. When out-of-bound behaviors do occur, we believe it is important for children to understand why the behavior is inappropriate and how to handle the situation differently next time. Teachers establish predictable limits and help the children understand the consequences of their actions. They act as role models and encourage children's appropriate behavior.

We believe it is our responsibility to provide children with positive guidance, and in our experience, most children will respond well to our approach. In the event a child does not respond, we will notify the parents and work closely with them to develop a plan to help the child gain self-control and a positive attitude toward his peers.

We reserve the right to ask the parents to withdraw the child from the school:

- should the child's continued negative behavior put himself, his peers, or his teachers at risk for physical harm, or
- should the child damage Church property.

While we understand the developmental tendencies of many children to experiment with inappropriate language to shock others, withdrawal may also be requested for children who are verbally abusive, including the repeated use of inappropriate language which other families consider offensive.

## **Behavior Study**

Our goal is to assist a child that is struggling to make the transition to positive classroom participation. We will do all that is possible to help a child remain enrolled in a classroom while keeping the other children safe and engaged.

When undesired behaviors are unsafe and consistent enough to disrupt daily learning and activities, a behavior study will ensue. Classroom staff, the WDS director, and parents will formulate a plan to assist the child in successful transition and participation with the classroom family.

## **The Teacher's Role**

To teach effectively, we believe our teachers must always keep in mind the dynamics and needs of the group of children as well as the individual characteristics and needs of each child in the group. Teachers use their knowledge of child development to plan activities, create the learning environment, establish the schedule, and work with children individually and in small groups. Our philosophy encourages teachers to respect and value the differences among children. One of the ways to do this is to provide a variety of activities. In this way children learn to make choices. Allowing children to make choices is one of the teacher's best strategies for promoting positive behavior.

## **Staffing**

The Weekday School program is staffed to meet the needs of and promote the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of children, in accordance with guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Specific job descriptions and expectations for staff may be reviewed in the Weekday School Policies and Procedures Manual.

The high quality program that we are able to offer at the Weekday School is largely due to the talented and well-trained staff. All teachers are required to have at minimum a Child Development Associate Certificate (CDA) or equivalent in college credits. Continuing education and ongoing staff training are valued highly at the Weekday School. All staff are encouraged to take further coursework, such as: the CDA (Child Development Associate); or courses at Lord Fairfax Community College.

# Enrollment



## Enrollment

The school is open to all children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years regardless of race, color, creed, gender, or nationality. As in any outreach of the Church, we are obligated to offer a program consistent with the highest type of early childhood education and to provide an atmosphere in which children and teachers are learning to live in a Christian way.

## Class Groupings

Class groupings are initially created after enrollment week. Factors that guide these assignments include: children's ages, days of week they will be attending the WDS, and gender ratios. It is our belief that children grow socially when exposed to a variety of peers. Therefore, children together one year might not necessarily be placed together the next year. Teachers also grow from change; therefore, staff may not teach the same-aged children from year to year.

## Getting Started

We suggest that parents interested in enrolling children in our program take part in a pre-enrollment tour and observation session. The tour and observation session will help you make sure our program is the type of program you want for your child.

Once you have made the decision to attend the Weekday School, you will fill out an enrollment form and pay the enrollment fees; followed by a health and immunization record (submitted annually) and emergency card, all of which are required by the state agency that monitors and regulates our school. In addition, we must have proof of your child's identity, taken from the birth certificate and recorded - the necessary information required for compliance with the Department of Social Services.

Other forms are specifically designed for our use. These forms will help the primary teacher gather needed information to help your child adjust to preschool.

If any of the following information should change at any time, please notify us so that we can update your records:

1. phone numbers
2. home and work addresses
3. names of authorized persons to be contacted in case of your child's illness or injury and their home and cell phone numbers
4. names of persons authorized to pick up your child in the event that you are detained.

## Gradual Transition

One of the best ways to facilitate your child's adjustment is to plan for a comfortable introduction to the program. Young children have little experience in change and often need extra time to adjust. Gradual transition gives your child that time. Before the first week of school, we offer an Open House for students and parents. You and your child are invited to come in, meet the teacher, and explore the classroom together. If your child experiences difficulty adjusting, we will be happy to work with you and your child to develop a transition/separation plan to try to meet his/her needs.

# Policies and Procedures



## Facility

Our enrollment capacity is 140 students. Enrollment is calculated by the square footage requirements of the VDSS and NAEYC. A Liability Insurance certificate is available to view in the Weekday School office.

## Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation are: arrival time of 9:00 a.m. and dismissal time of 1:00 p.m. Infants may be brought in as desired from 9:00 a.m. on, if a shorter day is desired. The Weekday School is set up with a minimum of 160 teaching days based on the five-day program. We will make every effort to make up missed days.

## Inclement Weather Policy

All weather related announcements will be made by 7:00 a.m. You will receive information through the PLAYGROUND app with this information. It will also be posted to Facebook.

We will mimic the closings of Frederick County Public Schools, the following procedures will be followed:

- 1) School is closed.
- 2) ONE-HOUR DELAY: School opens at 10:00 am and dismisses at 2:00 pm
- 3) TWO-HOUR DELAY: School opens at 11:00 am and dismisses at 2:00 pm

## Dress Code

Busy, creative, learning play can be messy - regardless of the age of the child. We use washable paints during all art projects and smocks or shirts cover clothing, but we cannot guarantee spills or stains will be avoided. Please dress your child in play clothing that is washable and durable so she/he can enjoy our activities without fear of soiling an outfit. For your child's safety we ask that children not wear sandals, or flip-flops at school. If a shoe cannot be secured on a child's foot, it should not be worn to school. Sturdy, closed-toe shoes, such as tennis shoes, will do a much better job of protecting your child from injury.

## What Should My Child Bring to School?

A complete change of seasonal clothing, including shoes and appropriate outerwear

On a daily basis, what you need to bring depends on the age of your child. Parents of infants, toddlers and 2's are asked to provide the following:

diapers, wipes, and ointments (a specific "Medication Administration" Form will need to be filled out separately). Diapers are changed as needed. Experience indicates young infants may need 4-5 diapers and older infants, toddlers, and 2's need 2-4. Many parents prefer to leave a package of diapers and wipes in the classroom labeled with their child's name. In this case, the teacher will notify you when the supply needs to be replenished.

We do ask that children leave toys and similar distractions at home.

At the beginning of the school year, the teacher will send home a list of classroom supplies that your child should bring to school. This would include items to be shared by the class such as tissues, and wipes for general cleanup.

## Arrival and Departure Times

The Weekday School is open at 9:00 a.m. We encourage families to arrive no later than 9:15 a.m. so that children can participate in morning group activities. Children who come after 9:15 a.m. are welcome, but will need to request entry - push the PRESCHOOL button to the right of the door and, after identification, the door will be opened. An adult must accompany each child to the classroom and sign-in the child, as well as provide written notification of any change in daily pick-up for your child. A classroom teacher or assistant will greet you and your child. This provides for a smooth, safe transition for your child and also provides an opportunity for you to communicate with the teachers. Dismissal time is 1:00 p.m. Adults picking up children must come into the school and sign the child out.

Parking may be difficult at times. We ask for your patience and efficiency toward others trying to park. Parents **may not** park in the Church Staff parking spots OR the Market Street UMC lot adjacent to the playground, even if they are empty. When parked, please do not leave your car idling. There are two parking lots in the front of the church across the Loudoun Street Mall.

Children will be released only to authorized adults whom you identify on your enrollment papers. It is your responsibility to notify the school and complete new forms if there are any changes. If your child is to be picked up by someone who rarely comes to the school, it is best for you to phone the school and notify us. Please alert relatives and friends who are picking up your children that they may be asked to show identification.

## Lunch and Allergy Information

All of our children bring their own ready-to-eat lunches to school. The WDS will not prepare, wash or heat any part of the children's lunches. We will assist with opening containers and general table, self-help and feeding skills.

For infants, toddlers and two year olds, we ask that you send the following:

1. formula (or milk) must be in permanently labeled bottles with the child's name and date of preparation. Each bottle must be capped and non-breakable. Formula (or milk) that is unfinished and unrefrigerated after one hour will be discarded.
2. nutritious food for children not yet on table food along with utensils. Baby food in jars must also be labeled with the child's name. Food opened and not finished must be taken home. No food will be used again once it is opened. Infants will not share food.
3. foods that are cut into ¼" pieces for infants and ½" pieces for toddlers and two year olds.

*Please note that no nut products are allowed in infant, toddler and two year old classes. Read packaged food labels carefully before sending them to school.*

For our other preschoolers, lunches should include a drink and ice pack if necessary. We will not serve a snack. For children **younger than four**, we ask that the following food items not be packed in lunches: hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, raw carrots, raw peas, hard pretzels, or spoons of peanut butter. These items may be potential choking hazards for children. **No popcorn – any age**. Please note that some children have nut (or other food-related) allergies. Signs are posted on classroom doors where this applies. Refrain from sending any nut products with your child in these classrooms. Be sure to read labels carefully on foods sent to school. Families whose children are in rooms where there is a nut-related allergy will receive detailed information about safe foods and procedures prior to the beginning of the school year.

## Outdoor Play

We believe that in order for children to be healthy, they need fresh air and exercise. Our supporting agencies concur and require us to provide outdoor time for children every day, weather permitting. Parents are advised to be aware of daily weather conditions so appropriate outdoor wear is sent to school with the child. Children will be taken outdoors in hot and cold weather and teachers will monitor the conditions and limit the time children are outside to assure children are neither too hot nor too cold. It is our policy that if a child is too sick to go outdoors, the child is too sick to be in school. We cannot honor requests to keep a child inside while her/his class is outdoors.

## How We Will Communicate About Your Child

Communication is important. A school newsletter will be posted on the website and sent via email each month. Teachers will send bi-monthly classroom reports by email to the families of their students. Teachers will send home daily notes for infants and toddlers to relate the child's activities that day.

Conferences are offered twice a year and at other times as requested by the teacher or parent. During these conferences we will discuss your child's progress, accomplishments, and challenges at school. We encourage you to share what is happening at home.

Parent surveys are distributed at least once a year in order for us to gather feedback. We use that information to develop objectives for the next year. Should you have any questions or suggestions, please notify your child's teacher or the director. Open lines of communication will enable us to provide you with the service you expect and value.

The supervision of your child's growth and training is our joint responsibility. We want to know and understand your child, so feel free to discuss with us any problems your child may be experiencing. Specific instructions concerning feeding, health, medicine, etc. must be in writing and signed by parents. When you have questions or concerns, we ask that you communicate first with your child's teacher. In addition, you are always welcome to make an appointment with the director.

## Parental Visits

Parents are welcome at any time. We encourage our parents to be involved in our school. Parents may choose to eat lunch with their child or spend time observing their child in the classroom setting. Other opportunities include:

1. Assisting with fund-raisers,
2. Serving on a special events committee,
3. Participating in our "Meals for Moms" program,
4. Serving as "Parent Liaison."



## **Volunteering in Your Child's Classroom**

Parents may wish to volunteer time to assist in their child's classroom. Helpful ways to assist may include:

1. assisting with paperwork,
2. assisting with children's journal writing,
3. reading to children,
4. assisting with art projects.

We do ask that before volunteering you meet with your child's teacher to determine the opportunities available and to develop specific dates and times when a volunteer is needed. All volunteer activities will be planned by the teacher and performed with the teacher's guidance.

The goal for classroom volunteers is strictly to help the teacher, assistant, and children. Therefore, we ask that respect be shown to the teacher's needs, children's interests, and group dynamics. Should an observer's or volunteer's presence within the classroom cause unnecessary disruption and/or stress for the teacher, assistant, or children, then the teacher may ask the observer or volunteer to leave the classroom.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please check with your child's teachers before making your plans. In order to comply with safety standards, food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers (with a list of ingredients available on the package). To ensure the safety of children in our care, we ask that no balloons be brought or sent to school. Balloons have been found to be extremely dangerous. Your child may choose to greet arriving students by ringing our school bell to celebrate his/her birthday.

## **Field Trips**

We like children to have the opportunity to learn about our community by providing recreational and educational trips. We require your signed authorization for each trip. Teachers are required to prepare field trip plans prior to each trip. You will be notified of all scheduled trips. Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from field trips. In order to comply with insurance regulations, teachers may not arrange for or transport children.

## Wellness Policy

Based on state regulations and our facility limitations, we are unable to care for children who are ill. If your child is unwell we ask that they remain at home until symptoms subside. If your child becomes unwell after you leave your child at school, we will notify you. Your child should be picked up as soon as possible.

The teaching staff, as well, will not come work when ill and carrying a fever.

The following list describes some of the most common illnesses that we see and the Weekday School policy on care and treatment. In addition to the following examples, if your child seems unusually irritable, lethargic, or generally “not himself/herself,” but shows no other symptoms, we will notify you and a decision will be made about whether he/she should remain at school.

**Contagious Diseases** – If your child is exposed to or contracts a contagious disease (i.e., chicken pox, pink-eye, etc.), you need to report this to the director so that other parents can be notified. Contagious diseases tend to have incubation periods. For example, the incubation period for chicken pox is two weeks. Children who contract a contagious disease must stay at home until all danger of contagion has passed.

**Fever** – A child with a fever (100°F) should be kept home until the child has been fever free for at least 24 hours (without the use of medication). (Although your child may have a normal temperature in the morning, body temperatures at that time tend to be normally low, and fevers usually return during the day.) If a child develops a fever while in the program, parents are to take the child home as soon as possible.

**Vomiting** – A child who is vomiting will be sent home. The child should not return to school until the vomiting has stopped. A child should remain home until she/he has eaten and digested at least one meal.

**Rashes** – Rashes may have a variety of causes. If your child develops a rash, we will call to talk to you about it and possibly recommend you contact your pediatrician. A child with a communicable rash should be kept home until the rash has subsided.

**Allergies** – Please inform us of any allergy your child is known to have. The information in your child’s file provides a space for listing your child’s allergies on both the general information form and the medical information form. A list of allergies will be posted in each room. Teachers will be informed of both a child’s allergies and treatments for their symptoms. Teachers will take every precaution to prevent children from coming into contact with a known allergen.

**Runny noses** – Generally, a clear discharge is not cause for concern, while a thick yellow or greenish discharge might be a sign of a more serious condition. Teachers will use their own discretion in sending a child with a runny nose home, particularly when it seems to be interfering with a child’s ability to function in the preschool program.

**Head lice** – Incidence of head lice is not unusual in a school environment. If we find nits on your child, we will call you to take him/her home. Your pediatrician can recommend one of the special shampoos that are on the market for treatment of head lice. Children may return to the Weekday School when they are nit free.

**Diarrhea** – A child who has diarrhea while at school shall be sent home and may not return until the condition is under control. If your child has an allergy, condition, or is on medication which commonly causes diarrhea, please alert the Weekday School staff.

The Weekday School staff will adhere to the above rules and restrictions as well.

Children and staff must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before they return to school.

## Can My Child Be Given Medication While at School?

State regulations only allow staff members who have successfully completed Medical Administration Training (M.A.T. or P.M.A.T.) to administer medication. When prescription medication is necessary, we must have a medical consent form signed by the child’s physician. Parents are required to complete and sign a consent form for any medications

which are to be given to the child at the school. State regulations are very specific about administering medicines to children. Copies of state requirements and consent forms are available in the director's office.

Often, medication can be administered before the child is brought to school or in the evening, avoiding medication at school. If this is not possible, we prefer to administer medication once a day, to avoid confusion and to ensure proper documentation. You may wish to ask your pharmacist to provide you with two labeled bottles for the medications so that one can be left at school and one at home.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The school has an emergency preparedness plan in place for dealing with emergencies and security. We conduct monthly emergency drills for evacuation and severe weather. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom of the school. In the unlikely event the school is severely damaged and declared unsafe, plans are made to evacuate children to safety where they will await arrival of parents or persons authorized to pick them up. Should such an emergency occur, the Director will send a message via Blackboard Connect® and post a notice at the school. Appropriate agencies will also be notified in the event of an emergency at the school.

We do everything possible to minimize accidents through various safety programs, facility inspections, routine maintenance, and consistent policies and procedures. The Weekday School is covered by public liability insurance. Should an accident occur, we will contact you immediately. In order to reach you, it is imperative that you provide us with cell phone numbers and current home and work numbers. We complete written documentation of all accidents.

### **Ensuring a Safe Environment**

A safe environment is a top priority at the WDS. In accordance with these goals, we have several rules that must be followed for the safety of our children:

1. Notify the school and teacher when someone new will be picking up your child – we will not release a child to an unauthorized individual and will check IDs.
2. Keep your child's emergency information and your contact information up-to-date.
3. In the case of separated or divorced parents, the law stipulates we cannot determine which parent may pick up a child. We must release children to either parent; regardless of which parent had enrolled the child, unless the custodial, enrolling parent has a court order. In that case, we must retain a copy of the court order in our files. Parents should inform the school if there are any issues with custody of the child.
4. Children will not be released without an adult escort from the premises. Our parking lots are frequently busy, and we want to ensure that children are always safe.

## Biting Policy

Children biting other children is the most common and the most difficult occurrence in toddler and two year old classes. Unfortunately, it happens in even the best programs. It is not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers. Biting incidents happen quickly, and a pattern and epidemic of biting behavior may occur in a very short period of time in spite of close supervision and intervention.

At the Weekday School, we feel a responsibility to all children we serve. Our goal is to provide a safe environment for all children and when biting occurs, the teacher and director will analyze the environment and make adaptations to reduce biting. In reality, biting behavior can be very difficult to change and requires time, patience, and understanding from all who are involved.

When a child bites, we:

1. immediately remove the child who bites from the situation.
2. attend, console, and administer first aid to the child who was bitten. We help this child re-enter play when he/she is ready.
3. firmly remind the child who bites that biting is not allowed, ask them to help in caring for the child who was bitten and help the biter to see that they have hurt someone else.
4. do not release the name of the child who bites, as this is not constructive and can make a difficult situation worse. We do, however, send home a report describing the incident.

To help a child who is biting, we:

1. observe the child to see if there are any common variables as to the time of day or the situation. Observation helps us in trying to identify the motivation of biting. Children bite for many reasons and each case calls for a different approach.
2. The parents, teacher, and the director will discuss the situation and possible behavior modification techniques.

If you are the parent of a child who bites, we want you to know that we will work with you and your child to change this behavior. This takes time and cooperation between caregivers and parents. Appropriate strategies will be identified and all adults involved (parents, teachers, and school director) will be responsible for consistent implementation of behavior modification techniques. Occasionally, children become stuck in a pattern of biting that does not respond to behavior modification techniques. In this event, you may be asked to withdraw your child from the program.

## Family Participation

The Weekday School staff and administration strive to keep lines of communication open with families. The monthly school newsletter, twice monthly classroom newsletters, school-wide emails, website, and media presence foster that communication, as well as the in-school drop-off and pick-up. Please use the resources we have established to remain aware of events and schedules at the WDS school.

At any time, you are invited to schedule an informal meeting with your child's teacher or director to ask questions about programming, instruction, assessment, and your child's progress.

## Procedures for Filing a Complaint

We strive always at the Weekday School to accommodate the needs of our children, parents, and staff. We are committed to maintaining effective and positive communication with children, parents, and other staff members. We realize that situations may arise in which parents have questions and/or concerns about policies, procedures, or incidents within the school. We will do our best to work together with the parents to resolve any issues. Should a parent continue to have a concern, the following procedure should be followed.

Address the question or concern to:

1. your child's teacher - this is ALWAYS a critical first step if the question or concern relates to the class or your child's participation within the class.
2. the Weekday School Director.
3. the Weekday School Team.
4. the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church.
5. First Presbyterian Staff Relations Committee.
6. NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) (Please note that before initiating this step, the NAEYC guidelines state: "The complainant must have exhausted all possible strategies within the program to resolve the situation, such as talking to the teacher, the director, the board, or other administrative organizations, prior to filing a formal complaint with the Academy.")

Should a parent continue to express dissatisfaction with the Weekday School, then that parent may choose to withdraw the child from the school. If the director and the Weekday School Team feel that all strategies have been exhausted in seeking to resolve an issue, with no agreeable outcome, then the Weekday School Director may ask the parent to withdraw the child from the school.

# Tuition and Fees



Tuition will be due as follows:

- A non-refundable deposit of \$100 per child will be due by June 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be applied toward September's tuition.
- The remainder of September's tuition will be due by August 10<sup>th</sup>.
- For October – April, tuition will be due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

The registration fee and annual tuition will be based upon 160 teaching days and full or part-time status of the students. The annual tuition will be paid in nine (9) monthly installments or in full at the beginning of the school year. Full time students are considered to be those attending five (5) days per week and part-time students are those attending two (2), three (3) or four (4) days per week. There are no deductions for days missed due to illness or vacations.

For continuous school closures exceeding two weeks (10 consecutive school days), reimbursements for 50% of the paid tuition for those days will be issued. This does not include weather related closures. The Weekday School does its best to make up for closures though this is not a day-to-day guarantee.

## **Payment Options**

You may choose to participate in ACH withdrawal. Just complete the form and return it to the school. Your account will be charged on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. Or you may put your tuition check or cash in the envelope and place it in the locked box just inside the Cameron Street entrance.

## **Prorated Tuition**

Should a child enroll in or withdraw from the Weekday School within the monthly attendance period, the tuition will be prorated based on the amount of time enrolled. The prorated tuition schedule is as follows:

One week attendance - 25% of monthly tuition

Two weeks attendance - 50% of monthly tuition

Three weeks attendance - 75% of monthly tuition

The parents should give notice of withdrawal to the Director no less than one (1) month prior to the child's last day.

## **Late Tuition Payments**

Tuition is due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month. Contact will be made with families whose tuition payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup>. There will be a late charge each month of \$35.00 for any tuition due and not received by the 10<sup>th</sup>. If circumstances warrant, the parent or guardian should contact the director if payment cannot be made by the 10<sup>th</sup> so that a payment plan or application for scholarship can be discussed.

If an account is delinquent for 60 days, the child will be removed from the program. If the account is not current by June 1, the child may not be eligible for placement the following year.

### **Returned Check/Non-Sufficient Fund Fee**

The Weekday School charges a fee for returned checks for non-sufficient funds. A fee of \$35 will apply if payment is returned for nonsufficient funds.

### **Late Pick-up Notice & Fees**

As a school staff, we are committed to being present with your children from 9:00 – 1:00 each day. We ask that families commit to picking up their children by 1:00 each day. We realize that occasionally circumstances beyond your control may affect your ability to arrive by 1:00. Please call the Weekday School office (leave a message, when necessary) if you know you will be arriving late. Please call the Weekday School office to let us know of any transportation changes during the preschool day so we may notify your child and his or her teacher. In the absence of extenuating circumstances, should a family fail to adhere to the 1:00 pick-up time, the family will be contacted and given a warning on the first occurrence. A late fee will be charged for all subsequent late pick-ups, unless there are extenuating circumstances. The following fees shall apply: \$20 for the first fifteen minutes and \$5 for each additional minute thereafter. This fee will appear on the next scheduled tuition invoice.

### **Scholarships**

Scholarship funds are available for families with financial need. Scholarships can be awarded at a variety of levels. The process can begin at the time of registration or anytime during the school year. Please see the director for more information and an application packet. Applications are confidential and are reviewed by a scholarship committee.

### **Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 63.2-1509, we are required to report incidents of suspected child abuse and neglect.



**PARENT MANUAL COMMITMENT**

The policies and procedures contained herein are not inclusive. Other procedures may be published or posted on the website, as well as in the facility and shall be binding as if set out herein and in full. The Weekday School from time to time may adopt and/or amend the established policies and procedures, not herein covered, and all enrolled participants will be obligated to observe these policies.

I acknowledge that I have read the First Presbyterian Weekday School Parent Manual (can be found on the website, [www.fpwds.com](http://www.fpwds.com)) and by signing below agree to adhere to the policies and procedures contained therein, including the delinquent tuition policy and \$35.00 late fee if the tuition is not paid by the 10th of every month; a fee of \$35 for non-sufficient funds; and a late pick up of children of \$20 for the first fifteen minutes and \$5 for each additional minute thereafter.

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

Parent of: \_\_\_\_\_