



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

## OF TALLAHASSEE



# WEEKDAY EDUCATION

PARENT HANDBOOK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Welcome

From the Director and Minister to Children.....	3
Mission Statement.....	4
Philosophy & Motto.....	4
Professional Staff.....	4

## Getting Started

Enrollment Process.....	5
Items Supplied By Parents.....	5
Items Supplied By Center.....	5

## Operational Procedures

Center's Hours and Daily Schedule.....	6
Open Door Policy.....	6
Attendance Policy.....	6
Sign In and Sign Out/Child Pick up Policy.....	7
Payments and Fee Schedule.....	7
Prorating Payments.....	7
Withdrawals.....	8
Late Pick Up Policy.....	8
Emergency Policy In Case of Failure to Pick Up Child.....	8
Suspensions and Terminations.....	9

## Health and Safety

Child Abuse and Reporting.....	10
Rilya Wilson Act.....	10
Safety and Security.....	10
Environmental Emergency Procedures.....	11
Illness Policy.....	12
Medication Policy.....	13
Immunizations.....	14
Injuries and Accidents.....	14
Allergy Policy.....	15

## General Information

Meals and Nutrition Policy.....	16
Discipline Policy.....	16
Clothing and Personal Items.....	17
Nap and Rest Times.....	18
Birthdays.....	18
Holidays.....	18
Program.....	19
Curriculum.....	19
Assessment.....	20
Toilet Learning.....	20

## The Parent's Role

Parent Conferences.....	21
Parent Engagement.....	21
Parent Communication.....	21
Grievance Procedure.....	22
Parental Responsibilities.....	22

## Support Services

Developmental Screenings.....	23
Hearing and Vision Screening.....	23

Enrichment Activities .....	23
-----------------------------	----

Parent Handbook Receipt .....	24
-------------------------------	----

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Weekday Parent,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share in the most impressionable years of your child's life – birth through five. I take seriously the awesome responsibility that lies ahead: to insure that every child is nurtured by well equipped and loving teachers, and to provide a stimulating environment for maximum growth, that is clean and safe. The gift of life is truly sacred, and at First Baptist Church, we strive to honor God by honoring each of our children as individual people with physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs that must be met.

May God Bless you and your family as we endeavor to bond together with one purpose—to provide a firm foundation in which your child will build upon for life...

Sincerely,



Debra Speights  
Weekday Education Director

## FROM THE MINISTER TO CHILDREN

Dear Weekday Parent,

As you have looked to us for your weekday childcare needs, I would invite you also to give prayerful consideration to exploring the possibilities of our larger church's ministry to your family. The care and compassion we employ in caring for your child is something we seek to do in all of our ministries. If you're not already involved in a local community of faith, we want you to know that we have a place for everyone in your family at First Baptist Church.

Thank you again for supporting our church's Weekday ministry. We look forward to the days ahead and the opportunities we will have to partner together in your child's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development. Don't hesitate to let us know how better we can serve you in these respects.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Smith  
Minister to Children

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to delicately care for, nurture, and motivate children ages birth thru five years, using a Biblically based, age-appropriate learning environment that will provide the foundation for Christ centered living.

## PHILOSOPHY

The Weekday Education department of First Baptist Church believes that children are a gift from God. Every child is important and is respected. We seek to establish positive personal interactions with each child and his/her family. We believe that children learn best through play. Daily activities are planned to guide spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Parents serve one of the most important roles in child development and are encouraged to participate in parent conferences and classroom activities.

## MOTTO

*Honoring, Encouraging, and Nurturing for life...*

Honoring	It is our desire to honor God by putting Him first in every way: prayer, Bible lessons, and lifestyle.
Encouraging	Our staff seeks to encourage our parents through daily words of kindness and suggestions.
Nurturing	Ultimately, we strive to love each child individually so that they can reach their full, God-given potential for life...

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Each staff member is trained in their field, attends ongoing in-service trainings, participates in monthly staff meetings and completes continuing education as required by the state in addition to professional development training.

The staff has daily interaction with the director and/or floor supervisors and monthly meetings to air concerns, suggest ideas or to ask about specific situations. Additionally, the director conducts formal observations of each staff member, noting highlights in their techniques, special talents and areas for improvement.

Each person employed or volunteering with Weekday Education has passed a Level 2 background check, which includes a federal and state criminal records check.

# GETTING STARTED

## ENROLLMENT PROCESS

The Weekday Education Director desires to meet with all prospective parents, conducting a thorough tour and in depth discussion of the parents' needs and preferences. Both parties must feel comfortable and confident that the placement into Weekday is a good fit. Once this is done and a spot is confirmed to be available, you should proceed to the following items.

- ☐ Complete Registration Confirmation Form
- ☐ Pay Registration Fee
- ☐ Submit completed and notarized enrollment forms
- ☐ Submit Direct Debit/Credit Card Authorization Form
- ☐ Read Parent Handbook and Know Your Child Care Facility brochure
- ☐ Sign Acknowledgement of Receipt (For Handbook and Know Your Child Care Facility Brochure)
- ☐ Review and sign Voluntary Preschool (VPK) Policies if your child will be four by August 31 of this year
- ☐ Attend Orientation or schedule a meeting with the new teacher
- ☐ Submit DOH Form #3040 – Health Form before the first day of child's attendance
- ☐ Submit Immunization Certificate before the first day of child's attendance
- ☐ Purchase supply items needed for your child (see supply list)

## ITEMS SUPPLIED BY PARENTS

- Formula or breast milk for infants not drinking milk
- 2-4 bibs (more, if needed)
- Diapers (with first and last name on each diaper), 6-8 per day
- Two complete changes of clothes (including underwear and socks); if toilet training, at least 3 extra changes
- Fitted crib sheet for mats and a small blanket (only if your child will be sleeping on a mat)

## ITEMS SUPPLIED BY CENTER

- Breakfast snack, lunch, and afternoon snack
- Wipes
- Crib linens
- Burp clothes

# OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

## **HOURS AND DAILY SCHEDULE**

Weekday Education is open Monday – Friday, from 7:30AM until 5:30PM. A daily schedule will be posted in your child's classroom for your viewing. If you have questions or ideas concerning your child's daily schedule, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the Weekday Director.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

At Weekday Education we have an open door policy. You are welcome to call or visit our center or your child at any time during our open hours. We only request that your visit does not interfere with our scheduled activities.

You will be provided an access code for entry in the building. Please do not give this code to anyone who occasionally drops off or picks up your child. Alternate pick up persons should buzz in by pressing the silver button near the main entrance door downstairs. For security, do not allow any person unknown to you to enter as you enter or exit. If someone does come in that you do not know, please inform office personnel or the nearest teacher.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Your child is expected to attend the center on a daily basis. For maximum growth each child needs to be in attendance no later than 9:00AM.

If your child will be late, please inform the Weekday office so that he or she may be included in the lunch count.

All children must be signed in and out of the center on a daily basis. Please be sure to notify all authorized persons to first report to the main office downstairs.

Your monthly tuition payment will remain the same regardless of absences in order for your child to receive care without interruption.

## **SIGN IN AND SIGN OUT/CHILD PICKUP POLICIES**

Signing your child in and out is required by licensing, and will be enforced.

No children will be released to an unauthorized person. Each child must be signed in and out daily. Each child must also have a Pick-up Authorization Form on file indicating those individuals (who must be over the age of 14) authorized to remove the children from Weekday Education. Parents are also required to leave three contact person names and telephone numbers in case of emergency.

Any day that anyone other than a parent is picking up your child, please contact the main office or email the director or office administrator. If a change is made regarding who will pick up your child during the course of the day, please call our office and we will inform the teacher and make a note in the Procure sign in computer.

Please ask anyone picking up your child to bring a photo I.D. with them. Until the center staff becomes familiar with authorized individuals, photo ID will be required to verify the person's identity upon pick up.

## **PAYMENTS AND FEE SCHEDULE**

- A Registration fee of \$100 must be paid at the time you register your child and annually, each August. This fee is non-refundable.
- Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. A late fee of \$15 will be assessed after the 10<sup>th</sup>.
- If you pay twice a month the second half of tuition is due on the 15<sup>th</sup>, and considered late after the 20<sup>th</sup> and subject to a late fee.
- Weekday uses an automated payment system that receives only Credit Cards or ACH payments.
- Weekday will only implement a rate change after a 30 day notice is given.
- A family discount of \$40 will be given for each addition child in the family enrolled at Weekday.
- If an account is not paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, we will not be able to provide services for that family until the account is paid.

## **PRORATING PAYMENTS**

If your child enters the program between the 1st and the 15th of the month, you will need to pay for the full month. If your child enters the program any time after the 15th of the month, you will be charged for half of the month. This policy also applies to withdrawals and refunds. If your child is withdrawn between the 1st and 15th of the month and the office is notified two weeks in advance, a half month payment is due. If your child is withdrawn between the 15th and the last day of the month and the office is notified two weeks in advance, you must pay for the entire month.



## **WITHDRAWAL**

Notification of withdrawal from Weekday must be submitted on an official withdrawal form (can be picked up from the front office). This notification must be received at least two weeks before actual date of withdrawal to be considered for proration or a refund.

## **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

Weekday Education closes at 5:30PM. Students are brought to the front offices at 5:25 and parents are called at 5:30.

If your child is not picked up by closing time, there will be a late fee of \$10 for the first 15 minutes and \$2 for every minute after that. Late pick-up fees will be applied to your account. We understand that emergencies occur. In case of an emergency, please call the center so that we know and can make arrangements at that time.

## **EMERGENCY POLICY IN CASE OF FAILURE TO PICK UP CHILD**

In the event that a child is not picked up by 5:30PM, staff shall use all contact information in attempting to arrange for the earliest possible pick up of any child remaining in the center. Staff shall contact the director in the event that parents are unreachable and when an alternate pick up might need to be arranged. If we have not had phone contact with a parent by 6:15PM, we will begin calling emergency contacts. If we release a child to one of the emergency contacts and staff then leaves for the evening, the information will be left on the parent's voicemail, if possible, and a message will be posted on the center's front door.

If a child has not been picked up by one hour after the center's closing time or after notification of emergency evacuation, and all attempts to reach parent/guardians have been unsuccessful, staff shall call the police or sheriff (depending on the jurisdiction of where the child lives) and request that they assist in locating a responsible adult to pick up the child. If the police report that they are unable to locate a responsible adult, then staff shall immediately call Department of Children and Families Protective Services and request that they arrange to have someone from Protective Services pick up the child from the center as soon as possible.

Staff will carefully and fully document all efforts, including names and times, throughout this process and provide documentation to the director the following workday.



## **SUSPENSIONS AND/OR TERMINATIONS POLICY**

The policies outlined in this handbook are strictly enforced to provide fairness to all parties that render and receive services. It is therefore important that each parent/guardian carefully review the conditions listed below.

Suspensions or Terminations will be enforced for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Failure to pay for services rendered (fees) or failure to pay on time
2. If receiving tuition assistance or VPK voucher, failure to maintain eligibility requirements and/or re-determination responsibilities
3. Failure to provide updated Health and Immunization Records for each child as required
4. Failure to abide by Weekday Education rules and regulations
5. Aggressive parent and or child behavior (name-calling, cursing, threatening, or otherwise abusive behavior)

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## CHILD ABUSE AND REPORTING

All childcare personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with section 39.201(F.S.) of the Florida State statutes.

## RILYA WILSON ACT

The Rilya Wilson Act is a court ordered attendance reporting law that was designed to protect children who are in Protective Services. This is explained in further detail on the flyer posted in the main office. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to discuss them with the center's director.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

You will be provided an access code for entry into the building. This access code is changed quarterly or as needed. Please do not give this code to anyone who just occasionally drops off or picks up your child. For security, do not allow any person unknown to you to enter as you enter or exit. If someone does come in that you do not know, please inform office personnel. There are panic buttons located throughout the center, so please inform a staff person of suspicious people or situations.

The outdoor play area is secured with a childproof gate as well as a child proof latch used for locking the gate when children are present. The door to the playground remains locked and is accessed by teachers using a special entrance code.

Weekday Education maintains daily sign in and sign out sheets via an electronic sign in system called Procare. This system helps us keep track of the dates and times that children were on the premises. A photo ID is required for pick up of children by an adult other than the custodial parent or guardian. Emergency numbers are called in the event of an illness, injury or other emergency.

The physical environment is maintained, cleaned, sanitized, and secure. The program has a fire alarm and burglar alarm. The local police are nearby and are familiar with the hours and activities of the program. Monthly fire drills are conducted to train the staff and the children on how to have an orderly and quick exit from the buildings, should an emergency arise.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The center has specific procedures in place for: **building emergencies, severe weather conditions, and threats of violence**. Please view our EEP in the main office for more details. Center wide drills are conducted every month to make sure that we are prepared for the worst-case scenario. Parents will also receive an update via email or phone regarding any actual emergency incident that occurs at the center.

### **BUILDING EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a fire, after evacuating the building staff members are instructed to take attendance and record all students who are not present. If the fire requires evacuation of the outside area, students will be taken to First Presbyterian Church (located on the corner of Park Avenue and Adams Street) where the teacher will immediately take attendance again to make sure all the children are accounted for. Parents will then be called/ emailed to pick up their children.

The local fire department inspects the preschool annually by checking the expiration dates of all fire extinguishers, checking the fire alarm, checking the exit lights, and checking to see if the teachers follow the correct evacuation procedure through the use of unannounced fire drills.

In the event that problems arise with the electric, heating and cooling, or plumbing systems, students will be relocated to another part of the building. If the problem is more extensive, the parents will be called, requesting that they pick up their child (pick-up procedures will be observed). Parents will be notified if the center will need to be closed for the following day(s).

### **SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

In the event of severe weather conditions such as tornadoes, lightning or thunderstorms, or severe winds that occur before school begins, parents should use their judgment. If severe weather occurs while the children are attending the center, the teachers will take the children out of the classroom and walk them into the main hallway. This area has been approved by the fire department as a safe place for the children to be during severe weather conditions. Once the threat has passed, the children will then be returned to their classroom.

*We will be CLOSED when the Governor declares that State Offices are closed due to hurricanes, bad weather, or other disasters.*

### **THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

In the event of a threat of violence toward a child or the group's safety, the teachers are to follow these procedures: If the program must be evacuated, the teachers are to follow the same procedures for a fire emergency. If someone arrives (or threatens to arrive) with the suspected intent to harm a child, or staff, the teachers have been trained to go into lockdown mode inside of their classrooms and 911 will be called immediately.

## ILLNESS POLICY

Please be aware that physicians and the Department of Children and Families do not always agree, but we are licensed by the Department of Children and Families regulations. This means that the following procedures are directly from DCF and we must observe their policies for the safety of our children and our staff.

**Any child with any of the following will be sent home and may return to school when specified below:**

- Diarrhea – more than 2 watery stools; must be symptom free for 24 hours without the aide of symptom relievers (reoccurring diarrhea will be excluded from the center until the child has been tested and received a negative result for giardia, salmonella and shigellosis).
- Vomiting – Must be symptom free for 24 hours without the aide of symptom relievers.
- Undetermined Rash – any topical condition on the skin that is not normal for that child; may return with a note from the physician that states that the child is not contagious.
- Fever – 101 degrees or higher; Must be fever free without the aide of Tylenol for 24 hours.
- Head Lice – observing the lice on the scalp or itching of the head, neck or back of the ears; must be nit free and treated with an anti-lice shampoo.
- Strep Throat – must be on antibiotics for 48 hours before returning to school
- Nasal Drainage (green in color) – a green discharge from the nose accompanied by a fever of 100 degrees or higher or a cough; Must be fever free for 24 hours and may return with a note from the doctor that states that the green discharge is not contagious.
- Ringworm – Flat ring shaped areas on the body or on the scalp; a child with ringworm may return when on medicine for 24 hours and the site must be covered. If the ringworm is on the scalp the child must be on oral medication and also have the area covered.
- Thrush – white patches in the mouth or on the tongue; must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Mouth Sores (relating to Coxsackie's virus or Hand, Foot, and Mouth) – Blisters on the tongue, gums or roof of the mouth. Blisters may also be on the hands and feet; May return with a note from the physician that states the child is not contagious (usually 2-3 days).
- Pink Eye – red itchy eyes accompanied by drainage; must be on eye drops for 24 hours and free from eye drainage.
- Croup – A cough that sounds like a bark and a low grade fever; May return when fever free for 24 hours and when the barking cough has gone away.

For any other illnesses and the ones listed above, please get a doctor's note for clearance to return to school.

Keeping a sick child at home will reduce the spread of illnesses in the classroom. It is a very long day for a child who is sent to school not feeling well.

Please do not put our staff in the difficult situation of having to send your child back home if you come back before the 24 hour period.

Please note that absences, regardless of the cause, will not entitle the parent to a refund or discount on the regular rate.

Thank you in advance for helping to keep our children as healthy as possible.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

- No medication shall be given by child care personnel without the signed permission of the parent or legal guardian.
- A medication authorization form must be filled out completely and turned in to the main office.
- We require weekly parent acknowledgement for the length of time that the medication is administered.
- In order to administer over the counter medications, we must have a written form from you, authorizing use and dosage for your child.
- All medicine must be in original prescription container.
- Prescription medication must have a label stating the name of the physician, child's name, name of the medication, and medication directions.
- All prescription and non-prescription medication shall be dispensed according to written directions on the prescription label or printed manufacturer's label.
- All medicines must have child resistant caps.
- Medication which has expired will not be given.
- Medication is turned into the main office and will only be administered by the director, floor supervisor, office administrator or Minister to Children. The only medicine that is approved for classroom use is diaper cream.
- Tylenol will not be given for fevers as this may disguise a serious ailment.
- All medicine that is administered in the office shall be witnessed by a second party and signed with two signatures.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Florida Department of Children and Families requires every child enrolled to have a physical examination documented on form 3040 and an updated immunization record on form 680. These are provided to you by your child's doctor. Physicals are good for two years from the date of the physical. Immunization cards need to be updated by the expiration date located by the doctor's signature. According to Florida Statutes 65C-22.006 2d, *a childcare facility must receive proper immunization and physical forms within thirty days of enrollment.*

Failure to provide this information can be cause for removal from the program since current immunization records are required for centers to maintain a valid license. We perform audits of our immunizations on a regular basis in cooperation with the Department of Children and Families.

## **INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS**

Staff trained in First Aid/CPR are present at all times. In the event that a child becomes ill or injured anywhere in the facility, the supervising staff member will make an immediate decision as to whether the incident is a non-emergency or an emergency situation.

In case of a non-emergency:

1. Child is coherent and composed immediately after injury or illness.
2. Child has a small cut or scrape with little bleeding.
3. Child has little or no swelling
4. Child is able to move injured area, or does not experience pain when touched

The teacher will apply first aid measures such as stopping the bleeding, applying band aid and washing injury with soap and water. The teacher will fill out an accident report, notify the parent, and have the parent read and sign the accident report upon arrival. A copy will be provided for the parent and the original will be placed in the child's file. If the injury continues to get worse, the parents will be asked to pick up the child and take him/her to the doctor/hospital.

In case of an emergency:

1. Child is incoherent
2. Child cannot be consoled after the incident
3. Child has swelling or skin discoloration
4. Child is unable to move the injured area

Parent will be notified and/or an ambulance will be called.

## ALLERGY POLICY

The following policies and procedures regarding allergies have been developed to further protect the children in our care. These policies require the full understanding and cooperation of staff and parents.

- Children with a history of allergies will have these problems specified by the child's health care provider on their medical information form.
  - The director will review medical forms upon enrollment with parents, and if a child has a special medical need, a health plan will be developed. This plan will include written instructions from the child's physician regarding the management of his/her allergies. This written care plan must be in place within 30 days of enrollment. For children with life threatening allergies, a care plan must be in place before the child begins attending the program.
  - All staff who work with the child will be familiar with the care plan. The plan will be posted in the classroom along with a photo of the child. The plan will be clearly marked, as well as the location of any medications or EpiPens.
  - If the director determines that the program's food service cannot safely provide snack and/or meals, the parents will be responsible for providing substitute healthy foods, which will be served by the staff.
  - The care plan will be revised if medications change, and will be reviewed annually.
  - An allergy list is maintained for all children who are enrolled. It is posted in every classroom, in the sign out notebook and in the kitchen. A list will also be included on field trips.
  - The person who is responsible for food service will read all food labels to identify known allergens. No food will be served to children with allergies if a label of ingredients is not available for that product. Teachers will not serve food to children with allergies if there is any doubt about the food content.
  - For children with life threatening allergies, their classrooms will be clearly marked to exclude that food from the area. Other parents in the classroom will be educated about the importance of not bringing foods from home into the classroom without pre-arranging it with the teacher and making sure the foods are safe. Teachers will be aware of all foods entering the classroom (including their own food) and will exclude all foods that could contain life threatening allergies. If in doubt about any food, it must be excluded from the classroom. In these classrooms, celebrations may not include homemade foods and must include only foods that are clearly labeled for allergens. Those foods will be checked before they enter the classroom. In center wide celebrations (such as Thanksgiving Feast) where many classrooms and parents are involved, the center cannot ensure the safety of all of the foods that are brought into the facility for children with allergies. For these instances only, the child's parents are responsible for verifying and ensuring the safety of any foods that their child has access to or ingests during these events.
- 
- Due to the possibility of "cross-contamination" between groups, no food is allowed on any playground.
  - All staff members will be trained in the management of allergies and allergic reactions part of the orientation, including all substitutes and floaters. The topic will also be included in the staff's CPR/First Aid training as a refresher.
  - All parents must update their emergency medical information immediately upon any change in allergy conditions.
  - Staff will utilize an incident record to document a child's symptoms, staff actions/responses and a child's response during episodes when medications are given, if parents and/or physician's office or 911 is called in response to symptoms or illness. A copy of the incident record will be sent with the children if he/she seeks medical evaluation, or is taken to the hospital, and a copy is kept in the child's file.
  - Classrooms that have children who are allergic to animals will not expose the child to that type of animal, or have them as classroom pets.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## MEALS AND NUTRITION POLICY

Breakfast snacks, full course lunches, and afternoon snacks are provided by Weekday. Breakfast snack is served from 8:30-9:00AM. Breakfast snack is not served after 9:00AM and children arriving after that hour should eat prior to arrival. Lunch is served from 11:30AM-12:00PM. Lunch is a well-balanced, hot meal prepared by our kitchen staff. Afternoon snack is served between 2:30 and 3:30PM.

Our meals are planned around food children generally like and they are encouraged to try a variety of foods. We follow the USDA Meal Pattern Requirements for all meals, which ensure that the food we serve meets your child's nutritional requirements. Portions are served according to the child's age. Food is prepared, served and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

Parents may provide suitable substitutes for the items that their child cannot eat from the menu. Please review the posted menu for appropriateness for your child. Lunch and snack foods brought from home must meet the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program for the types of foods and portion sizes (USDA Meal Pattern Requirements are available upon request and also online at: [www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal\\_Patterns.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm)).

Food brought from home will be labeled with the child's first and last name, the date, the type of food, and any need for temperature control. Leftover food will be discarded. The only food that may be returned to the family is food that does not require temperature control, or food that came to the facility in a commercially wrapped package and that was never opened.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

The following discipline procedures are used at FBCTLH Weekday Education:

- Redirect younger children.
- Discuss the problem with children old enough to have good verbal skills and include them in the solution to the problem.
- If needed, "time alone" from activities in the classroom under teacher supervision.
- If the incident is a reoccurring one, or one that the teacher feels needs more attention we will bring the child to the office for "time alone" under adult supervision.
- In some cases, parents may be called to talk to their child over the phone or asked to come to the school and take the child home for the day.
- If a child has extreme disruptive behavior on a consistent basis, the director, the teacher, and the parent will meet to establish positive intervention to change the unwanted behavior. Weekday strives to protect all children from extreme, destructive or dangerous behavior of another child.
- After unsuccessful intervention, the child may be dismissed from the program.
- Infants establish their own schedules, are diapered when necessary and are never permitted to cry for an extended amount of time. Research clearly states that infants must have their needs met in order to develop trust.
- NO FORM OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WILL BE USED AT WEEKDAY EDUCATION. There is absolutely no punishment associated with toileting, eating, or napping. Weekday Education will not use humiliation, anger, scolding, hitting, or fear to control a child's behavior.

## **CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS**

Since the activities planned for your child may involve paints, play dough, water and outdoor play, we suggest the following in order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from play:

- Dress your child in play clothes that are washable, roomy and easy for them to manage (elastic waist pants that can be pulled up or down easily).
- Provide at least two changes of clothing in case of spills, accidents or emergencies.
- Provide an extra pair of socks and shoes for preschoolers.
- Label all items brought to the center including garments with a permanent marker. The center is not responsible for lost items. Bottles, food, pacifiers, and diapers must have first and last names written clearly to avoid mix up of items.
- Shoes are required at all times. Flip-flops and sandals are not permitted. They make outside play dangerous. Tennis shoes are best!
- We have ample toys for the children's play. We discourage toys brought from home other than items requested by teachers for "Show and Tell" days.
- For health and safety reasons, children 2 and under should not wear hair beads or other small hair items that can be swallowed. Please limit the use of bows, barrettes, earrings and other small, potentially hazardous items. If we find an item that may cause a hazard to the children, we will remove the item and place it in your child's bag.

We understand that many children have the need for security items. Although Weekday cannot be responsible for the toys or other items brought from home, security items may be used by the child during the day when needed and stored in the child's backpack at other times.

## **NAP AND REST TIMES**

For children under the age of 1 we do not have set rest periods, since it is more appropriate to follow the children's individual schedule and up until the age of 1 there is still much variation in the children's sleeping patterns.

Children ages 1-5 are required to rest from 12:30—2:30 but are allowed to sleep up until 3:00 if needed. Children who awake earlier will be engaged in quiet activities or outside time.

Teachers assist children in resting by reading stories, providing soothing music and rubbing backs. Children are not required to sleep but are expected to rest quietly on their mats during this time.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are exciting events for children! Although birthdays are special, we request that they be celebrated simply – no gifts, please. Feel free to visit with your child and his or her classmates during the day. If you would like to provide a special treat at lunch or snack time, we will be glad to arrange a convenient time. For birthday parties, allergy policies must be followed precisely. All food must be store bought with the list of ingredients on the label. Please see the allergy policy for more information.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We will be closed on the following holidays:

- Teacher In-Service (First Friday in August)
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day and Friday after
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (including the week of)
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

Note: If a holiday falls on a Saturday, Weekday will be closed on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday.

## **PROGRAM**

Weekday Education cares for, nurtures, and motivates children ages birth thru five years through a Biblically based, age-appropriate learning environment. Daily and/or weekly communication both written and verbal helps assure the best care for your child. We will post all planned experiences and also provide written communication. For all children, toys and materials are rotated to ensure that they are not bored and to maintain their interest in their surroundings.

Children, one year of age and younger, experience a variety of developmentally appropriate toys and materials, in a language rich environment. The infant and toddler staff primary focus is on valuable, secure experiences. The staff promote security since this is the number one indicator of successful experiences for a toddler.

Children, 2 years of age and older, participate in developmentally appropriate activities which are planned using specific thematic topics to enhance their learning experience. Classrooms are arranged into learning centers, which allow children the freedom to play and develop skills.

Opportunities are available for:

- Art and creative expression
- Science and discovery
- Sand and water play
- Language and reading development
- Block and transportation play
- Imaginative and dramatic play
- Music and movement
- Large and Small motor development
- Food experiences
- Math, problem solving and number concepts
- Health and safety
- Self-help routines

The daily schedule is a carefully planned balance between self-directed and teacher-guided activities. During “free play” children have the freedom to choose activities and playmates. Each child is offered large and small group experiences, one-on-one interactions, as well as time to play alone if he or she chooses. Children are encouraged to participate in activities, but are never forced to do so. The activity plan for the week is posted for your review and we encourage families to participate in our curriculum activities as often as they desire. We offer children an opportunity to play outdoors daily, weather permitting.

## CURRICULUM

We use the Wee Learn Curriculum. This curriculum provides activities that not only expose the children to six areas of development listed in the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards, but also helps lay a foundation for spiritual growth. It is play- based using hands on experiences with age appropriate Learning Activity Centers.

If you would like to read the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards for birth through age five they are available online at: [www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/oel\\_performance.html](http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/oel_performance.html).



### ***Florida School Readiness Performance Standards Six Areas of Children's Development:***

- *Physical Health*
- *Approaches to Learning*
- *Social and Emotional Development*
- *Language and Communication*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Motor Development*

## ASSESSMENTS

Teachers assess the development of each child based on the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-Lap). Each teacher has a list of skills appropriate for their age of children in which the teacher checks for mastery. The assessment is given in the fall and the spring and all observations are shared with the parent.

## TOILET LEARNING

Deciding when the right time to go through the process of toilet training is different for every child. When you feel your child is ready to toilet train, we will be happy to assist you. Your child may be ready to potty train if he or she is:

- Walking well
- Staying dry for several hours
- Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
- Appears to be aware of when they are wet or have a soiled diaper
- Is not fearful of the bathroom

There is no definite age when a child is ready for toilet training, but it should be done when both parents and teachers agree that it is appropriate. Both the parents and staff should use the same procedures for training so it does not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time. During training, it is very important to dress your child in suitable clothing (elastic waist pants that the child can easily pull down and up, no belts or snaps) and provide at least three changes of clothing.

# THE PARENT'S ROLE

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are invited to speak with classroom teachers or a director at any time concerning center matters or your child's development. It is best to talk directly to your child's teacher if you have concerns regarding your child or your child's classroom or to the director if you have concerns about a staff member, center policy or procedure.

We strongly encourage ALL parents to sign up to a conference at the designated time after fall and spring assessments. A parent conference must be held whenever a parent, teacher, or director feels it is necessary. Failure to meet with the center staff regarding your child's well-being could be grounds for dismissal.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

We encourage parents to become involved with the program. Weekday Education honors the important role of parents. Current research shows that children enjoy a more enriched learning experience when their parents take an active role in their education. As partners with your child's center, parents are encouraged to:

- Volunteer in their child's classroom
- Have lunch with your child
- Participate in seasonal events
- Share a talent (music, art, sewing, etc.)
- Donate items for Dramatic Play
- Attend Orientation and Open House events

We realize that our parents are very busy working and/or going to school. We encourage your involvement but we do not want to overburden you with high expectations, so it's up to you as to how involved you would like to become with the program.

## COMMUNICATION

We value our relationship and communication with parents, as we serve as partners in the care of your children. We encourage you to let us know anything that might help us in our work with your child, such as a move, developmental or medical needs, the birth of a baby, divorce or separation, death in the family, a new pet, etc.

Teachers will share information with you about your child's day on a daily basis through daily notes for infants and toddlers and weekly notes for our preschoolers. We will handle the situations that arise, but we will make parents aware of what we are doing in the classroom as it pertains to your child.

A monthly newsletter is distributed to provide information concerning center curriculum, policies, announcements, and general information about young children. We also try to inform you of community events. Please read these newsletters so you can remain informed about center changes and updates.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

If parents have any questions or concerns, we ask that the following procedures be enforced.

First, go directly to the person with whom you have a difference (the teacher, another parent or other staff member). Address the issue in a non-accusatory manner and attempt to reach a resolution. It is not acceptable to discuss an issue with any person not directly involved.



**REMEMBER:** When questions arise, many problems can be avoided by going directly to the person(s) involved!

Second, if the conversation with the person does not bring resolution, the concern should be addressed with the director. The director will then work with the parents in an attempt to resolve the problem.

Third, once the issue has been discussed in the order above, the issue may be brought to the Minister to Children or the Executive Pastor.

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

What we expect from parents:

- Read the bulletin boards, notices and newsletters that are sent home. Important information is shared with you on a regular basis, but you must make the effort to read it.
- Value staff members and show them common courtesy. Caregivers are more than just babysitters. We employ teachers who have training and education in child development. Show respect for their position as an important part of your child's development.
- Focus on your child when you pick him/her up. Take time to greet staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave.
- Pay your childcare fees on time. We are providing a valuable service and deserve prompt payment. Don't put the director in the position of asking you for payment or having to threaten dis-enrollment.
- Make sure your children follow center rules. If we ask that you not bring in toys or food, then, please do not allow your child to do this. This helps develop discipline and character in your child.
- Make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing. Children will get dirty in childcare. It is not realistic to send them in good clothing and expect teachers to keep them clean. Make sure clothing is easy to remove if your child is in diapers or in the process of toilet training.
- Keep a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent the spread of infectious illness. Although it may seem inconvenient at times, these rules also keep YOUR child from being infected by others as well.
- Address concerns in a respectful way and to the appropriate person. Do not bad mouth staff to others – seek to resolve your problem with the appropriate person.
- Try to minimize your child's time in child care. Most children have had a full day after 8 hours and need to re-fuel emotionally by spending time with their family.
- Communicate with teachers about what's going on at home.
- Make sure children get a good night's rest so they are ready for their busy day.
- Pick children up on time. Staff needs to get home to their families as well.



# SUPPORT SERVICES

## **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS**

All parents, upon enrolling their child, will receive a screening authorization form. The screening form gives the parent/guardian the option of accepting or denying permission for Weekday Education to administer an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) Developmental Screen to their child.

All children whose parents give permission will be screened during the first 45 days of enrollment and those screening results will be shared with the parents in a conference. All parents will be asked to acknowledge the results of the ASQ when they sign their conference form.

All screening information will be kept confidential and placed in the child's cumulative file.

If a child scores below the cut off score in any given area, the child's parents will be notified. A referral to the Early Learning Coalition's Warm-Line will be recommended to the parents. The screening form issued by the coalition will be utilized.

## **HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS**

The Early Learning Coalition offers free hearing and vision screening for any parents who wish to have one completed on their child. Look for more information in our monthly newsletter or contact the Early Learning Coalition to set up a personal screening for your child.

## **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

Extra Curricular Activities are offered through outside businesses. These activities are not sponsored by Weekday and all cost must be paid by participants directly to the organization. We do provide a separate payment box for these activities which is located in the main office downstairs.

# RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

Parent(s) and Guardian(s) must sign and date this form stating that they have received a copy of this handbook, read and agree to the center's policies and procedures. This handbook will be issued to the enrolled child's parent/guardian and the signed copies of this receipt will be held with Weekday Education in the child's file as proof of acceptance.

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Print Parent's Name

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Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Child's Name

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TALLAHASSEE  
WEEKDAY EDUCATION**

Monday—Friday 7:30am—5:30pm

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