

FIRST kids PRESCHOOL



Family Handbook 2019-2020

First Presbyterian Church
Post Office Box 789
Concord, North Carolina 28026-0789
704-788-2812
firstpresconcord.org

 First Kids Concord NC

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our First Kids family! We are honored that you chose us to be such an important part of your child's early social and educational experience.

Under the guidance of First Presbyterian Church, First Kids Preschool has been a leader in serving the needs of young children and their families in Cabarrus County for sixty-four years. In the 1950s First Presbyterian Church answered the prayers of many parents by developing classes for children with special needs before the county developed such programs. First Kids offered Kindergarten classes for many years, until they became standard in the public schools. Over the years First Kids has strived to be a model of quality by providing developmentally appropriate learning experiences in a caring and nurturing environment. In 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2019, individual members of our staff were recognized by both The Cabarrus-Rowan-Stanly Association for the Education of Young Children and Child Care Resources of Charlotte for outstanding teaching or directing.

First Kids currently offers classes for infants through Transitional Kindergarten. Many members of our staff hold Master's, Bachelor's, or Associate's Degrees in education, and several others hold degrees in other areas. Staff members are active in state and local childhood organizations and participate in in-service education for professional growth.

For years researchers have understood that a child's experiences and skills acquired during his preschool years correlate with his future success throughout the formal school years. What the children learn during this time will lay the foundation for their learning and development throughout life. Techniques used to work with young children, however, should be different than those utilized in traditional elementary school settings. Young children perceive the world differently than older ones. They construct knowledge as they explore through hands-on experiences. We teach the child, not the subjects.

So, what kinds of things will you see when you visit our school? You will see teachers who greet your child with warmth and enthusiasm as she enters the classroom and who provide her love and support throughout the day. You will see your child curious, excited, and mentally involved as he experiments with manipulatives and toys, reads or listens to stories, and dictates or writes his own ideas. Sometimes you will see your child engaged and persisting in individual projects. Other times you will see her solving problems as part of a collaborative group. You will see your child developing emotionally and socially as she builds relationships with others. You will see teachers talking with him about all these activities, helping him make thought-connections and challenging him to bridge upward. You will see a staff ready to build supportive relationships with you.

This Family Handbook describes even more of what you will find at our program. Please take time to read it carefully and let us know if you have any questions.

Now, what we would most like to see at preschool is YOU! You, as parents and grandparents, are a vital part of our program. We depend upon your support, cooperation, and involvement and hope that you will look upon us as a support network for your family.

Playing and Learning Together,

*Maureen O'Bryan
Preschool Director*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Annual Theme (“First Kids has Character” Monthly Topics)	7
Babysitting Program	9, 12
Background Screening (Staff)	12
Behavior Management (Discipline Policy)	16
Birthdays	17
Breastfeeding	13
“Building Healthy Lifestyles”	7
Calendar (Annual)	18
Car Seats	12
Cell Phone Use (During Pick-Up and Drop-Off)	11
Chapel Dates	5
Child Abuse/Neglect (Suspected)	12
Child and Youth Protection Policy	12
Class Lists (Distribution of Class Lists, Sharing Personal Information)	15
Color Days	7, 18
Contagious Illnesses	13, 14
Corporal Punishment	12, 16
Curricula	5
Discipline Policy (Behavior Management)	16
Drop-In Program	9, 12
Dressing Your Child for Preschool (Proper Preschool Attire)	6, 15
Drop-Off / Pick-Up Procedures	11
Elevator Safety	15
Emergency Plans	13
Enrichment Activities	5
Field Trips	16
Health & Safety Guidelines	13
Health Forms and Immunization Records	13
Healthy Lifestyle Choices	6
Healthy Lunch Ideas	17
Holiday Celebrations	17
Inclement Weather Policy	15
Illness (Should My Child Stay Home from School?)	14
Illness (What Happens When My Child Gets Sick at School?)	13
Lunch Guidelines	17
Medication (Administering at School)	13
Messages from Home	9
Mission Statement	5
Monthly Payments (How Much Do I Owe? How Do I Pay?)	10
Parental Support (Volunteer Opportunities)	4, 16

Parent-Teacher Conferences	16
Parties at School	17
Partners In Education	16
Party Invitations (Handing Out at School)	17
Pets at School	13, 15
Philosophy	5
Pick-Up Information Cards (What if my alternates change?)	11
Pick-Up / Drop-Off Procedures	11
Playground Safety & Guidelines	15
Preschool Committee Scheduled Meetings	8
Preschool Objectives	6
Registration Policy	9
Scholarship Program	9
Seat Belts/Car Safety Restraints	12
Severe Weather Policy	15
Sick Children (When Should I Keep My Child Home From School?)	13, 14
Six-Month Rule	12
Social Media	15
Staff Roster	8
Tax ID Number	10
Teacher List	8
Tuition (Annual, Monthly Rates; Where Do I Send My Payment?)	10
Two-Adult Rule	12
When Should I Keep My Child Home from School?	13, 14
Withdrawal Policy	9

PARENTAL SUPPORT

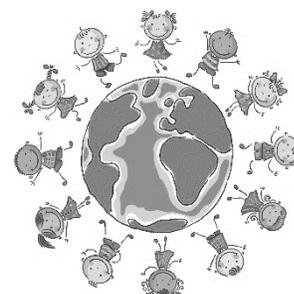
“It Takes A Village...”

We encourage strong partnerships between staff and parents. Throughout the year we will send you information regarding parenting workshops, volunteer opportunities at preschool, and community family events. Examples include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - Field Trips | - First Kids’ Annual Picnic |
| - Week of the Young Child Activities | - Coming Together For Children |
| - Spring Into The Arts Festival | - Classroom Parties |

We also invite you to take advantage of our office library to find a variety of books which help answer questions such as:

-  What are developmentally appropriate activities I can use at home?
-  How do I handle my sassy two-year old?
-  Is it normal for my one-year-old to bite?
-  Who are some of the best children’s authors?



First Kids is a village of families! We hope to see you often this year!

MISSION STATEMENT

First Kids' mission is to nurture the intellect, personality, body, and heart of each child by creating a safe and developmentally-appropriate environment and experiences that lay a foundation for lifelong learning. Our highly-educated and dedicated staff works in a loving Christian atmosphere and in partnership with parents to create a community of joyful, compassionate, and confident learners.

PHILOSOPHY

The process of children learning *how* to learn is best facilitated through all domains of development via hands-on, intentional play; engaging and meaningful experiences; and ample opportunities to form significant social connections.

CURRICULA

Our program is based on three primary areas which help build confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills: 1) teacher-student interactions, 2) ongoing observations and assessments, and 3) developmentally appropriate, high-quality learning environments. Infant/Toddler rooms are designed to provide nurturing, home-like experiences with a variety of sensory-rich activities. Classrooms for older children focus on center-based play highlighting construction, table toys, art, discovery, circle time, writing, dramatic play, library, and outdoor play. Following are the principle resources and curricula that we use:

- The Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers
- North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning Development
- Learning Without Tears
- Conscious Discipline: A classroom management plan which provides a transformational, whole-school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation.
- Building Healthy Lifestyles: A comprehensive nutrition and exercise education program that brings educators and parents together to assist young children in making healthy lifestyle choices regarding healthy eating, outdoor physical activity, and screen time.



ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to the curricula listed above, we offer:

- **Music and Movement Classes:** All children attend weekly sessions to experience music through singing, listening, instrument play, and movement.
- **Chapel Time** (Led by Reverend Rachel Vogado): Students in classes aged three-year through TK visit the chapel one morning each month to participate in a Bible-based lesson. Chapel dates coincide with our color days.
- **Library Time** (Cabarrus County Library): Students in classes aged three-year through TK visit the local library one morning each month for interactive story time. Check with your child's teacher for her scheduled time.

PRESCHOOL OBJECTIVES

SPIRITUALITY

- To grow in the understanding of God as our Creator and to learn of His love
- To guide children in talking with God and thanking Him for His love and care
- To hear stories of Jesus and to know they come from the Bible

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

- To ponder, process, and apply experiences
- To seek information and to show curiosity and eagerness in learning situations
- To take academic risks, solve problems, and show flexibility
- To exhibit tenacity, attentiveness, flexibility, imagination, creativity, invention, and aesthetic sensibilities

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- To develop an awareness of self-care and increase independence
- To demonstrate an understanding of personal safety
- To develop an ability to follow health and safety rules and to recognize and avoid danger
- To refine both fine and gross motor skills
- To build an awareness of personal health and fitness and to make it a part of daily practices

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- To broaden receptive and expressive language skills
- To develop foundations of reading through vocabulary, oral language, printed words, alphabetic principles, and phonological comprehension
- To build foundations of writing through fine motor activities, dictation, connecting sounds with letter forms, and practice with writing implements

EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- To grow in the ability to interact cooperatively with peers and to develop friendships
- To adjust to working in group settings
- To appreciate differences in others and to develop respect for them
- To learn to share space, work materials, and toys
- To work through disputes by way of problem-solving and negotiation
- To recognize that as individuals each child has rights which he must learn to protect
- To build a sense of responsibility
- To develop healthy feelings about herself and to grow in self-confidence
- To understand and accept change, opposition, and defeat

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

- To foster mathematical thinking and expression via numbers, shapes, classification of objects, weights and measurements, comparisons, positional language, observations, use of senses, predictions, and experimentation
- To increase social connections
- To participate as a member of a group or community
- To demonstrate an awareness of diverse cultures
- To make sense of the world by asking questions and engaging in imaginative play
- To engage in creative expression through art, music, drama, movement, and dance
- To share ideas and to show interest and respect for the creative expression of others

ANNUAL THEME: FIRST KIDS HAS CHARACTER!

Monthly lessons will include:

MONTH	COLOR	CHARACTER TRAIT	FOCUS BOOK/AUTHOR	RHYMES ("I LOVE YOU RITUALS")
SEPTEMBER	Yellow	Courage & Bravery	"Brave As Can Be" Jo Witek Christine Roussey	Georgie Porgie
OCTOBER	Orange	Helpfulness	"I Can Help" David Hyde Costello	Little Miss Muffet
NOVEMBER	Black/Brown	Gratitude	"The Thankful Book" Todd Parr	Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater
DECEMBER	Red	Generosity	"Night Tree" Eve Bunting	Twinkle, Twinkle
JANUARY	White	Patience	"Waiting is Not Easy" Mo Willems	Walk and Stop
FEBRUARY	Pink	Kindness	"Tiny Act of Kindness" Thuy Ha	Dancing Hands
MARCH	Green	Politeness	"Please, Mr. Panda" Steve Anthony	Humpty Dumpty
APRIL	Purple	Self-Control	"Clark the Shark" Bruce Hale	Here's the Bunny
MAY	Blue	Confidence	"Remarkably You" Pat Zietlow Miller	Mr. Sun

CELEBRATING COLOR

Two days each month we celebrate a color, focusing on it in a variety of ways, including:

- Circle time games
- Art projects
- Stories
- Special snacks

We encourage you to include our color of the month in your child's outfit as listed below:

MONTH	DAYS	COLOR
SEP	10 & 11	YELLOW
OCT	3 & 4	ORANGE
NOV	12 & 13	BROWN & BLACK
DEC	10 & 11	RED
JAN	14 & 15	WHITE
FEB	11 & 12	PINK
MAR	17 & 18	GREEN
APR	22 & 23	PURPLE
MAY	12 & 13	BLUE

PRESCHOOL STAFF ROSTER

POSITION(S)	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
Director	Maureen O'Bryan	320 Scalybark Trail, Concord 28027	704-425-8623
Assistant Director / MWF Fours	Pam Prentice	4612 Alamo Court, Concord 28027	704-701-1481
Ones	Amber Huggins	39 Lakewood Court, Concord, 28027	704-956-7788
Ones	Jennifer Wedner	2801 Eva Drive, Concord 28027	704-796-3299
Ones	Kinsey Garrett	428 Spruce Place SE Concord, NC 28025	704-886-8120
Two A MWF & TTh	MaryAnn Harrison	455 Concord Parkway N #5560, Concord 28027	916 412-3192
Two A MWF & TTh	Lisa Sackeli	1506 Light House Lane, Kannapolis 28081	704-578-7469
Two B / Three B / Music	Gordana Coley	687 Grandview Drive NE, Concord 28025	704-701-7593
Two B & Three B	Maddy Brooks	898 Hess Road, Concord 28025	704-796-9667
Three A MWF & TTh	Beth McLain	10229 Flowes Store Road, Midland 28107	704-773-4993
Three A MWF & TTh	Julia Holshouser	628 Spring Street SW, Concord 28025	951-902-0803
MWF Fours	Vicky Nicasro	1261 Bennington Drive NW, Concord 28027	704-787-1135
Five-Day Fours	Amber Williams	258 Scenic Drive NE, Concord 28025	828-337-6622
Five-Day Fours	Julianna Willis	2412 Wimbledon Street, Concord 28025	806-317-9798
Five-Day Fours	Lauren Denny	6375 Hawks Nest Drive Concord 28027	704-301-4642
TK	Kristen Dain	1671 Mill Creek Lane SW, Concord 28025	704-796-8492
TK	Holly Westbrook	190 Flintridge Drive, Concord 28025	704-467-7555
Floater	Carolyn Ritchie	230 Eastover Drive, Concord 28025	704-785-4443

PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE

Preschool Committee members serve for a minimum of two years and help form all preschool policies. Please contact any of the members below with questions or suggestions regarding First Kids.

This year's meetings are scheduled on the following Thursdays from 9:15-10:30 a.m. in the Middle School Classroom, Third Floor of the preschool building: 10/3, 11/21, 1/16, 3/12.

Courtney Clark (Current Preschool Parent)
704-488-5867
courtneyclark83@gmail.com

Jesse Rhodes (Current Preschool Parent)
704-796-9365
jllync2024@hotmail.com

Holly Cagle (Christian Education Committee)
704-956-6225
hollykgriffin@gmail.com

Lauren Makela (Current Preschool Parent)
704-458-5305
lmthompson214@gmail.com

Amber Williams (Staff Member)
828-337-6622
af42401@yahoo.com

Maureen O'Bryan (Preschool Director)
704-788-2812 (w) 704-425-8623 (c)
frstkids@yahoo.com

Lauren Paul (Current Preschool Parent)
803-351-4403
jlaurenpaul@yahoo.com

Kristen Dain (Staff Member)
704-796-8492
kndain@gmail.com

Pam Prentice (Staff Member)
704-701-1481
misspamp@yahoo.com

Rachel Vogado (Associate Pastor)
704-788-2100
rachel.vogado@firstpresconcord.org

REGISTRATION POLICY

Each January we send registration forms for the upcoming year to all church members with young children and currently enrolled First Kids families. You must return your completed forms and registration fee by February 28. As we receive them, we will add your child's name to a list posted on the preschool office window. Registration fees are non-refundable unless all requested classes are full. See the current registration brochure for a list of fees.

We base enrollment on a random selection, prioritized as follows:

1. Church*/Staff Members currently enrolled
2. Church*/Staff Members not currently enrolled
3. Non-Church Members currently enrolled
4. Siblings of Non-Church Members currently enrolled
5. All Others

*For the 2020-2021 school year, "church member" is defined as anyone who has been received by the Church Session by November 2019 and who is listed on their active roll.

Applications returned after the February 28 due date (including current church members) are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you need to withdraw your child from preschool, notify the Director as soon as possible. To receive any applicable tuition reimbursements, you must give at least two-week notice.

CHANGES IN PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please alert your child's teacher immediately if you have changes to your address, phone number, emergency contacts, or any other pertinent information.

PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

As part of its community outreach program, First Presbyterian Church established a memorial fund to offer preschool scholarships to families needing financial assistance. A Subcommittee chooses recipients on an annual basis. Contributions to the Fund are always welcome. Your contribution would enable a needy child an opportunity to benefit from an early educational and social experience that she may otherwise miss. Please contact the Director for more information.

DROP-IN/BABYSITTING PROGRAMS

If space is available, First Kids may allow you to bring your child on a Drop-In basis (days for which he is not registered). The cost for this service is \$25/day. **You must obtain the Director's approval before bringing your child to school on non-regular days.** You may call her at 704-788-2812 or 704-425-8623.

Additionally, staff members may be available to provide before or after school care. If you are interested in this service, please notify the Director. Rates may vary. See page 12 for information.

MESSAGES FROM HOME

Staff members cannot accept verbal messages from children. Please contact your child's teacher via written note, email, phone call, or text message. Relaying important information during busy times, such as during drop-off or pick-up, may lead to misunderstandings. Written communication directly to the teacher is best, be it handwritten or electronic (text/email).

You may call the preschool office with messages. **Please note, however, that both the Director and Assistant Director are oftentimes working with children or parents in other areas of the school. They will check messages by 12:45 each day.**

TUITION

Tuition is based on an
paid in full or in monthly

2019-2020 TUITION RATES		
DAYS PER WEEK	ANNUAL RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
2	\$1,305.00	\$145.00
3	\$1,890.00	\$210.00
5	\$3,060.00	\$340.00
TK	\$3,285.00	\$365.00

annual fee which may be
installments.

The first month's tuition is due on July 1 each year. Subsequent payments are due on the first of each month beginning in September with late fees of 5% being assessed on payments received after the 10th. No payment will be due in May. First Kids does not send monthly bills; however, at the beginning of each year we distribute payment reminder cards.

Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and write your child(ren)'s name(s) and class(es) on the memo line.

	John Smith 555 Your St. Your Town 54321	DATE 09-01-19
PAY TO	First Presbyterian Church	210.00
Two Hundred Ten and NO/100 Dollars		
MEMO	Mark McCain	Lucas McCain
1234 5678 9876 543210		

DO NOT PUT CHECKS ON THE DESKS IN THE OFFICE.
DO NOT SEND TUITION PAYMENTS TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.

Address all questions regarding payments or statements to either our financial secretary Pam Prentice or our director Maureen O'Bryan. Do not speak with classroom teachers regarding these matters.

You may drop your check in the box outside the preschool office or mail it to:


FIRST KIDS PRESCHOOL FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH P.O. BOX 789 CONCORD, NC 28026-0789
ATTN: PAM PRENTICE

If you wish to make a payment in person when First Kids is closed, you may give it to the church secretary in the Fellowship House during office hours:

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- First Kids' Tax I.D. Number is 56 052 9971.
- At the Preschool Committee's discretion, families who are more than one month late in their tuition payments may be asked to leave the program.
- **Tuition must be up-to-date in February** to be eligible to register for the next school year and paid-in-full to register for summer preschool programs.

- We will remove your child's name from our roster and decline re-admittance if your tuition for the previous year is not paid in full by May 15.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Drive through service is a courtesy not offered at many other centers and should be regarded as such. Parents are welcome to park and walk their children to classes. Staff members work diligently in all types of weather to unload/load children safely and efficiently. We do our very best to buckle all children properly into their seats; however, drivers are ultimately and legally responsible for the proper restraint of their passengers.

Between 8:55-9:15 a.m. and 12:40-12:55 p.m. each school day, the Union Street driveway will open in the opposite direction. No one should attempt to exit onto Union Street during these hours.

Follow the directions listed below based on your youngest passenger. Staff will ensure that all children get to their correct locations. **DO NOT ARRIVE MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES OUTSIDE THE TIMES LISTED. EARLY/LATE ARRIVERS WILL BE CHARGED \$5 PER 15 MINUTES.**

CLASS	STAFF ON DUTY	DIRECTIONS
Ones	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:55 - 9:10 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:40 - 12:55	Park in the Davis Hall lot and bring children to/from the classroom.
2A, 2B 3A, 3B MWF 4	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:55 - 9:10 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:40 - 12:55	Enter from Union Street via the south entrance (near playground). Pull forward through the circular drive, turning right to go under the breezeway between the two buildings. Continue forward with the flow of traffic. Exit on Church Street.
5-Day 4	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:55 - 9:10 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:40 - 12:55	Enter the courtyard drive from Church Street. Exit straight onto Union Street.
TK	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:45 - 9:00 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:40 - 12:55	Enter the courtyard drive from Church Street. Exit straight onto Union Street.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- You may park in the Davis Hall lot, the First Pres lot across Church St., and on Church St.
- **DO NOT PARK AT THE BREEZEWAY AT ANY TIME.** Do not park at Wells Fargo. Be aware that Trinity Church now charges a parking fee and will tow cars if not paid.
- Never leave your child alone in the car and ensure that he remains properly restrained until a staff member unbuckles him. Law requires us to report these violations to local authorities.
- **Staff members are not allowed to load/unload children when drivers are on cell phones.**
- Remain in your car and allow staff members to buckle/unbuckle children.
- The maximum safe speed is 5 mph. Do not pass cars in the car line unless directed by Staff.
- **NEVER ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO WALK TO CLASS UNATTENDED.** If you arrive and find no Staff on duty, park in a designated area and walk your child to class.
- Do not let your child walk on the brick walls in the Davis Hall lot.
- Keep conversations with Staff brief to keep traffic flowing smoothly.
- **BEFORE ENTERING THE CAR LINE, DISPLAY YOUR CAR TAG AND ROLL DOWN YOUR WINDOWS.** We cannot see through tinted glass.
- Notify Staff in writing (note, email, text) of any change in regular pick-up persons.
- Keep your Pick Up card up-to-date. Staff will check IDs of anyone with whom we are unfamiliar to ensure that he is listed on your card.



Buckle Up Kids
NORTH CAROLINA

- We cannot legally withhold a child from his parent or legal guardian without documentation. In legal cases, be sure to speak with the Director and provide the proper forms.

BUCKLE UP - IT'S THE LAW

The Preschool Committee mandates that Staff follow current NC laws regarding seat belts and safety seats: children younger than 8 years and/or weighing less than 80 pounds must be secured in a size-appropriate child restraint system (infant seat, toddler seat, or booster).

First Kids has two seats which may be available to borrow on occasion. If you need one:

1. Park your car in the Davis Hall lot.
2. Alert a staff member that you need a car seat.
3. If one is available, install it in your vehicle.
4. If one is not available, leave the premises to obtain one elsewhere. Staff will remain with your child while you are gone. Standard late fees will apply, if applicable.

If you leave the premises with a child who is not properly restrained, law requires that we report you to local authorities.

CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

In January 2015 First Presbyterian Church adopted the "Child and Youth Protection Policy" which says:

As the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, North Carolina, we hereby express and affirm our commitment to maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for all of God's children, especially the most vulnerable among us.

First Kids adheres to all guidelines set forth in this policy. You may view the full document on First Presbyterian's website firstpresconcord.org under the GROW tab, Child Formation. Highlights include:

- **Background Screening and Child Protection Training**: All employees of the church and preschool, including regular volunteers and substitutes, must complete a background check through a screening service designated by the Church Session. In addition, each must complete the "Child Protection Safety Training". Occasional substitutes and volunteers who have not met these requirements may assist only in the presence of a screened staff member.
- **Drop-In/Babysitting Services**: You must complete a "Release and Indemnification" form if you:
 - Employ First Kids staff for before/after school babysitting on campus or transportation to/from preschool
 - Use our Drop-In Program to bring your child on a day for which she is not registered or for a child who is not registered in the program (i.e., sibling). Church staff must approve and document the form before services may begin. The arrangements are expressly excluded from the scope of the policy.
- **Corporal Punishment**: Staff members are strictly prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment while on duty.
- **Two-Adult Rule**: The intent of this policy is to minimize the time a child is alone with a single adult. Exceptions to this rule include: administering First Aid; transferring a child from one area to another (i.e., restroom visits, pick-up time).
- **Six-Month Rule**: Substitutes and volunteers who have less than a six-month relationship with the church or preschool must be in the presence of two screened staff members at all times.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Law requires us to report to the Department of Social Services any instance in which there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse, neglect, or exploitation may have occurred.

Protecting  **Children**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

First Kids observes good health standards and follows consistent safety guidelines to ensure that your child remains in good care.

- We follow all regulations designated by the Concord Fire Marshal and conduct fire and emergency drills periodically.
- Our building is equipped with both an alarm and a sprinkler system.
- Each staff member is certified in CPR for infants and children, has tested negative for tuberculosis, and follows the health and safety guidelines outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Our “Emergency Plan Booklet” outlines our guidelines in dealing with threatening situations: abduction, bomb threats, intruders and weapons, emergency evacuations, extreme weather, lock downs, serious illness or injury, transmission of blood borne pathogens. Copies of this booklet are displayed in the classrooms.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Health Forms: Each child must provide a completed health form and current immunization record showing an original signature from your source of medical care prior to their first day of school and each time immunizations are updated throughout the school year. We cannot accept copied or faxed forms. **All children must have up-to-date and required immunizations as outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org). No exemptions allowed.**
- Handwashing: Each teacher, child, and visitor must wash her hands upon entering a classroom, after using the restroom or diapering a child, and before consuming food.
- Contagious Illnesses: Contact us immediately if your child develops or becomes exposed.
- Sick Children: A child who arrives noticeably ill (i.e., fever, rash, green or yellow nasal discharge, chills, vomiting) will not be allowed to stay at school. Children becoming ill during the day will sit in an isolated area with adult supervision until an authorized person arrives to take him home.
- Medication: Staff may not administer prescription or over-the-counter medications without a signed “Permission to Medicate” form on file. Included in the definition of “medication” are diaper ointment, lotion, lip balm, hand sanitizer, and sunscreen. Exceptions include bug bite relief sticks and emergency treatments (i.e., extreme allergic reactions). All medication must remain out of children’s reach. **Do not send any medications to school with your child.**
- Visiting Pets: Owners must get Director approval and show proof of inoculation prior to the visit.
- Smoking, Alcohol, and Illicit Drugs: All are strictly prohibited when children are on the campus.
- Weapons of Any Kind: All weapons are strictly prohibited on campus.
- Latex Balloons: **Latex balloons are a choking hazard and not allowed.** Mylar balloons are acceptable.
- Umbrellas & Backpacks with Wheels: These items are not allowed for safety reasons.

FIRST KIDS PRESCHOOL IS A BREASTFEEDING-FRIENDLY CENTER

We support and welcome all mothers who breastfeed their babies. Breastfeeding provides the healthiest start for babies, offering ideal nutrition and a multitude of health benefits for both infant and mother. Research indicates that breastfed babies have less risk of asthma, childhood obesity, Type 2 diabetes, SIDS, ear infections, diarrhea, and vomiting. Mothers who breastfeed have a decreased risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer. Breastfeeding-friendly centers report having healthier infants with less colic and greater parent satisfaction. What will you find in our center?

- A quiet, comfortable breastfeeding station in the first floor restroom beside Davis Hall as well as many other suitable areas throughout the building
- Refrigerator space for storing expressed milk
- Trained staff members who will work with you to develop a feeding plan for your child

Visit cabarrus.nc.networkofcare.org for additional resources for support in our community.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL	
KEEP HER HOME IF SHE HAS:	SHE MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL WHEN:
Fever: Temperature of 99.6 or higher	She registers a normal temperature for at least 24 hours . If the fever is a symptom of a more serious illness, she may return when she has had no fever for at least 24 hours, and the symptoms have cleared.
Vomiting: 1 or more times in a 12-hour period	She has not vomited in 12 hours and has had no fever for at least 24 hours .
Severe cold: Including any of the following symptoms: fever, sneezing, coughing, yellow/green nasal discharge	All symptoms are clear and she has had no fever for at least 24 hours .
Diarrhea: 3 or more loose, liquid bowel movements in a 1-hour period	She has had no diarrhea within the last 12 hours , she has had at least 1 normal bowel movement , and she has had no fever for at least 24 hours .
Skin Rash: Any skin irritation of unknown origin	The rash has cleared , or she has been cleared by a doctor to return to school.
Coxsackie Virus (“Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease”): Lesions or blisters on the hands, feet, and/or mouth; may be accompanied by fever and/or sore throat	The blisters have cleared , she has had no fever for at least 24 hours , and she is no longer contagious . <u>The disease is contagious 3-5 days after the first lesions appear.</u>
Conjunctivitis (“Pink Eye”): Redness and irritation in eye; may be accompanied by thick yellow drainage	The symptoms have cleared .
Impetigo: Skin blisters surrounded by redness; may be on any area but most commonly on face, ears, or nostrils. When the blisters rupture, skin is raw, weepy, and oozy; turning yellowish and crusty	The blisters become dry and she is no longer contagious.
Bronchitis: May begin with hoarseness, a mild fever, and a dry and painful cough which loosens as the condition progresses	The symptoms have cleared .
Strep Throat: Scratchy, sore throat; may be accompanied by fever	She has taken doctor-prescribed antibiotics for at least 24 hours , she has had no fever for at least 24 hours , and the symptoms have cleared .
Head Lice: Grayish, crawling bugs which infect the scalp, causing intense itching. The bugs and/or their tiny, whiteish, oval eggs adhere to strands of hair, usually about 1/4 inch from the scalp.	After successful treatment with a shampoo or medication (no evidence of bugs or their eggs remaining)
Any Contagious Illnesses including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles • Mumps • Rubella (German Measles) • Roseola • Chicken Pox • Scarlet Fever 	The symptoms have cleared , or she has been cleared by a doctor to return to school.

ELEVATOR SAFETY

Please help us reinforce elevator safety by following our school-wide rules:

- Remind children to remain outside the taped areas while waiting for the elevator.
- Keep children from touching the elevator door (inside or outside) at any time.
- Do not allow children to ride the elevator without an adult.
- **Only adults may push the elevator buttons.**

PROPER PRESCHOOL ATTIRE

- Dress your child comfortably for both indoor and outdoor play. In all likelihood, she will get dirty.
- Tennis shoes and socks are the safest form of footwear for our sandy playground and gross motor equipment. Children in slick-soled shoes will not be allowed on climbing equipment.
- For children in diapers and/or potty training, dress them in clothing which is easy to remove.
- Diapers must be disposable, not cloth, for health reasons.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Our playground was constructed in accordance with safety standards set forth by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. For your child's safety, when using the playground outside of school hours, please remember:

- Adults must supervise children at all times.
- Gates must remain securely latched while children are on the playground.
- **No pets are allowed on the playground at any time.**

UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In case of inclement weather, or other circumstances making travel to and from school or occupation of our building unsafe, First Kids' top priorities are to ensure that our families and staff, who reside in all corners of our county and beyond, can safely travel to and from school and to maintain adequate staff coverage. When making decisions, we depend upon guidance from our local weather agencies, the transportation departments of area schools, and our own maintenance staff. Unless it is determined that our campus is not safe, we will follow the schedule below. You will receive a text or email message from Staff to notify you of any schedule changes.

If Area Schools...	Then First Kids will...
Close for the day	Close for the day
Delay opening for more than 2 hours	Close for the day
Delay opening for 2 hours	Open at 10:30 and have pick-up at 1:00
Delay opening for 1 hour	Open at 10:00 and have pick-up at 1:00
Dismiss early	Notify all parents of early pick-up and close early

Up to five school days missed due to inclement weather may be excused (not made up). The Preschool Committee will determine whether to make up any missed days. If our original calendar changes due to make-up days, we will email all families.

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION / SOCIAL MEDIA

If you do not want your personal information included any of the following ways, please notify the preschool office in writing prior to the first day of school:

- Teachers will distribute to all families a copy of the class list which includes students' names and birthdates, parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. Many parents use this information to contact families for play dates, birthday parties, etc.
- First Presbyterian Church and First Kids occasionally share photographs and names of our children on our website, emails, and social media posts to show them enjoying special events, daily activities, etc.

DISCIPLINE

Based on the developmental theories behind two of our curricula, The Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers and Conscious Discipline, we know that children learn best in the context of relations. For this reason, we create communities in our classrooms where the children feel safe, want to help, and see themselves as an important member. Our classroom communities nurture social competence and self-discipline by helping children understand how to *treat* others and how they want to be treated *by* others. Because these skills are not easy to acquire, they deserve time, patience, and oftentimes direct teaching.

Our preschool setting allows children many opportunities to develop social behaviors. Children are still learning, and experimentation with negative behaviors is developmentally suitable. We do not look upon these trials as problems; we see them as learning experiences. Teachers will not share every instance of correctable behavior with you. They will share problems only when they go beyond what is considered developmentally appropriate, or if they need your help in understanding certain behaviors.

To help guide the children into learning appropriate vs. inappropriate behaviors, teachers will give positive verbal rewards and model acceptable practices. They will ask a child to stop and think about his choices and help him understand better options. They will allow children to work through their own differences, offering direction and encouragement. They will use various methods to remind children of proper behaviors (songs, pictures, words). They may sit next to a child to help keep him focused. They may move him to a calm area to allow him time to settle down or to redirect his thoughts. **They will never use corporal punishment, withhold food or rest, confine your child to a small area, yell, or roughly handle your child.**

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Teachers hold formal parent conferences each January-February to discuss with parents their child's progress for the year. After the Christmas break, teachers will begin scheduling these appointments. All teachers offer several options, including at least one nighttime session.

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION



First Kids is registered with Harris Teeter's "Together in Education" program. Link your VIC card with us, and a portion of your purchases will go to our scholarship program.

Ask your cashier, go to harristeeter.com/together-in-education, or call 800 432-6111 to link to **First Kids Preschool #6125**. Don't forget - all VIC cards must be linked yearly.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers use field trips to expand the children's experiences. Even our youngest children go on neighborhood strolls. **For your child to be able to participate, we need your written permission.**

In your Welcome Packet you will receive a permission slip covering all trips for the year. Please sign and return it if you would like for your child to be able to attend all outings. If you prefer, you may request individual slips for each event. Keep in mind, however, that sometimes trips within a two-block radius of our campus are impromptu, and your child will miss out if we are unable to reach you in the moment.

For any trips outside a two-block radius of our campus, teachers will contact you with details. They may request parent volunteers to assist with transportation. In such cases, your auto insurance will be liable should an accident occur, and First Kids' insurance would offer secondary coverage. For field trips, we abide by the rules set forth on page 12 of this handbook regarding car safety. Each parent is required to install her own child's car seat in the transport vehicles.

LUNCH GUIDELINES

To help teach healthy habits and self-care, First Kids established the following guidelines:

- **PEANUTS AND FOODS MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY IN WHICH PRODUCES NUT PRODUCTS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** Tree nuts (cashews, almonds, etc.) are allowed.
- **Be sure to clearly LABEL ALL ITEMS with your child's first and last names, including the lunch box, food containers, ice packs, and eating utensils.**
- Send your child's lunch in a lunch box, not loose in his bookbag.
- To reduce the general consumption of sugar, we serve only water with snacks and lunches. The only exception to this rule is milk or formula for the Infants/Ones classes.
- For children aged 2 and older, do not send drinks of any kind to school. We will provide the water and cups. For the Infants/Ones classes, please send in a bottle or sippy cup, clearly labeled with your child's first and last names.
- Remember to include an ice pack for foods which are normally refrigerated.
- Use only plastic containers. Glass containers are not allowed.
- Send items which are low in sugar and salt.
- **Candy is not allowed.** Teachers will ask children to save it in their book bags until they get home.
- Do not send in items which must be cooked or heated.
- If your child needs a spoon or fork, send in a metal or hard plastic one. **Disposable plastic utensils are not allowed.**

Following are suggestions for health lunch options:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| • Veggies (raw or cooked) | • Graham crackers | • Applesauce |
| • Turkey/Tortilla Roll-ups | • Saltines | • Pretzels |
| • Cheese | • Raisins | • Salad |
| • Fresh Fruit | • Mini bagels | • Nutella |
| • Yogurt | • Rice cakes | • Almond or Soy Butter |

SCHOOL-WIDE HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate three holidays with classroom parties to which parents are invited to attend. This year our parties fall on the following dates:

- Halloween: October 30-31 - Christmas: December 16-17 - Easter: April 8-9

Teachers will honor other holidays, including Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day, and St. Patrick's Day, with simpler class activities and healthy snacks.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We love celebrating special days, and your child's birthday is no exception! We observe all birthdays at school in a similar way. Be sure to confer with your child's teacher first to schedule a time and to get information regarding food allergies and classroom favorites. You may furnish a small treat for each child in the class. You may send the treat to school with your child, or you may bring it yourself and stay to join the fun! Please remember that **ALL FOOD ITEMS MUST BE PEANUT-FREE AND NOT MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY IN WHICH PRODUCES NUT PRODUCTS.**

If you send in goodie bags for the children to take home, ensure that **all food is PEANUT-FREE**, and all toys are the appropriate size for the ages of the children in the classroom. **Latex balloons are not allowed**; however, mylar balloons are acceptable.

If you plan to invite classmates to a party outside of school, you may send invitations to go home with each child **only if every child in the class will receive one.**

ANNUAL CALENDAR

AUGUST

AUGUST

THURS Aug 29 Open House: MON-WED-FRI Classes and 5-Day Fours @ 9:30-10:30
TUE-THU Classes & TK @ 11:00-12:00

SEPTEMBER

TUE-WED Sep 3-4 First Days of School
TUE-WED Sep 10-11 **YELLOW DAYS**
FRI Sep 27 School Closed for Teacher Workday

OCTOBER

TUE Oct 1 Early Dismissal @ 11:50 for Staff Training
THU-FRI Oct 3 & 4 **ORANGE DAYS**
FRI Oct 4 Pumpkin Patch (For Classes 3A, 3B, MWF 4, 5-DAY 4s, TK)
TUE-THURS Oct 8-10 Fall Pictures
FRI Oct 18 Family Picnic, Frank Liske Park Barn, 9:30-Noon
MON Oct 28 School Closed for Teacher Workday
TUE Oct 29 Scholastic Book Fair Begins and Continues through Monday, November 4
WED-THU Oct 30-31 Classroom Halloween Parties - Wear Costumes to School

NOVEMBER

MON Nov 4 Family Fun Night, First Kids, 5 - 6:30 p.m. - Scholastic Book Fair Closes at end of Fun Night
TUE Nov 5 School Closed for Election Day
MON Nov 11 School Closed for Veterans' Day
TUE-WED Nov 12-13 **BROWN & BLACK DAYS**
SAT Nov 23 Concord Christmas Parade Lawn Party - First Presbyterian Front Lawn
WED-FRI Nov 27-29 School Closed for Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER

FRI Dec 6 Early Dismissal @ 11:50 for Staff Training
TUE-WED Dec 10-11 **RED DAYS**
MON-TUE Dec 16-17 Classroom Christmas Parties
WED-THU Dec 18-19 Polar Express Days - Wear Pajamas to School & last days of school for 2019
FRI-FRI Dec 20-Jan 3 School Closed for Christmas Break

JANUARY

MON-TUE Jan 6-7 Return from Christmas Break, First Days of School for 2020
TUE-WED Jan 14-15 **WHITE DAYS**
MON Jan 20 School Closed for Martin Luther King Day
MON Jan 27 School Closed for Teacher Workday
TUE-WED Jan 28-29 Doughnuts with Daddy Breakfast, Davis Hall, 8:45 - 9:30 a.m.

FEBRUARY

TUE-WED Feb 11-12 **PINK DAYS**
MON Feb 17 School Closed for Presidents' Day

MARCH

TUE Mar 3 School Closed for Election Day
TUE-WED Mar 17-18 **GREEN DAYS**
THUR-FRI Mar 19 & 20 Spring Pictures
FRI Mar 27 School Closed for Teacher Workday

APRIL

WED-THUR Apr 8-9 Classroom Easter Parties & Egg Hunts
FRI-FRI Apr 10-17 School Closed for Easter Break
WED-THU Apr 22-23 **PURPLE DAYS**
THU-FRI Apr 23-24 Week of the Young Child Parade Davis Hall, Noon

MAY

TUE May 5 School Closed for Teacher Workday
WED-THU May 6-7 Mother's Tea, Davis Hall, 8:45-9:30 a.m.
TUE-WED May 12-13 **BLUE DAYS**
TUE-WED May 19-20 Last Days of School
THU May 21 Staff Meeting , 9:00-11:00; Closing Program for 4-year and TK classes, Church Sanctuary, 5:00 p.m.

Dear God,

I thank you for the gift of this child to raise, this life to share, this mind to help mold, this body to nurture, and this spirit to enrich.

Let me never betray this child's trust,
dampen this child's hope or
discourage this child's dreams.

Help me dear God to help this precious child
become all You mean him to be.

Let Your grace and love fall on her like gentle
breezes and give her inner strength and peace and
patience for the journey ahead.

Marian Wright Edelman

