

# FIRST kids PRESCHOOL



# Family Handbook 2020-2021

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**First Presbyterian Church**

Post Office Box 789

Concord, North Carolina 28026-0789



704-788-2812

[firstpresconcord.org](http://firstpresconcord.org)

*Dear Parents,*

*Welcome to our First Kids family! We are honored that you have chosen us to be such an important part of your child's early social and educational experience. While the COVID-19 Pandemic has brought unprecedented changes to how we can deliver our services in 2020, please trust that we will strive to make this year as normal, as educational, as playful and as loving as we possibly can.*

*This year we celebrate our 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! 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, under the guidance of First Presbyterian Church, 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 degrees in education or related fields. 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 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.*

*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*

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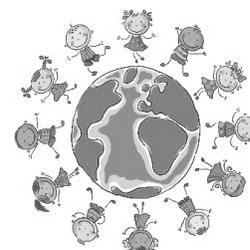
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**Please Note: All changes to our regular practices, due to COVID-19 restrictions, have been highlighted in yellow.**

## PARENTAL SUPPORT

*“It Takes A Village...”*

We encourage strong partnerships between staff and parents. Unfortunately, many of our traditional field trips, family events, breakfasts and celebrations have been suspended until further notice. We will add special events back as we are able. We do encourage you to stay in touch with what is happening at school virtually, through Facebook pages, Class DoJo accounts and weekly emails. Staying “connected” is more important than ever.



## 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

Initially, COVID-19 restrictions will only allow us to deliver some enrichment activities virtually. This will be our "Temporary Normal." Services will be returned to face-to-face interactions once restrictions are lifted.

- **Music and Movement Classes:** Classroom teachers will incorporate sessions to experience music through singing, listening, instrument play, and movement. Individual instruments will be provided and when possible, these activities will take place outdoors.
- **Chapel Time** Students in classes aged three-year through TK will hear bible lessons virtually, one morning each month. We will eventually return to chapel visits.
- **Library Time** (Cabarrus County Library): Students in classes aged three-year through TK will visit the local library one morning each month for interactive story time, once restrictions are lifted. Until then, our local librarians and other guests will visit us virtually.

## **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: EXPLORING OUR WORLD

Monthly lessons will include:

MONTH	COLOR	CURRICULUM THEMES	Bible Verse
SEPTEMBER	Yellow	Using our 5 Senses to Learn About First Kids -Apples	"Treat other as you want them to treat you." Luke 6:31
OCTOBER	Orange	Exploring Fall & The Farm & Dental Health Month	"Do not be afraid, I am with you." Isaiah 41:10
NOVEMBER	Black/Brown	Family & Community Discoveries	"Give thanks to the Lord, because He is good." Psalms 107:1
DECEMBER	Red	Christmas Traditions Around The World	"The angel said, 'I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all people.'" Luke 2:10
JANUARY	White	Arctic Adventure & Winter Wonder	"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope." Psalms 27:10
FEBRUARY	Pink	Our Amazing Bodies And Healthy Habits	"Be kind and compassionate to one another." Ephesians 4:32
MARCH	Green	Weather Wonders & Sensational Space	"He made the storm as quiet as a whisper." Psalms 107:29
APRIL	Purple	Digging Into Spring (Dirt, Bugs & Gardens)	"For everything there is a season. A time to plant and a time to harvest." Ecclesiastes 3:1,3
MAY	Blue	Summer Adventures (Ocean, Zoo, Summer Safety)	"You are the Light of the World. Let your light shine so others can see it." Matthew 5:14, 16

### CELEBRATING COLOR

Two days each month we celebrate a color with special activities and snacks. Join us by wearing these colors on...

MONTH	DAYS	COLOR
SEP	15 & 16	YELLOW
OCT	13 & 14	ORANGE
NOV	17 & 18	BROWN & BLACK
DEC	8 & 9	RED
JAN	12 & 13	WHITE
FEB	9 & 10	PINK
MAR	16 & 17	GREEN
APR	13 & 14	PURPLE
MAY	11 & 12	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	Teresa Bonnett	10475 Amsterdam Drive Mt. Pleasant 28124	704-516-5800
Two A MWF	MaryAnn Harrison	322 Halton Crossing Drive 28027	916 412-3192
Two A MWF & TTh	Lisa Sackeli	1506 Light House Lane, Kannapolis 28081	704-578-7469
Two-Three B MWF Two A TTh	Maddy Brooks	898 Hess Road, Concord 28025	704-796-9667
Three A MWF & TTh	Julia Holshouser	808 Fairview Street Kannapolis 28083	951-902-0803
Three A MWF & TTh	Carolyn Ritchie	230 Eastover Drive SE 28025	704-785-4443
Five-Day Fours MWF	Julianna Willis	2412 Wimbledon Street, Concord 28025	806-317-9798
Five-Day Fours M-F	Nicole Hollis	500 Hillandale St NE Concord 28025	412-799-3079
Five-Day Fours TTh	Amy Murphy	250 Union St. South	704-488-7326
TK	Holly Westbrook	190 Flintridge Drive, Concord 28025	704-467-7555
TK	Kristin Morgan	270 Sunset Dr. Concord 28025	704-640-6402
TK	Kinsey Garrett	428 Spruce Place SE Concord, NC 28025	704-886-8120

## 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 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Middle School Classroom, Third Floor of the preschool building: 10/1, 11/19, 1/14, 3/11.

**Holly Cagle** (Christian Education Committee)

704-956-6225

[hollykgriffin@gmail.com](mailto:hollykgriffin@gmail.com)

**Maureen O'Bryan** (Preschool Director)

704-788-2812 (w) 704-425-8623 (c)

[frstkids@yahoo.com](mailto:frstkids@yahoo.com)

**Courtney Clark** (Current Preschool Parent)

704-488-5867

[courtneyclark83@gmail.com](mailto:courtneyclark83@gmail.com)

**Lauren Paul** (Current Preschool Parent)

803-351-4403

[jlaurenpaul@yahoo.com](mailto:jlaurenpaul@yahoo.com)

**Caroline Jarvis** (Current Preschool Parent)

704-699-9127

[carolinewhitaker@yahoo.com](mailto:carolinewhitaker@yahoo.com)

**Pam Prentice** (Staff Member)

704-701-1481

[misspamp@yahoo.com](mailto:misspamp@yahoo.com)

## **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 2021-2022 school year, "church member" is defined as anyone who has been received by the Church Session by November 2020 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 a one-month 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- Will be suspended until further notice. We will notify parents when the service is available, once restrictions are dropped.**

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 speak with your child's teacher. Parents will be asked to sign a special waiver for this service.

## **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 12:39 each day.**

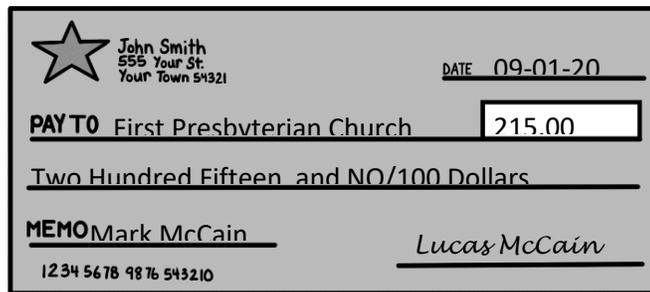
2020-2021 TUITION RATES		
DAYS PER WEEK	ANNUAL RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
2	\$1350.00	\$150.00
3	\$1,935.00	\$215.00
5	\$3,150.00	\$350.00
TK	\$3375.00	\$375.00

**TUITION**

Tuition is based on an annual fee which may be paid in full or in monthly installments.

**The first month's tuition is typically due on July 1 each year. In 2020 the first month was to be paid by August 15<sup>th</sup>. 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.

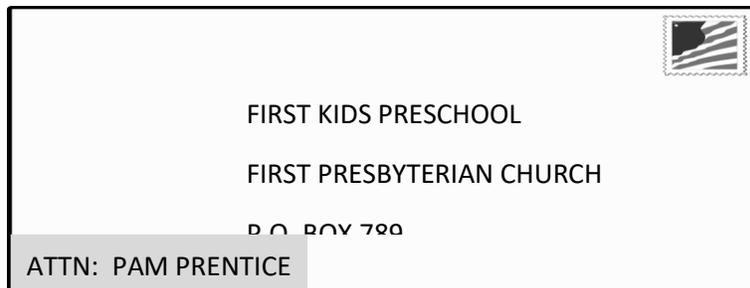
Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and write your child(ren)'s name(s) and class(es) on the memo line.



**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 locked mailbox, on the ramp outside the office door, or in the wooden mailbox by the office.



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: Monday-Thursday- 8:30-4:00

**Online Payment: Visit <https://www.shelbygiving.com/App/Giving/fpc> Found at [Firstpresconcord.org](http://Firstpresconcord.org). Click "GIVE" Click: "Funding Source" Click: "First Kids Tuition" and enter the amount.**

**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. **Due to COVID-19 restrictions our staff will no longer be allowed to step into your car to unbuckle or buckle children.** Please see details below.

**From 8:45-9:30 a.m. and 12:30-1:00 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> 8:50- 9:20 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:30 - 12:45	Park in the Davis Hall lot and bring children to the porch entrance at the top of the stairs closest to the playground. A teacher will meet you there. During pick-up please wait at the door and a staff member will bring your child to you.
2A, 2B 3A, 3B MWF 4	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:55 - 9:10 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:35 - 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. Put your car in park, turn off engine, and bring your child to his teacher’s check-in station. Exit on Church Street. During drop-off, put your car in park, turn off engine while in the line, a teacher will bring your child to you to load.
5-Day 4	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:58 - 9:12 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:40 - 12:55	Enter the courtyard drive from Church Street. Exit straight onto Union Street. Put your car in park, turn off your engine, bring your child to the check-in station. <b>Please do not arrive early to enable us to unload all TK children.</b> During pick-up, put your car in park, turn off engine, stand by your car and a staff member will bring your child to you.
TK	<u>DROP-OFF</u> 8:45 - 9:00 <u>PICK-UP</u> 12:30 - 12:55	Enter the courtyard drive from Church Street. Exit straight onto Union Street. Put your car in park, turn off engine, bring your child to the check-in station. During pick-up, put your car in park, stand by your car and a staff member will bring your child to you.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

- ALWAYS DISPLAY YOUR CAR TAG
- You may park in the Davis Hall lot, the First Pres lot across Church St., and on Church St.

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 you remove him/her from the car. Law requires us to report these violations to local authorities.
- **Turn off all cell phones** during drop-off and pick-up.
- 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 late and find no Staff on duty, park in a designated area and walk your child to the check-in station closest to the office door. Ring the bell or call your child's teacher and someone will assist you. Parents are not allowed in the building until further notice.

- 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.
- 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.

### CAR SEATS BUCKLE UP - IT'S THE LAW

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, you will be asked to 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](http://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). **In an effort to reduce our population due to COVID-19, two of our classes will have just one teacher until restrictions change. A designated floater assigned to each room will frequently visit and assist these teachers and doors to these classrooms will remain open.**
- 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.

## 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](http://www.aap.org)). No exemptions allowed.**

- **Handwashing:** Each teacher and child, must wash her hands just prior to or upon entering a classroom, after using the restroom or diapering a child, before and after playground visits and before and after 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.
- **Please see all COVID-19 protocol listed in our COVID Policy Handbook**
- **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:** We will not be able to allow visiting pets until further notice.
- **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. **Until restrictions are lifted all children must use a poly-tote that can be easily disinfected, instead of a backpack.**

### **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. Please notify the director if you would like to use this space and she will let you in through a downstairs entrance, to avoid coming onto the preschool floor.
- 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](http://cabarrus.nc.networkofcare.org) for additional resources for support in our community.

### **WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL**

**Please see the COVID Policy and Procedure Handbook for information related to COVID-19 symptoms. Refer to the chart on the next page to know what to do for all other illnesses.**

## WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL

KEEP HER HOME IF SHE HAS:	SHE MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL WHEN:
<b>Fever:</b> Temperature of 99.6 or higher	She registers a <b>normal temperature (without medicine) for at least 24 hours</b> . 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.
<b>Vomiting:</b> 1 or more times in a 12-hour period	She has <b>not vomited in 12 hours</b> and has had <b>no fever for at least 24 hours</b> .
<b>Severe cold:</b> Including any of the following symptoms: fever, sneezing, coughing, yellow/green nasal discharge	All <b>symptoms are clear</b> and she has had <b>no fever for at least 24 hours</b> .
<b>The Flu</b>	A child who has had the flu may return to school one week after the initial onset of symptoms and if all fever and symptoms have disappeared.
<b>Diarrhea:</b> 3 or more loose, liquid bowel movements in a 1-hour period	She has had <b>no diarrhea within the last 12 hours</b> , she has had <b>at least 1 normal bowel movement</b> , and she has had <b>no fever for at least 24 hours</b> .
<b>Skin Rash:</b> Any skin irritation of unknown origin	The <b>rash has cleared</b> , or she has been <b>cleared by a doctor</b> to return to school.
<b>Coxsackie Virus</b> (“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 <b>blisters have cleared</b> , she has had <b>no fever for at least 24 hours</b> , and she is <b>no longer contagious</b> . <u>The disease is contagious 3-5 days after the first lesions appear.</u>
<b>Conjunctivitis</b> (“Pink Eye”): Redness and irritation in eye; may be accompanied by thick yellow drainage	Medicine has been administered and the <b>symptoms have cleared</b> .
<b>Impetigo:</b> 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 <b>blisters become dry</b> and she is no longer contagious.
<b>Bronchitis:</b> May begin with hoarseness, a mild fever, and a dry and painful cough which loosens as the condition progresses	The <b>symptoms have cleared</b> .
<b>Strep Throat:</b> Scratchy, sore throat; may be accompanied by fever	She <b>has taken doctor-prescribed antibiotics for at least 24 hours</b> , she has had <b>no fever for at least 24 hours</b> , and the <b>symptoms have cleared</b> .
<b>Head Lice:</b> 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 <b>successful treatment</b> with a shampoo or medication ( <b>no evidence of bugs or their eggs</b> remaining)
Any <b>Contagious Illnesses</b> including: Chicken Pox, Roseola, Scarlet Fever	The <b>symptoms have cleared</b> , or she has been <b>cleared by a doctor</b> 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 play equipment. Children in slick-soled shoes will not be allowed on climbing equipment. Clogs, flip flops and sandals are not allowed.
- 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. **Until further notice, our playground will only be open during preschool hours. When restrictions allow for after school use please adhere to the following.**

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, loss of power or water, illness outbreaks, 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, our own maintenance staff and state and local health organizations.

**You will receive a text or email message from Staff to notify you of any schedule changes,** as soon as those decisions are made and information will be posted on Facebook on the First Kids Family and First Kids Preschool pages.

Up to five school days missed due to any of the causes listed, may be excused (not made up). The Preschool Committee will further determine whether to make up any missed days beyond five. 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. Virtual meetings may also be an option.

## 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](http://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

Field Trips, other than walks on Union Street, will be restricted with COVID-19. Once reinstated, the following will apply.

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.** We have had issues with children biting those items.

Following are suggestions for healthy lunch options:

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

## **SCHOOL-WIDE HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We celebrate three holidays with classroom parties. **Parents will not be allowed to attend until further notice.** This year our parties fall on the following dates, depending on class meeting dates. - Halloween: Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> - Christmas: Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> - Easter: Mar. 31<sup>st</sup> & Apr. 1<sup>st</sup>

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. All items must be store or bakery-bought and provided in their original container with the ingredient list present. Please remember that **ALL FOOD ITEMS MUST BE PEANUT-FREE AND NOT MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY IN WHICH PRODUCES NUT PRODUCTS.**

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.**

Please see our COVID-19 Handbook for Re-Opening for more important policies and guidelines.

We so appreciate the opportunity to be a part of your child's early educational experiences.  
We look forward to a wonderful year together!

## ANNUAL CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

THU-	Sep 3	Drive-By Open House 11:00 am-6 pm Come by to pick up your child's folder Virtual Open House for older children In-person Open House for Ones & Twos or Children new to the program.
TUE-WED	Sep 8-9	First Days of School
TUE-WED	Sep 15-16	<b>YELLOW DAYS</b>
MON	Sep 28	School Closed for Teacher Workday

### OCTOBER

THU	Oct 8	Early Dismissal @ 11:50 for Staff Training
TUE-WED	Oct 13 & 14	<b>ORANGE DAYS</b>
THU	Oct 29	Scholastic Book Fair Begins
WED-FRI	Oct 28-30	Classroom Halloween Parties - Wear Costumes to School

### NOVEMBER

MON	Nov 2	Family Fun Night Drive By
TUE	Nov 3	School Closed for Election Day
WED	Nov 11	School Closed for Veterans' Day
TUE-WED	Nov 17 & 18	<b>BROWN &amp; BLACK DAYS</b>
WED-FRI	Nov 25-27	School Closed for Thanksgiving Break

### DECEMBER

TUE-WED	Dec 8-9	<b>RED DAYS</b>
FRI	Dec 11	Early Dismissal @ 11:50 for Staff Training
MON-TUE	Dec 14-15	Classroom Christmas Parties
WED-THU	Dec 16-17	Polar Express Days - Wear Pajamas to School
MON-FRI	Dec 21 -Jan 3	School Closed for Christmas Break

### JANUARY

MON-TUE	Jan 4-5	Return from Christmas Break, First Days of School for 2021
TUE-WED	Jan 12-13	<b>WHITE DAYS</b>
FRI	Jan 15	School Closed Teacher Workday
MON	Jan 18	School Closed for Martin Luther King Day

### FEBRUARY

TUE-WED	Feb 9-10	<b>PINK DAYS</b>
MON	Feb 15	School Closed for Presidents' Day

### MARCH

MON	Mar. 1	Early Dismissal @ 11:50 for Staff Training
TUE-WED	Mar 16-17	<b>GREEN DAYS</b>
FRI	Mar 26	School Closed for Teacher Workday
WED	Mar 31	Classroom Easter Parties & Egg Hunts

### APRIL

THUR	Apr 1	Classroom Easter Parties & Egg Hunts
FRI-FRI	Apr 2-9	School Closed for Easter Break
TUE-WED	Apr 13-14	<b>PURPLE DAYS</b>
THU-FRI	Apr 19-21	Week of the Young Child & Earth Day Activities

### MAY

TUE-WED	May 11-12	<b>BLUE DAYS</b>
TUE-WED	May 25 & 26	Last Days of School
THU	May 27	Staff Meeting , 9:00-11:00; Graduation for 4-year and TK classes 5:00 pm

Traditional Events such as Doughnuts With Daddy, The Week of the Young Child Parade and the Mother's Day Tea will be rescheduled if restrictions allow.

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

