



# **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL**

## **PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**

**“Start children off in the way they should go,  
and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6**

### **Mission Statement**

**Believing that children are a heritage of the Lord, the mission of First Presbyterian Day School is:**

- **Planting seeds of Christ-likeness in the hearts of children;**
- **Pursuing excellence in academics;**
- **Preparing students for future service in God’s kingdom in their homes, churches, and professions.**

The school is controlled by the Board of Trustees elected by the Session of the First Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Kirk Anderson	Dr. David Elkin	Mr. Phillip Parker	Mr. Tim Threadgill
Mr. Max Bowman	Mr. Paul Hurst	Mr. Richard Russ	Mr. Will Vise
Dr. Jay Brown	Dr. George May	Mr. Jeff Skelton	Mr. T. Cal Wells, Chair
Dr. Reid Cotten	Mr. Hu Meena		Dr. Julie Wyatt

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. Brian Smith, Head of School  
Mrs. Cathy Miller, Preschool Director

### **OFFICE**

Cheryl Gibbs  
Susan Graves

Carolyn Wilkinson  
Lauren Vance

### **PRESCHOOL TEACHERS**

Assistant to the Director: Ann Claridge Chestnut  
Pre K3: Hasina Brown, Chrissy Maggio, Tina Oates, Cissy Prewitt, Anna Splaingard, Sarah Thomas  
Pre K4 Lead Teachers: Shannon Blakely, Jennifer Higginbotham, Sarah Maruszak, Ella Payne, Cindy Wilks  
Pre K4 Assistant Teachers: Ainsley Bjernegaard, Ashley Dukes, Jean Hurst, Molly Lowry, Dasha Peipon, Monica Ratcliffe

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Students will not be accepted at school if they have any signs of illness, including fever, severe cold or vomiting for 24 hours without medicine before returning to school. Should students get sick at school or have an accident, parents will be notified immediately. In an emergency, if the parent cannot be reached, the family doctor will be called or student will be taken to the emergency room at a local hospital.

#### **Lice**

Any discovery of lice in a child's hair must be reported to your child's teacher as well as to the administration. Please take these precautions:

1. Check your child's hair for eggs (also called nits).
2. If you suspect your child has head lice, ask your health care provider to diagnose the problem and recommend appropriate treatment. Everyone in your family should be checked, and anyone with nits should be treated.
3. Tell us if your child is diagnosed as having head lice.

#### **To get rid of head lice:**

1. Use a medicine that your health care provider prescribes or recommends. Use any of these products very carefully, and consult a physician before treating children less than 2 years of age, pregnant or nursing women, or people with extensive cuts or scratches on the head or neck.
2. After appropriate treatment, all nits must be removed. This is a difficult and time-consuming process because nits have such a firm grip on the hair. You can remove them with a special nit-removal comb. A metal tooth comb, like the Lice Meister, is the best comb to use.
3. Check for nits daily for the next 21 days. Most treatments recommend a reapplication 7 days later.
4. Clean personal items and surroundings:
  - Machine-wash all washable and possibly infested items in hot water. Dry them in a hot dryer.
  - Put non-washable items (furry toys or pillows) in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.
  - Seal items that cannot be washed or dried in a plastic bag for 10 days (any eggs or lice present will die in

this time).

- Wash combs and brushes in a shampoo approved to kill lice, or soak in hot water for at least 5 minutes.
- Thoroughly vacuum rugs, upholstered furniture, and mattresses.
- Do not use insecticide sprays because they can be harmful to people and animals.

When can your child return?

Any discovery of lice in a child’s hair must be reported to the school. A child may not return to school until he or she has been checked by a school official, and no lice are found.

**BIRTHDAYS**

Parents may bring a special treat to serve at snack-time on or near their child’s birthday. Please notify the teacher of your plans as early as possible. Passing out invitations at school to parties at home, such as birthday parties, will be permitted only when all students in the room are invited to the party.

**CALENDAR**

K3 & K4 Parent Orientation	August 9, 2018
First Day of School 10:30 dismissal	August 13, 2018
Labor Day	September 3, 2018
Fall Break / Monday (Columbus Day)	October 8, 2018
Holiday Potpourri	October 12, 2018
Muffins with Mom	November 30, 2018
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 19-23, 2018
Christmas Holidays	December 19, 2018 : <b>dismiss 10:30.</b> Return Jan. 8, 2019
Martin Luther King Holiday	January 21, 2019
Doughnuts with Dad	February 1, 2019
Spring Break	<b>Dismiss on March 7, 2019, @ 2:40</b> Return March 18, 2019
K3 Program	April 17, 2019
K4 Program	April 18, 2019
Easter Break	April 19 and 22, 2019
Field Day (K5 - 6th only-- no Preschool this day)	May 10, 2019
Last Day of School	May 21, 2019 dismiss 10:30

**CARPOOL and SAFETY**

The safety of all students is one of the most important matters pertaining to school each day.

**MORNING CARPOOL:** 8 – 8:15 a.m. Parents should drop off students on Belhaven Street next to the curb only to meet a teacher, not into the street. If you wish to walk your child in, please park in the Pinehurst Street parking lot. Parents are welcome to walk their child in the first week of school. After the first week, we encourage drop-off only to assist with your child’s transition. Teachers will accompany children to their cars.

**EARLY ROOM:** Early room is available from 7:30 – 8 a.m. for no charge. You must walk your child in to the designated early room.

**AFTERNOON CARPOOL:** Students will be dismissed from 12:00- 12:15 p.m. Parents should form a line along the curb of Belhaven Street (eastbound). Teachers will accompany children to their cars.

RAINY DAY CARPOOL: Because of the covered walkway at drop-off and pick-up, rainy day carpool will remain the same as usual.

Please stay in your car. Also, we ask that you assist us when loading carpool at the end of the day by pulling out of line if some problem occurs. Always remember to seatbelt your child.

**Cell phones are not allowed in the carpool line. If you receive an emergency call, please pull out of line.**

SECURITY: Security guards are posted on both the Belhaven and Pinehurst Street parking lots 24 hours a day. Cameras are also posted inside and outside the building. ALL doors remain locked. Parents will use a code or be buzzed in at one door at the Pinehurst Entrance and one door at the Belhaven Entrance.

Children's Release: Only authorized adults will be permitted to pick up a child. Please notify the director in writing or by calling if there is a change. If an individual requesting to pick up a child is unknown to the school employees, he/she will be required to produce proper identification before the child is released.

Preschool students will not be given tardies. **However, please make every effort to have your child here by 8:15.** Our day begins with a devotional and instructional group activities that introduces key points of the week in language arts, math, and science. Students will feel like they have missed an important part of the day if they continuously miss group time.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

*Any changes in addresses, telephone numbers or email addresses should be made by the parent on ParentsWeb.* This information is important to ensure proper communication between home and school.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Parents are asked to maintain current email addresses and cell phone numbers with their child's teacher and via ParentsWeb: <https://fp-ms.client.renweb.com/pw/>. This link and other important links can be found under the *For Parents* section located at the bottom of the home page of [www.fpds.org](http://www.fpds.org). \*\*It is extremely important to maintain a current cell phone number via ParentsWeb as that is how the school will alert you in the event of school closings or emergencies.

If you have a timely message for your child, please call the school office as teachers are away from their computers and phones the majority of the day.

School-wide announcements will be included in newsletters emailed from classroom teachers or the preschool director. Information to include should be sent to Meredith Johnson, Director of Communications ([mjohnson@fpds.org](mailto:mjohnson@fpds.org)), by noon on Thursdays.

FPDS will not send emails out on behalf of parents for any non-school sponsored activity. Parents are responsible for distributing these emails to their child's classes or grade levels.

In the event it becomes necessary to close school, you will receive a text message and email. Closings may also be viewed at [fpds.org](http://fpds.org) or via social media.

Our web site [www.fpds.org](http://www.fpds.org) is a valuable resource for all FPDS information for your family. Also, please make sure to like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/FirstPDS> and follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/FirstPDS> and Instagram [@fpdscrusaders](https://www.instagram.com/fpdscrusaders).

### **CRUSADER CIRCLE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Crusader Circle is First Presbyterian Day School's after-school care program available for any currently enrolled K3 or K4 student.

Students who stay for Crusader Circle will have lunch at 12:00. Preschoolers can bring their own lunch or purchase a meal from the cafeteria, which will be delivered to the preschool area. They will have a short nap, outside time, and enrichment activities.

Please do not send toys or other items with your child for fear of losing or breaking them. However, Crusader Circle students will need to bring a nap mat, blanket, and lovey, which will all be kept in a designated cubby.

Extra-curricular activities are offered at an additional expense. Students who participate in these activities will not nap on that day.

Crusader Circle begins the first full day of school and is open only full days when school is in session. (Crusader Circle is not available when school dismisses for a half-day.) Parents must pick up their child from the preschool area and sign them out of Crusader Circle.

\*\*Students will also have the option to be accompanied to the kindergarten suite at 2:45 carpool, so that parents picking up older siblings may meet them there. Siblings are not permitted to pick up or drop off preschool students from their classrooms or the kindergarten suite for morning or afternoon carpool.

- Parents must fill out a permission form each year for their child to attend Crusader Circle. The form is found at <http://www.fpds.org/programs/after-school-care>.
- Hours: 12:15 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.
- Cost: \$4.75 per student per hour (*Note: A \$15 per quarter hour, or any part thereof, will be charged for students picked up after 6 p.m.*)
- Billing: At the end of each month, you will be billed for the time your child spent in Crusader Circle. A computerized time clock will be used to keep a record of each child's stay throughout the month.

### **CRUSADER CLUB**

Crusader Club is FPDS' parent organization made up of multiple committees of parent volunteers who assist the administration and faculty with school-life. Crusader Club is an excellent way to get involved and a great way to meet other FPDS parents. This truly is the heart of our school family

### **FIELD TRIPS**

During Field Trips, students will be under the close supervision of at least one teacher and several parents. A field trip permission slip is to be signed by parents at the time of registration. All children are required to wear seat belts while being transported to and from field trips. If a child is still within the weight suggestion of using a car seat, these must be supplied. **Siblings may not attend field trips.**

### **FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS**

Fire drills will be held several times during the school year. On the signal, all students will leave their classrooms in orderly lines and proceed to an assigned place outside the building to the playground. At the beginning of school, each teacher will give students detailed instructions regarding fire drills.

Tornado drills will be held several times during the school year. On the signal, all students will leave their classrooms in orderly lines and proceed to an assigned place on the lower floors of the building. At the beginning of school, each teacher will give detailed instructions regarding tornado drills.

## **LUNCH**

Valley Foods provides food service for FPDS. Parents should set up an account for lunch purchases at <https://www.myschoolaccount.com/>. Instructions may be found at [fpds.org](http://fpds.org).

All parents should go to the Valley website and set “low balance alerts”. This will insure you do not go into negative balances without notification. Many parents did not do this important step last year.

A variety of food choices is offered each day with a hot lunch available for preschoolers **\$3.25**. Monthly menus are published on the school website. Students will have two hot lunch options. Please note that outside food such as fast food or take-out from local restaurants cannot be brought to school.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Please do not send toys or other items with your child for fear of losing or breaking them. Students who are staying for Crusader Circle are asked to bring a rest mat, blanket and lovey.

## **PARENTAL COMMITMENT**

By enrolling a child in the First Presbyterian Day School, parents agree to abide by and comply with all policies, rules, and procedures as outlined in the annual school registration contract and all terms of the current student handbook. Parents further agree not to involve school personnel in any domestic disputes, including requesting a teacher or administrator to be subpoenaed to testify in court on the behalf of either parent in such a dispute.

## **POTTY TRAINING**

Students must be potty trained to enter the preschool program. While we recognize that accidents will occur occasionally, if your child has them repeatedly, he or she may be asked to go on a “potty vacation.”

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports will be sent home with student mid-spring that is a report only (no grades). Parents are welcome to schedule a conference with the teacher or director at any time if desired.

## **SCHOOL PARTIES**

Five parties are held throughout the year: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the last day of school. Room mothers are responsible for planning parties and will coordinate with class parents for simple refreshments. (No favors are given at the parties.) Parents are not required to attend each event but are invited to come if they chose.

## **SUMMER PROGRAM**

**Under the Oaks** is the summer program of FPDS, available for students who have completed K3 through fifth grades. This will be a fun-filled, interactive summer for your child. Open 7:30 – 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, Under the Oaks is available during the months of June and July. For more information and fees, visit [fpds.org](http://fpds.org).

## **UNIFORMS AND DRESS CODE**

All approved uniforms may be purchased at **Lands' End online or in the store in Ridgeland.**

The Crusader Club will provide an FPDS t-shirt free of charge that will be worn on special activity days, field trips, etc.

We encourage closed-toe shoes; we do not recommend boots or sandals.

Each child should bring a change of clothing the first week of school in case of emergencies. Please label all removable clothing, lunch boxes, etc.

On some occasions, the Crusader Store run by our Crusader Club will offer FPDS apparel that the administration has approved to be worn to school as part of the uniform. Those items will be noted as official dress code wear. (Please note that not all Crusader Club apparel is approved for the daily dress code. Be sure to check signs and notes about the specific item you purchase to see if it has been approved for the dress code.)

From time to time teachers may request special dress up days to go along with a unit of study.

### **K3 & K4 Girls**

Required dress:

- Light blue toddler dress with Peter Pan collar and puffed sleeves

Additional choices:

- Light blue pique cap sleeve polo
- White pique cap sleeve polo
- Navy jumper
- Navy skort
- Navy polar fleece jacket

### **K3 & K4 Boys**

Required dress:

- Short sleeve navy jersey polo
- Khaki shorts or pants, pull-on styles available

**Additional choices:**

- Short sleeve light blue jersey knit polo
- Short or long sleeve white jersey polo
- Long sleeve navy pique polo
- Navy shorts or pants, pull-on styles available
- Navy polar fleece jacket

\*\*\*Boys' and girls' FPDS applique t-shirts available at the Open House may be worn on Fridays.

Boys hair should be trimmed neatly above the eyebrows and not touching the back collar of the shirt with sides no longer than the earlobes.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

The signing of a re-enrollment contract for the upcoming year indicates the parents' commitment to paying the tuition for that year. When it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from First Presbyterian Day School, whether prior to the beginning of school or at any time during the school year, the parent or guardian should notify the school office and sign a withdrawal form. No withdrawals are considered by the School Board without a properly executed withdrawal form. All textbooks must be returned. **SCHOOL BOARD APPROVAL IS NECESSARY FOR RELEASE FROM TUITION FINANCIAL COMMITMENT FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

