



Preparing Children for Kindergarten ➔ Teaching them about Jesus

Parent Handbook

Revised Jul 27, 2021



HOURS OF OPERATION, SCHEDULE, AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

FFP School Day Hours of Operation:

6 Weeks through 5 Years 2 Day Classes	Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday	9:00 am to 2:00 pm
6 Weeks through 5 Years 3 Day Classes	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:00 am to 2:00 pm
6 Weeks through 5 Years 4 Day Classes	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:00 am to 2:00 pm

FFP follows Northwest Independent School District's calendar for holidays, including Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring Break. We also follow NWISD's inclement weather schedule. This includes delayed or cancelled classes due to inclement weather for the district. Please see your television station or radio for updates and closings for the district.

Please note we start 2-3 weeks after public school and end 1-2 weeks before their last day (dependent upon local district's school year calendar updates or changes).

MISSION STATEMENT

Strive to meet the needs of children through a loving Christian environment.

PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

First Flight Preschool's goal is to be North Texas' leading preschool program. Our program gives children ages 6 weeks through 5 years enriching opportunities to develop the whole child. We focus on learning through child-directed play experiences and curriculum time. We believe a balance of play and preschool enhances growth and development in all areas: physically, socially, emotionally, creatively, and intellectually. This is achieved in a safe and loving faith based environment with caregivers who are dedicated to enriching children's lives.



Staff members share the following values as a guide for interactions between staff members, between staff members and children, and between staff members and parents:

- We support each other through regular, positive communication, recognizing efforts and accomplishments, proactive conflict resolution, grace, and mutual respect.
- We are committed to reaching out to people of different races, genders, ethnicity, beliefs and abilities. We strive to create an environment of inclusion that celebrates our differences and commonalities.
- Our program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

LICENSING

You have chosen an early childhood program for your student that is licensed by the State of Texas DFPS. As such, we are required to meet licensing standards at all times and undergo a yearly inspection by the state. Parents may contact FFP to review a copy of the state minimum standards and our most recent licensing inspection report. Parents may also review the most recent licensing report posted in the foyer.

For more information, concerns, or questions you can contact the local licensing office.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 1501 Circle Drive Suite 110 Fort Worth, TX 76119 800-582- 8286

TDFPRS Website www.dfps.state.tx.us

Gang Free Zone FFP is a designated gang-free zone under Texas House Bill 2086. In addition, guns, knives and any other weapons are not allowed in the school. This does not pertain to law enforcement officials who wear a gun as part of their uniform.

Recommendation for Adult Immunizations The State of Texas recommends that all adults be up-to-date on their vaccines when working in school settings. The FFP staff are not required to immunize themselves, but are directed to their healthcare professional.



ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

First Flight Preschool admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin and does not discriminate in the administration of our policies or programs. All rights, privileges, programs, and activities are available to all students in the school.

Initial enrollment each year will begin at a date and time specified by the administrative team. Registration is on a first come, first served basis and will proceed as follows:

- 1) Currently enrolled families, including siblings, and siblings of alumni
- 2) New Families

To register your child and hold their spot in FFP, each student must have:

- 1) Completed Enrollment Application online
- 2) Paid one-time, non-refundable Supply & Registration Fee

Complete application and payment online at

<https://register.runsandbox.com/Register/?form=72367a41-7119-4042-b457-a1495b8f9de4>

You will be asked for payment upon completion of the Enrollment Application.

Once your child has been accepted into our program, before the first day of school we must have:

- 1) **Completed Enrollment Form** - A list of special needs or any other information, which may be necessary to meet the needs of the child, must be noted on this form. Children's disabilities are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 2) **Healthcare Professional Statement**
- 3) **A copy of the child's most current immunization records**
- 4) **A copy of a hearing and vision screening test** from their doctor for children **ages 4 and older as of September 1st of the school year**. Alternatively, we will host a hearing and vision screening at the school in the Fall for a small fee.
- 5) **Food Allergy Emergency plan** for students with life-threatening food allergies.



Complete Enrollment Form and online at

<https://register.runsandbox.com/Register/?form=72367a41-7119-4042-b457-a1495b8f9de4>

Required documents can be uploaded on the SANDBOX PARENT APP or emailed to marilyn.ritchey@visitacf.com

NOTE: STUDENTS WITH INCOMPLETE FILES AFTER the first week of school MAY BE DROPPED AND WILL FORFEIT ALL REGISTRATION FEES.

Hearing & Vision Screening/Speech Screening The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services requires that all children who have reached their fourth birthday are to be screened for hearing and vision. We have an outside service come in once a year to provide these screenings for a fee. Your child's pediatrician can do the hearing and vision screening at their four-year checkup. Speech screenings are offered at FFP as well. These screenings are optional and provided for your convenience.

**Our staff are not required to get regular immunizations; however, they may do so by their own discretion.*

ENROLLMENT TERMINATION

All students will be on a probationary period for six weeks starting with their first day of attendance. This is to ensure we can provide an appropriate learning environment based on the needs of each child. No refunds will be given for unused tuition registration or supply fees if your child does not continue with the program after this period.

In some cases, it may be necessary for the Director to decide to discontinue a child's enrollment. This may occur at any point during the year. Such a decision would be based on what is in the best interest of the child and their classmates. Every effort will be made before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be a result of the following, but is not limited to:

- 1) Continued abuse of peers, staff or property
- 2) Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- 3) The inability for First Flight Preschool to meet the student's needs
- 4) Non-payment of tuition by 10 days or more



TUITION POLICIES

Tuition costs are assessed for the student for the period of one school year, not on a month-by-month basis. We offer 2 payment options for the year's tuition cost: payment in full by the first day of the school year, or 9 monthly installments of the full tuition price. ***If you choose to pay via the 9-month payment plan, tuition is due each month, starting Sept 1 and ending May 1.***

All school closures have been prorated out of the full school year tuition amount including possible inclement weather days. *On the 9-month payment plan, tuition is the same amount each month, September through May, including holiday months.*

Late Fees Tuition is due on the 1st of each month and late after the 10th, regardless of your child's attendance schedule. Late tuition will be calculated at \$5 per day on each operating day for the school, Monday through Thursday.

Payment Options Online payments may be made online after registration via your family's Sandbox account or by check dropped in FFP Foyer. Please make checks payable to Alliance Community Fellowship and note the reason for payment in the memo and student name.

Sibling Discount Families with 2 or more children at FFP will receive a discount for yearly tuition rates. \$25 per sibling discount.

Delinquent Accounts If tuition is not paid in full by the 10th of the month, your account will be labeled "Delinquent." Your child may not be allowed to return to school until your account is paid in full. During this time, your child's spot cannot be guaranteed to stay open. We will call from the waiting list to fill any vacant openings. All accounts must be paid in full in order to register for the following school year.

Student Withdrawals Parents are responsible for tuition until withdrawal. Notice must be given to administrative staff (not teachers), in writing, 30 days in advance, prior to the end of the current month. You are responsible for tuition for any month your child is attending school. For example, if you are planning on removing your child from the program and make administrative staff aware on the 15th of the month, you are still responsible for the current month and the following month's tuition cost. No refunds will be given for unused tuition, registration fees or supply fees.



Late Pick-Up Charges There is a late pick-up policy in effect for preschool students who are picked up after 2:05 pm. Parents will be charged \$1 per minute after 2:05 pm.

Non-Payment of Tuition The Director may remove a child from the program if the tuition is 10 days late.

Enrollment before Attendance If you wish to enroll your child before he/she can begin attendance, you must pay the registration and supply fee to hold your child's spot. If there is an extended amount of time between enrollment and start date, you will be asked to pay the tuition payments during those months to hold your child's spot.

AFTER-HOURS BABYSITTING

First Flight Preschool does not accept responsibility or liability for teachers babysitting children outside of the supervised setting of our program. All childcare, before and after our teacher's contract hours, is a private arrangement between the sitter and the parent. This arrangement cannot interfere with the staff member's contract hours, this includes babysitting a child in their classroom.

PLACEMENT POLICY

Placement of a child in our program is determined by age, developmental level and program schedule. While we do appreciate input from our families, the final decision will be made by the FFP administrative staff. ***Due to this policy, we cannot place a child based on requests for certain friends or teachers.***

Children are grouped according to age with an approximate age span within each classroom of 12 months. Children 0-23 months are grouped according to state regulations.

We reserve the right to move a child into a more appropriate classroom if for any reason we should deem it necessary to the wellbeing of the child or children involved. Reasons may include, but are not limited to; conflicts with other children, failure to respond to discipline of the teacher and most notably, the child's social or academic abilities being delayed to the point that their self-esteem and confidence is being negatively affected. It is our sincere desire that the children within this program thrive, grow and excel. Naturally, parents are kept abreast of any problems, but the final decisions regarding placement will fall to the Director.



ATTENDANCE, VISITATION, AND SICK POLICY

Arrival: Children should be dropped off between 8:45 am and 9:00 am. All classes begin at 9:00 am. Teachers are not ready to receive children until 8:45 am, as they are preparing the classroom for the day. All children must be left with a staff member.

Student Sign-In/Sign-Out The State requires that all students must be signed-in when they arrive at school and signed-out when they are picked up. Sign-in QR Codes are located in the foyer to sign your student in and out of our system. (THIS IS MANDATED)

****When a parent opens the door allowing their child to exit the building, the teachers and the center directors assume that responsibility for the child has been taken over by the parent. We will take every precaution to keep your child safe, but if you allow them to leave the building unattended, we cannot be held responsible for their safety.**

Pick up/Drop off Pick up for students 3 years and under will be dropped off and picked up in the foyer of building 2.

For 4 years and up they will be dropped off and picked up at the bottom of the ramp of the portables and will proceed up the ramp to their class.

Visitation FFP has an open-door policy. However, if you would like to stay and spend time with your child activities, please see the office so we can do a proper criminal history check, as required by the State. Please be sure to check-in at the office when you arrive.

During the school day our doors remain locked.

Dismissal Preschool doors open at 1:45pm and students are to be picked up promptly and no later than 2:00 pm in the foyer or at the ramp by the portables. If an emergency arises and you cannot arrive on time to pick up your student, please contact us at 817-439-0184. If someone else is picking up your child, please let us know in advance. This person **MUST** be on your child's authorization list on your Admission Form and know your child's PIN. No child will be released to another person other than the parents unless we have prior notice. Identification will be required.

If someone is not permitted to pick up a child due to legal proceedings, please notify the administrative staff immediately. The office will need to retain documentation concerning this matter.



Absence Tuition will not be credited for a student who is absent. In order to fund the low staff-child ratios, we cannot extend refunds or credits for absenteeism for any reason; our staff must be paid, regardless of your child's attendance.

Sick Policy For the protection of all children, please do not send your child to school if he/she is sick. Children should be symptom free for 24 hours without medication prior to returning to school. Please notify a Director of any communicable diseases so other parents can be notified. (In this case, every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality.)

Per the recommendation of the Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases and the American Academy of Pediatrics, and for protection of your child and others, a child should not be in attendance with any of the following symptoms and will not be accepted at FFP:

1. Fever of 100.1 degrees or higher (*fever-free for 24 hours without a fever-reducer*)
2. Vomiting and/or diarrhea (*must not have had diarrhea or vomited in 24 hours*)
3. Any symptoms of childhood diseases such as scarlet fever, measles, chicken pox, strep throat, flu or any other infectious diseases
4. Common cold
5. Sore throat
6. Croup
7. Fifth disease
8. Any unexplained rash
9. Any skin infection, boils, ringworm, impetigo or head lice
10. Pinkeye or other eye infections (Eye secretions will be wiped clean and monitored. If it returns the child will be sent home. All eye secretions will be considered contagious until examined by a doctor. A doctor's note will be required for the child to return to school.)
11. Any communicable diseases (please see office for questions regarding this)
12. Cloudy or green nose secretion and/or persistent cough
13. Lice or presence of Lice eggs

The following must require notification to the preschool:

- If child sustains an injury that requires hospitalization;
- If child shows signs and symptoms of an illness that requires hospitalization
- If a child contracts an illness deemed notifiable by the DSHS specified in 25 TAC 97, Subchapter A. (Communicable Diseases)



In addition FFP will notify parent(s) regarding injuries:

- If child is injured and requires medical treatment or hospitalization
- If child shows symptoms of an illness that requires hospitalization

FFP assumes that responsible parents will not send a child to school if they show any signs of sickness. Students may return to school when they have not vomited, had diarrhea, or had a fever in the previous 24 hours without medication. Please do not give your child a fever reducer and send them to school. That puts all the children and our staff at risk and is not respectful to other parents.

If a child is injured or becomes ill at school, the parents will be notified and expected to pick up the child in a timely manner. We will call the number for the child's parents first. If the parents cannot be reached, then the person designated to be the emergency contact will be notified. Be sure to keep the school notified of any changes in telephone numbers, work address or phone, or emergency contacts. These changes can be made on the Sandbox Parent App.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Volunteers & Parent Participation We love our families and welcome our parents to get involved! We strive to work collaboratively in a mutually supportive fashion with parents to ensure the child is able to take full advantage of their school experience.

We have many volunteer opportunities for our parents to get involved:

- Being on the teacher appreciation team, working with the teachers for parties/events
- Saving materials for school projects
- Preparing materials at home for school projects (cutting, stapling, sewing)
- Volunteering at school events



MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Medical Emergencies If an emergency arises, a qualified staff will administer first aid care, call the parent, and if necessary emergency medical personnel. If a parent cannot be reached emergency contact numbers will be called. In the event that parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached, the child's physician will be contacted. Staff will accompany the child to the nearest hospital for emergency treatment. The staff will remain with the child until the parent arrives. **Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant medical expense.** An accident report will be written with detailed information on any injury to a child. Incident reports are kept in the child's file and a copy is given to the parent within 24 hours of any injury. **Please ensure all contact information is kept updated and that each person on the contact list is aware of these policies.**

MEDICATION

Medication of any type cannot be dispensed without a signed *Authorization for Dispensing Medication* state form, including asthma inhalers, Benadryl and Epi-Pens. If your child has a life-threatening allergy they must also have a Food Allergy Emergency plan signed by their doctor. FFP will not dispense antibiotics, allergy medication, cough or cold medicine. Please schedule your child's medication to be given before and/or after school times. If your child has a medical condition that requires medication to be dispersed during our school day, please make the administrative staff aware. In the case that a child's medical condition requires medication to be dispersed during our school day a Medication Authorization Form must be completed.

Medication Requirements

- All medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's full name.
- Over the counter medication, Benadryl, must state the amount to be administered for the child's age and/or weight.
- The medicine must include directions for administration.
- If the medicine is prescribed, the name of the physician must be on the container.
- All medications must have an expiration date and cannot be administered after this date.
- Medicine can only be administered to the child for whom it was intended.
- The parent must sign an authorization form to dispense medication and include dates and times to administer. These directions must follow the label directions.



- Medications must be picked up by parents on the last day of school. Any medications not picked up will be properly disposed of.

WATER ACTIVITIES

Per State requirements, parents must be notified of any water activities in the classroom.

ANIMALS

Pets are not allowed at First Flight Preschool on a regular basis. In the event we have a pet visiting the classroom notification will be given to the parents. All animals visiting the campus must be fully immunized and suitable for contact with children as documented by a licensed veterinarian, animal shelter, or zoo. The teaching staff will supervise all interactions between the children and animals, as well as instruct the children on safe behavior when interacting with the animals. Certified and immunized service animals are welcome.

TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIPS

Transportation First Flight Preschool does not provide transportation for students. In a medical emergency, we will call 911 for transportation to a local hospital.

Field Trips First Flight Preschool does not take children on field trips.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND PEST CONTROL

FFP's campus is completely smoke-free. We maintain facilities so they are free from harmful animals, pests and poisonous plants. In the event pesticides and herbicides are used, they are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions. They are used in a manner that prevents skin contact and exposure.

LUNCH AND SNACKS WE ARE A PEANUT-FREE CAMPUS

A peanut allergy is a common allergy among children reported to cause fatal and near-fatal allergic reactions. Always read the entire ingredient label to look for the names of peanuts. Peanut ingredients may be within the list of the ingredients or peanut could be listed in a "Contains: Peanuts" statement beneath the list of ingredients. Also look for the statement, "Processed in a plant that also processes peanuts" as this could cause cross-contamination and cannot be served to a child with a peanut allergy.



Lunch All students must bring a lunch from home consisting of nutritious finger foods that can be served with minimal assistance. Please be mindful of foods that are considered choking hazards for children younger than age 4: hot dogs, grapes, seeds, chunks of meat and cheese, chunks or raw vegetables.

Popcorn will not be allowed in our classes. Grapes and hot dogs must be quartered. Please keep in mind that the lunches cannot be refrigerated or reheated. **Candy, artificially colored foods (especially red) and sugary drinks are strongly discouraged.** Water will be provided to children who do not bring a drink.

Snacks We ask our parents to please bring a snack for their child each day. Please send nutritious, peanut-free snacks that are designed to provide a portion of your child's daily nutritional requirements. Please refer to our snack list for ideas. *Popcorn is not allowed.*

Breastfeeding We are supportive of your choice to breastfeed your child. We will be happy to provide you with a private place to nurse or to feed your child breast milk that you pack from a bottle.

Birthday Treats Birthdays are a very special time for each child! Feel free to bring a peanut-free, special treat. When sending a birthday treat, **please consider a healthy alternative to traditional cookies or cupcakes** to help our students stay ready to learn, such as:

Chocolate dipped strawberries

Fruit and yogurt parfaits

100% fruit roll ups

Animal crackers

Squeezable yogurt or applesauce

Fruit Kabobs (cut fruit on a stick and dipped in vanilla yogurt, or alternate strawberries, and cheddar or Colby cheese cubes)

Ice cream cone or waffle bowl filled with yogurt or whipped cream and chopped fruit

Bananas and/or strawberries with semi-sweet chocolate chips



String cheese

Fruit cups (grapes must be quartered)

DAILY SCHEDULE AND CURRICULUM

We use a play-based and interactive approach to planning and curriculum development, which allows us to prepare emergent lessons and activities that stay on track with each individual child and the nature of the classroom, while staying in line with developmentally appropriate practices.

The following activities are typically included every day in our program. The order and activities change throughout the year.

Welcome Centers - Children are welcomed to class and invited to choose a hands-on table center.

Circle Time - Songs, stories, finger plays, dramatization, calendar, introduction of the theme led by the teacher .

Center Time - Children choose from a variety of activities, including; art, writing, manipulatives, blocks, dramatic play, Science, sensory table, and Reading.

Snack - During this time children are encouraged to exhibit good manners and talk about their day with their peers and teachers. Children are also encouraged to clean up after themselves.

Outside/Gross Motor Play - Children have the opportunity for gross motor, social, and cognitive development. The children play indoors and outdoors daily as weather permits.

Lunch - Children bring lunch from home to eat with their peers. The teachers eat with the children to foster good manners and social skills. Children are encouraged to clean up after themselves.

Nap/Rest Time - All children have rest or quiet time after they eat lunch, per State requirements. Children in the 3's and younger bring a nap mat to use during this time. We do not force children to nap. Those who don't sleep may engage in quiet play such as reading a book or doing a puzzle.



Chapel-Music/Spanish - All children have Chapel-Music once a week. Three's and Prek participate in Spanish weekly.

Closing - Children review their day and prepare to go home.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Themed Celebrations Special activities are planned for holiday celebrations such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. Other celebrations include Storybook Parade, Pajama Day, Color War and other special days that help us celebrate our themes.

Art Show Each year our students participate in a themed art show where we showcase their years work and parents have the opportunity to purchase a one of a kind art piece.

Graduation When your child has completed Pre-k he/she will participate in our commencement ceremony. Diplomas are awarded to mark this exciting and important milestone in your child's education.

YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS AND WHAT TO BRING

Label Please label ALL of your child's belongings. This is most important when it comes to food and water bottles, but includes their backpack, lunchbox, coats, hats, nap mats, etc. This is a State requirement.

What to Wear Your child should be dressed in play-friendly clothing. *Teachers do their best to protect the student's clothing. We ask for your understanding if an accident occurs while painting or playing outdoors. DO NOT send your child to school in Crocs, sandals, flip flops or other shoes that are not conducive to active play and playgrounds.*

Change of Clothing & Jackets Each child should always have a complete change of clothing including a top, bottoms, underwear, and socks in a gallon sized Ziploc bag with their name on it in their bag. If they need to change clothes at any point the soiled clothes will come home in the Ziploc bag.

During cold weather months, please send your child with a jacket every day.

Nap Mat Each child in the 3's or younger must have a mat to rest on. If your child has a special blanket or "lovie," they are free to bring it. Again, please label everything with



your child's name. We strongly recommend washing your child's nap mat weekly and taking it home daily.

Please bring the following items to school each day:

6 weeks - 12 months Class

- Completed feeding sheet
- Diapers/Wipes
- Bottles or cups that do not leak with your child's name.
- Lunch and snack that pertains to your child's age.
- Change of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag.
- Pacifier without bungee or cord attached.

13 months - 23 months Class

- Diapers/Wipes
- Bottles or cups that do not leak with your child's name.
- Lunch and snack that pertains to your child's age.
- Change of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag.
- Pacifier without bungee or cord attached.
- Nap mat, blanket and any special "lovies" or pacifiers

Two's Classes

- Diapers/Wipes
- Water bottles or cups that do not leak, labeled with your child's name.
- Lunch and snack consisting of finger food. Be wary of choking hazards such as hot dogs and grapes (both must be quartered), honey, and nuts.
- Change of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag.
- Nap mat, blanket, and any special "lovies" or pacifiers.

Three's Classes

- Pull ups and Wipes (if applicable)
- Lunch, snack and water bottle
- Change of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag.
- Nap mat



Pre-K

- Lunch, snack and water bottle
- Change of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag.

POTTY TRAINING

We understand that potty training can be a challenging time for little ones and parents alike. We want to help you and your child accomplish this milestone with ease!

Two's Classes - Children in these classes, who are not fully potty trained, must come to school in a diaper or Velcro/pull-tab Pull-Ups. If your child is in the process of potty training, please be sure to inform your teachers so we can support them as well.

Three's Classes - As our days get more active, it is best for children in these classes to be completely potty trained, it is up to the Director's discretion on placement in the class if not potty trained.

Pre-K - Children in these programs **MUST** be fully potty trained. This includes being able to use the restroom without assistance, wipe, and wash their hands.

COMMUNICATION

The entire staff at FFP is here to make sure you and your child have a rewarding experience at school! We strive to create healthy lines of communication with each family.

Classroom Communication Teachers will communicate through a variety of means including email, classroom newsletters and notes. We prefer speaking to our parents face-to-face any time we can! Please maintain communication with your child's teachers through school-approved means when communicating about your child. ***This does not include their personal cell phone or email.*** In addition, product recall issued by CPSC is available in the foyer.

Administration Communication The school's administrative staff may communicate with you through several avenues including face-to-face communication, emails, phone calls, Sandbox Parent App, and notes home.



Parent Questions and Concerns If you have questions or concerns, please talk to your child's teachers first. If your question or concern is not answered, contact the Director or Assistant Director of the school.

Conferences Teachers and parents should feel free at any time during the year to ask for a conference. This may be a parent/teacher conference, or a conference to include the Director if necessary. Please schedule these meetings in advance so we may ensure adequate coverage for the teacher in your conference.

Confidentiality FFP maintains confidentiality and respects each family's right to privacy. Families are assured that all individual records, assessments, and documents are kept in a secure location. Only staff having direct access to the child may view the child's records. We will obtain permission before releasing any information to an outside agency.

PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL - HINTS FOR PARENTS

We know this experience can be challenging as a parent, especially if you are a first-time parent. Here are some hints for making your child's first day of school the best experience it can be!

1. Typically, children are excited to start school! Expect your child to go to school happily and have a good time. Children sense their parents' insecurities very quickly.
2. Talk about school in a positive and reassuring way. "You are old enough to go to 'big kid' school now, isn't that exciting? I know there are many fun things to do there, and I am so excited to hear all about your day when I pick you up!" Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood has a great video on his first day of preschool on Youtube!
3. Honestly answer any questions your child has about starting school. Positive discussion helps them to feel validated in their emotions and process through this new experience!
4. Attend "Meet the Teacher" before the First Day. This is very important to help your child feel secure about his surroundings and the new faces he/she will see. Do something special together the night before school. Fix lunch together and put it in your child's new lunch box. Let your child pick out what he/she wants to wear on the first day of school.
5. Plan your schedule so you and your child can be rested, unhurried, and relaxed that morning. Begin a "wake-up" routine two to three weeks before the first day of school to help them become accustomed to their new morning schedule.



6. Be sure your child gets enough sleep the nights before school days. 10-12 hours is the average amount of sleep time for a preschool-aged child.
7. When you bring your child to school, you are bringing them to a teacher who knows, loves, and understands children. Place your child in the teachers' hands, assure your little one that you will return, then leave promptly. Most children make better adjustments to the group if the parent is not present. "Quick goodbye's leave dry eyes"
8. Be assured that if there are tears, they are usually very brief. It may take your child several weeks to adjust to the new environment and routine, but once he/she does, you will experience with delight how much your child really enjoys school!
9. *A vital piece of your child's success at school is **prompt arrival, regular attendance (unless the child is ill), and picking up your child on time.*** This helps establish a regular routine for your child.

GUIDANCE STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE

First Flight Preschool sets a positive classroom atmosphere and encourages each child to "do unto others," promoting self-regulation and logical consequences. We focus on development of self-control rather than adult-control, using guidance strategies to help teach the children to exercise positive behavior. Our main guidance for all disciplines is through Becky Bailey's, Conscious Discipline techniques.

Above all, we will not harm children. We will not participate in practices that are emotionally damaging, physically harmful, disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitive, or intimidating. This mission has precedence over all others.

Our most common strategies:

- Children will be redirected and limits will be set
 - Encouragement of appropriate behavior
 - Use of clear and consistent rules
 - Child-directed problem solving
 - Logical consequences
- Immediate acknowledgement of positive behaviors

On those occasions when a student persists in stepping outside the boundaries, a child may be removed from activities and asked to take a time-away, beginning with a time in their classroom. Time-away is paired with discussion between the student and teacher



to ensure their understanding. If needed the child can have time-away in the Director or Assistant Director's office, until he/she can regain control. This is most often used when the behavior of the child is having a direct effect on another child in the classroom or when a child is hurting their peers or teachers. Food is never withheld as punishment.

If a child is sent to the Director's office twice in one day the child will be sent home for the remainder of the school day.

Behavior strategies will be discussed with the parents. If aggressive behavior becomes a recurring struggle in the classroom suspension from the program may be necessary. Parents will be kept informed about their child's likelihood of suspension.

Aggressive behavior is defined as:

- Biting
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Pushing
- Other abusive behavior that is directed at other children or staff

CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Occasionally young children present consistent, dangerous behaviors in the educational setting with the potential to injure themselves and others. In such circumstances, children may need more intensive behavior interventions.

The procedure for such circumstances are as follows:

- The teacher will have a designated safe and appropriate place in the classroom and outside the classroom where an adult can take the child away from peers for the purpose of assisting the child with self-regulation. *A staff member will remain with the child at all times.*
- When dangerous behaviors occur, the staff will notify the child's parents.
- All incidents will be documented and stored in the child's file.
- If the child continues to exhibit said behaviors the child's teacher and the Director or Assistant Director will meet to discuss how to handle future incidents and potential referrals for additional services.
- Behavior support may include a Behavior Plan. A Behavior Plan is an individualized, intensive intervention based on information collected by the family and teaching staff. The Behavior Plan will include:



- Description of the behavioral concern, triggering events, and positive redirection strategies
- Prevention strategies
- Replacement skills
- Strategies for when the behavior occurs

Staff will implement the Behavior Plan and meet with the family to discuss progress and modify the plan as needed.

Withholding of food, access to the bathroom, or any other demeaning form of treatment is strictly forbidden. Use of such methods by any staff member will result in disciplinary action. Continual communication with parents and guardians must be maintained concerning the child's behavior and ongoing documentation is required. Staff will be sensitive to cultural beliefs and values.

See also Termination of Enrollment.

FIRE, SEVERE WEATHER, AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

The Texas Department of Childcare Licensing require each school to conduct:

- Monthly fire drills
- Quarterly severe weather drills
- Quarterly lockdown drills

Please refer to the emergency procedures listed in each classroom for details. We will evacuate to the furthest side of our parking lot.

*A copy of our Emergency Preparedness Plan is available. This plan includes policies and procedures for severe weather and other building emergencies.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Emergency Evacuation In the event of an emergency evacuation, FFP staff will contact local authorities, parents, and the licensing office.

Teachers will evacuate the students from the building to:



The Met Church
11301 N Riverside Dr
Fort Worth, TX 76244.

The classroom's emergency bag will accompany the class upon evacuation. The teacher will take attendance and establish the class's safety status. At least one teacher will remain with their class at all times. *Parents will be contacted as soon as possible, once all students are safe, to be made aware of the situation.*

The building can be re-entered once it has been declared safe by the Director, Assistant Director, or emergency personnel.

Students will remain with FFP staff until the building is safe to re-enter or are picked up by an authorized adult.

For an earthquake, teachers will direct students to "drop and cover" until the shaking has stopped.

Extended Emergency Evacuation In the event of an extended emergency evacuation FFP staff will follow these procedures:

- Emergency personnel, parents, and licensing will be contacted.
- The administrative staff will establish a command post, teachers will stay with students.
- Adults arriving to pick-up children should report to the command post and administrative staff only.
- Adults will be required to show identification and sign children out.
- The classroom teacher will verify the adult before releasing the child.
- Students will remain at the evacuation location until they are released to an authorized adult.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE PROCEDURES

In the event it becomes necessary to send children home early from school, the following Early Closure Procedures will be followed:



- Parents will be sent an e-mail and/or Sandbox text or notification. Parents may receive a phone call from the school, as time allows.
- The normal learning environment will continue until dismissal of students is announced.

Intruder/Lockdown Procedures

- In the event of an intruder on campus, the office staff will notify the teachers that we are on lockdown.
- The administrative staff will call 911 immediately and contact Alliance Community Fellowship to notify them of the situation.
- Classroom teachers will direct students to move away from windows and doors. Doors will be locked. Windows will be covered.
- The lockdown will remain in effect until law enforcement officers verify the school's safety
- In the event that the school needs to dismiss students the Early Closure Procedures will be followed.
- During a lockdown situation, parents must not attempt to enter the building until the area has been secured and deemed safe by law enforcement.
- Once the lockdown has been removed, students will remain with their teacher until they are released to an authorized adult.

Power Outage Procedures In the event of a power outage, teachers will remain with their students until a decision is made for the remainder of the school day. Students will not be released unaccompanied from classrooms to use the bathrooms. The school day will continue as normally as possible. If the decision is made to send children home, the Early Closure Procedures will be followed.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) requires the FFP staff and all members of child care institutions to be on the lookout for, and to report to the appropriate authorities, any and all suspected cases of abuse to a child. The staff is mandatory reporters of child abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the Child Protective Services for investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. *It is advised that the parents/guardians make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or*



other visible injury to minimize suspicion of possible child abuse or endangerment.

The staff is dedicated to preventing and responding to the abuse and neglect of children. In the event of suspected abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to contact the TDFPS child abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org.

Per the TDFPS requirements, at least one clock hour of annual training must focus on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including:

1. Factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect;
2. Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
3. Internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and
4. Community organizations that have training programs

The staff members are notified of professional development opportunities regarding abuse and neglect on an ongoing basis. The parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should contact the child abuse hotline at 1-800- 252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org. Childcare operations are public accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title III. If you believe that such an operation may be practicing discrimination in violation of Title III you may call the ADA Information line at 800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383.

PARENT SERVICES

Questions If you have any questions or concerns regarding the policies and procedures, please notify the Director. We will gladly discuss your concerns and answer any questions you may have. You can call the office at 817-439-0184 to schedule an appointment or stop by during regular school hours.

Grievances Procedures and Mediation Policies If a concern arises regarding school-wide behavior policies, teacher-parent and teacher-student interaction or communication please first address those concerns with your teacher. If a resolution cannot be reached or if the situation merits more input, feel free to contact the Director. We will schedule a time to discuss and resolve any issues that arise. If we cannot reach a satisfactory resolution, you may refer the matter to the First Flight Board in writing.



If you are having a problem with your child's class or teacher, please request a conference with the teacher to try to solve the problem. If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, notify the Director of your concern and the situation will be investigated. You may be asked to meet with the teacher and Director to try again to solve the problem. If a resolution cannot be reached with the Director, you must submit the complaint in writing to our Executive Pastor who will meet with you or refer the matter to the Board. Their decision will be final.

ASSESSMENTS AND PROGRAM TRANSITIONS

Assessments Purpose Assessment is a valuable part of providing a high-quality learning experience for your child. One purpose of child assessments is to learn about the development, interests, and needs of each child while we enable appropriate, individualized teaching strategies to be developed. A second purpose is to detect early signs of delay in developmental milestones and/or the need for further assessment, referral, or early intervention.

Assessment Instruments Our preschool teachers use several assessment tools with Frog Street curriculum, active learning assessments, and observational assessment tools throughout the school year.

Assessment Schedule A folder is kept for each child that highlights individual strengths and accomplishments. The portfolio contains work and art samples, assessments, observational records (as needed).

FFP staff assesses children throughout the day as they naturally move through their schedule. Teachers observe children in groups and individually as a means to set goals to support the individual child and the classroom. Families have ongoing opportunities to share observations from home. The teachers use this information to take into account family values, culture, identity, and home language. Each teacher documents observations in their own way, such as recording observations, taking photographs, and collecting work samples. A structured assessment is administered for children 2 yrs - Prek.

Referrals The teaching staff conducts initial screening and curricula-based assessment. If we suspect a child has additional needs, this information is communicated with parents. **FFP staff does not diagnose children.** The preschool maintains lists of resources that can be shared with a parent interested in more information about organizations or people that can provide early intervention.



The referral process is as outlined below:

1. The teacher notes classroom observations and gathers information from parents
2. The teacher writes a statement of concern with observation and family information (i.e. The child seems to mispronounce many words)
3. An in-class observation will be scheduled
4. After the observation, a meeting with the teacher will be held to develop a plan for the child. One of the Directors will be included if deemed necessary.
5. If further screening is recommended, information will be shared with parents. Resources will be provided to maximize the child's success or assistance will be given if a referral to an outside agency is necessary.

Program Transitions Assessments, knowledge of the child, and the child's age are all factors in a child's transition through FFP's available programs.

We do not graduate children mid-year, regardless of their age or academy readiness. Children are best served when fulfilling our school year with consistent teachers and structure. All students will transition at the beginning of each school year.

**See also Placement Policy.*

*"Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it."*

Proverbs 22:6

