



First Baptist Church, Opelika • Weekday Preschool Ministry

# **2020-2021 PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome to our Bright Beginnings Ministry!

Thank you for entrusting your child to us for his/her early learning experiences. Bright Beginnings is an extension of the ministry of First Baptist Church. We consider it a privilege to be able to minister to your family through our program.

This handbook has been prepared so that you may know our policies and better understand our program. As parents, you are cordially invited to ask questions and make suggestions.

I am available in the Bright Beginnings office from 9:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office number is 334-364-2784. It is our desire to work with you to ensure that your child has a happy and rewarding year.

Due to COVID-19, teachers and parents/caregivers are required to wear a mask when in the preschool building. Bright Beginnings is asking parents to take your child's temperature before leaving home. If the temperature is 100\* or higher please keep your child at home. We will be taking temperatures of everyone entering our preschool. Anyone with 100\* or higher will be sent home. Children are not required to wear masks; however, if you choose for them to wear one, we will try to make sure they wear it. We are asking those who bring children to school or pick up after school enter and exit the building quickly observing social distancing as much as possible. Thank you for being patient with us as we work through any issues regarding the safety of our children.

Communication is key to having a successful year. As you know already, everything is subject to change depending on the governor's orders regarding COVID-19 and the policies of FBCO.

Please be prayerful over our school for this year. We look forward to having a great year.

Seeking the Son,

Marsha Teel  
Bright Beginnings Director  
[marshat@fbcopelika.com](mailto:marshat@fbcopelika.com)  
334-364-2784 Office

## PURPOSE

Bright Beginnings is committed to helping each child develop to his/her greatest potential – spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally.

This is accomplished by:

- Providing loving, quality care to children in a safe and clean environment.
- Providing Christ-centered learning experiences, which are developmentally and age-appropriate for all children.
- Reinforce the child's ability to think and solve problems as well as developing language, math, music, art and physical skills through play and association with others.

## HOW PRESCHOOLERS LEARN

Preschoolers are perpetual learners. They learn by being active, examining, and experimenting. They learn “as they go” through a combination of the following:

***CURIOSITY*** – Triggers interest and action.

***SENSES*** – Sensory learning is full-blown during preschool years.

***FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCES*** – Doing is learning.

***REPETITION*** – Practice makes perfect and brings satisfaction, security, and success.

***IMITATION*** – Young children learn language, everyday tasks, and certain attitudes through imitating others.

***SATISFACTION*** – For optimum learning to occur, a preschooler needs to experience joy in an activity.

***PLAY*** – A child’s play is work and results in serious learning.

***RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS*** – Parents and teachers, through their warm displays of love and care, can guide children to be all that God wants them to be.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESCHOOLERS

Children today develop in many of the ways that Jesus did. Luke 2:52 states: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Preschoolers grow mentally, physically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally. Preschoolers grow according to plan – God’s plan. Their development and behavior, which occurs during each age, usually fit predictable patterns. Each age group has different basic concerns.

**Toddlers** - During this stage (14-24 months), children are learning competence in many skills, especially in walking, climbing and running.

**Twos** – Children at this age have a need to control their bodies and master skills. They are seeking independence. Negativism and egocentric behavior is expected.

**Threes** – During this year, a child develops creativity and imagination. Threes also like to please adults and usually begin to show some self-control.

**Fours** – Confidence is a good word to describe most four-year-olds. Four-year-olds may experience some disharmony with other people, and often show overconfidence. They have trouble separating fantasy from reality and are easily frustrated.

**Fives** – Typical five-year-olds generally display harmonious, balanced, cooperative behavior. They also show a desire for greater challenge. They love the challenge of learning new things. Curiosity is high. Their thinking is literal; therefore, they learn best through concrete means.

## *PROGRAM SPECIFICS*

### *Age Requirements*

Children must reach class age on or before September 2. This is in accordance with the state and public schools' policies. Children starting our program must be potty trained by the time they start the three -year-old classes.

### *Tuition*

Tuition is due the first of each month in advance and must be paid no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. There will be a \$20.00 late fee added to tuition that is paid after the 10<sup>th</sup>. The first day of school, you will owe ½ tuition for August and a full month's tuition for May (first and last month). For 3-day classes that amount is \$233. For 5-day classes that amount is \$278. One month's tuition is due again each month beginning in September. A full month's tuition is due regardless of the number of days in attendance, cancellations, or late registration. Tuition must be placed in the black mailbox right outside the director's office. If tuition is not paid by the last day of the month, the child will be automatically dropped unless the parent makes definite arrangements for payment. **Please write your child's name on the bottom of your check to ensure proper credit to your account. Cash payments must be in a sealed envelope with the amount enclosed and the child's name written on the outside of the envelope.** A \$10 discount per month is awarded to families for all children after the first one enrolled.

#### **Rates are as follows:**

All 3-day Classes: \$155 per month

All 5-day Classes: \$185 per month

### *Registration*

Registration is held online beginning in January. A NON-REFUNDABLE registration fee/supply fee of \$115 is due at the time of registration. Money will only be refunded if the class does not make.

### ***Arrival and Departure***

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon. Your key fob will allow you into the building at 8:15. You will need to wait in the preschool lobby until 8:30. If you cannot maintain a social distance in the lobby, please wait outside.

All children must be walked to their classroom the first week. After the first week, 3-year-old classes and 4-year-old classes may take advantage of dropping off under the preschool awning. Drop-off starts at 8:30 and is over at 8:45. A teacher will be waiting for assist your child out of the car. Do not allow your child to exit the car before a teacher is with them. Children must be in the right passenger side of the car to do drop off. Teachers are not allowed to walk a child around the front or back of an automobile for safety reasons.

Children must be picked up no later than 12:00 noon. Everyone must come in to pick-up children after school. On the first late pick up, parents will be given a warning, then parents will be charged a late fee at the rate of \$1 for every 2 minutes you are late. Please make sure to bring this fee with you when you pick up your child.

### ***Security***

Bright Beginnings has a Child Security System in place.

1. All doors are locked. The **Director** is the only person authorized to let you in the building if you forget your key fob. Two key fobs will be issued per family the first week of school. Key fobs only work at the Preschool entrance on the Avenue B side of the church.
2. Parents must list all persons who will be authorized to pick up their child. If persons other than those listed on the registration form will be picking up your child, then you must submit a written authorization to the Weekday Director. Before picking up the child, the authorized person will be required to show a driver's license identification to the Director or the child's teacher. **No child will be released to a person not previously authorized to pick up the child.** This policy is for the safety and security of your child.

## A TYPICAL DAY

A typical day in Preschool is arranged to provide a balance between quiet and active periods. The following is an example of a typical day:

- CENTER TIME - free choice of activities: manipulative games, blocks and art.
- LARGE GROUP - unit work, calendar, weather, creative movement, and music.
- SMALL GROUP - learning readiness.
- INDIVIDUAL - specific skills of individual needs – diagnosis and reinforcement.
- PLAY TIME - games, free movement, and directed activities.
- QUIET Time - stories and listening to records or tapes.

## COVID-19 Concerns

Teachers will be required to wear masks when they cannot distance themselves from the children. Students are not required to wear a mask; however, if you want them to wear one, we will do everything in our power to make sure they do.

We will be practicing handwashing often and using hand sanitizer when needed during class activities.

The cleaning staff at FBCO has been trained to thoroughly clean each room used with cleaners designed to fight the corona virus.

The indoor playground will not be used. We can't effectively clean between class times. Playtime will be outside in the open air.

We don't have all the answers, but we will do all we can to keep our little ones safe.



### ***Parent Volunteers***

We welcome and encourage parents to help in many ways. Parties, egg hunts, and other special activities in the classroom are times that “extra hands” are especially helpful! If you have a special interest or idea that can be shared, please contact the Weekday Office or your child’s teacher. This is our customary policy. Because of Covid-19 concerns, this year we will make adjustments as they are needed. Teachers will keep you informed.

### ***Snacks***

A mid-morning snack will be provided for the children that will include water to drink. Children are not allowed to bring their own snacks. On occasion they may have a special snack served and for this reason, it is important to make teachers aware of any allergies your child may have.

## **CURRICULUM**

Bright Beginnings is committed to God’s call in guiding and teaching each child about His love and truths. A balanced curriculum of work and play, quiet time and active times, group and individual experiences is planned with the various age abilities of the children in mind.

All of our teachers are committed Christians, who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. All teachers have had some experiences working with preschoolers. A high school education is required of all our teachers.

The following are the resources our teachers use for their curriculum:

TODDLERS	Wee Learn for Infants and Toddlers
TWO-YEAR OLDS	Wee Learn for Two-Year Olds
THREE-YEAR OLDS	Wee Learn for Three-Year Olds
FOUR-YEAR OLDS	Wee Learn for Four-Year Olds
	Letter People

## ***Health Policy***

An **Immunization Card** must be on file in Bright Beginnings office before your child is permitted to come to class. These forms are available at your doctor's office and must be completed and signed by a physician. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school supplied with current health information.

For the protection of all children with any signs of a contagious disease, the child will not be permitted in the classroom.

Children should be kept at home when they show any of the following symptoms:

- Fever – should be fever free (**without medication**) 24 hours before returning to school
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea – free of symptoms for 24 hours.
- Any symptoms of the usual childhood diseases – scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and whooping cough, hand/foot/mouth disease
- Common cold / runny nose
- Sore throat, coughing, croup
- Questionable rashes or skin infections
- Impetigo or ringworm
- Pink eye and other eye infections
- Head lice –should be nit free and a note from your child's doctor must be given at the time of your child returning to school.

If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he should be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Any symptom what is on the list as a COVID-19 symptom is considered serious and we need your help in self quarantining following our state requirements.

Should your child contract a contagious illness, please contact the Director immediately. Notice of the illness will need to be sent to parents of the other children enrolled in our program.

If your child has a continually clear runny nose or rash due to non-contagious allergies, a note from the child's doctor must be given at the time of the child returning to class.

**Because of COVID-19, these guidelines will be strictly enforced. Please work with us to keep everyone safe.**

**No staff member of the Bright Beginnings program is permitted to give any medication to a child.**

## *BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY*

The Bright Beginnings Program believes God has created each child as a unique individual. An individual's self-image or feeling of self-esteem and self-concept is an integral part of one's behavior and social interaction. In order to develop or mold a realistic self-image, which leads to positive behavior, three conditions must exist in the Bright Beginnings environment: acceptance, rules, and respect. The role of our program is to provide these conditions in and out of the classroom. Coupled with this environment, the use of positive discipline techniques based on God's love and the individuality, development, and varied needs of each child are the goal for guiding behavior within the classroom.

### *Acceptance*

The teacher-child relationship will strive to exhibit unconditional acceptance of the child no matter what the circumstance. The teacher will be involved in helping each child learn appropriate behaviors.

### *Rules*

Each class will set limitations on behavior to help children learn about safety and living with others. These limits will fit the development of the child. They will be worded positively, stated simply, and be behaviorally related.

### *Respect*

Each child will be seen as an individual. We demonstrate respect for children when we listen as they share ideas and experiences, stoop and make eye contact with children, and offer children choices related to their learning experiences. At no time will a child be humiliated, made fun of, or subjected to harsh, abusive language.

If a child displays willful defiance of the classroom rules and/or the teacher, then parent involvement will be requested. If a severe behavior persists and parent involvement does not correct the problem, then the parent will be asked to make other arrangements for their child. Willful and purposefully hurting a teacher, assistant, or another child can result in your child being dismissed from the program.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### *Clothing*

Children need to be dressed for play. Clothing that is loose, comfortable, and permits active play is best. Tennis or rubber-soled play shoes are necessary for the child's safety in physical movement both indoors and out.

Play is an important part of our program. Children are scheduled to play outside each day. In inclement weather, room 137, 3:16, and The Warehouse will be used instead of going outside. Please dress your child accordingly; warm clothes and coats for cold days and cool clothes for hot days. Please remember, sandals are discouraged.

The children are involved in many activities and sometimes accidents occur. We ask that each child bring a change of clothing including underwear and socks. **PLEASE LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S OUTER CLOTHES AND EXTRA CLOTHES**

### *Items Brought from Home*

Our program provides adequate toys and equipment for use by the children. We especially ask that you do not allow your child to bring the following items: money, toy guns or knives, make-up, prized toys that can be lost or damaged, candy, or chewing gum.

### *Birthdays*

This is a special event in the life of a young child and may be observed at school. If you would like to furnish cupcakes, cookies, etc., you are encouraged to do so. Please inform your child's teacher *in advance* of your plans. Please do not bring gifts for your child or have gifts delivered at school. Should you choose to distribute party invitations for celebrations to be held away from school, please make sure to include all children in the class. Addresses and phone numbers of all the children can only be obtained when permission has been granted by parents.

\*These guidelines may change depending on the status of COVID-19.

*Bright Beginnings*  
Weekday Education  
2020-2021 Calendar

August 17-21	Teachers Workdays
August 25	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School
September 1	Drop-off Begins for 3 and 4 year olds
September 7	Labor Day Holiday
September 24-25	Fall Pictures
October 12	Fall Break BB out of school
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday BB out of school
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Holiday BB out of school
December 11	BB Christmas Program @ 11:00
December 14-Jan. 4	BB Christmas Holidays
January 5	Classes return
January 18	MLK Holiday
February 15	Presidents Day Holiday
February 16	Teacher PD Day (Student holiday)
March 1-5	Dr. Seuss Week
March 15-19	Spring Break
April 2	Good Friday Holiday
May 13	BB Spring Program @ 11:00 in Worship Center & BB Last Day