

FIRST STEP

(Socialization Through Enriched Play)

at First Baptist Church Preschool, Richmond, VA
Celebrating 12 years



Parent Handbook ~ 2017-2018 School Year

2709 Monument Avenue
Richmond, VA 23220
Web site: www.firstbaptistpreschoolrva.com

804-358-5458, extension 155
FAX 804-359-4000
hamp@fbcrichmond.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS
TABLE OF CONTENTS

History and Mission of First STEP 2

Our Beliefs..... 3

Sample Schedule 4

School Policies

- Arrival 4
- Attendance 4
- Center Approach 4
- Church Support 4
- Diapers 5
- Discipline 5
- Dress 5
- Health 6-7
- Insurance 7
- Ladder of Communication 7
- Parents as Partners 7
- Safety 8
- School Closing Policy & Inclement Weather/Emergency Policy 8

School Year Calendar 9

First Step Contact Information..... 9

First Baptist Church Preschool

2709 Monument Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23220

hamp@fbcrichmond.org
358-5458, ext. 155

Alex Hamp
Preschool Administrator

August, 2017

Dear Parents,

Welcome to First Baptist Preschool's First STEP Program. Our teachers are busy planning many exciting learning opportunities for your child(ren). Our school year begins on Tuesday, September 19th with our Family Orientation and Interviews. Then your first day of preschool is Thursday, September 21st. Class begins at 9:30 a.m and is over at 12:30 p.m.

We encourage you to read this PARENT HANDBOOK and ask us about any questions you may have.

Our school provides a warm, supportive, and nurturing environment. We encourage you to share your talents and time with us as we join TOGETHER to make this year an important one in terms of your child's growth. Please plan to visit us often.

Sincerely,



Alex Hamp

History and Mission of First STEP (Socialization Through Enriched Play)

First STEP Preschool began in 2006 as a wonderful partnership between ASK (Assistance, Support and Kindness to Children with Cancer and Serious Blood Disorders) and First Baptist Preschool.

Through listening to our families, ASK had recognized the need to develop additional supportive services for children whose preschool experience had been interrupted or postponed due to medical treatment. ASK approached First Baptist Preschool and First Baptist responded with open arms, a great space and a fabulous and experienced preschool staff. With the creation of this partnership, First STEP was designed to meet the unique educational, social and emotional needs of young children with chronic illness as they go through the process of healing. First STEP acknowledges that dealing with a serious illness requires many adjustments for young children and their families. Basic skills such as socialization and play may be delayed because of the isolation related to treatment.

The goal of First STEP is to offer a safe, fun and educational experience for children that will address each child's normal developmental needs while understanding the additional demands that the child and family are experiencing. Family members are an essential part of the team as they help the staff understand the child's needs and assist in developing appropriate goals for the school year.

Through its partnership with your family and the First Baptist Preschool, ASK will continue to work toward its mission of Making Life Better for Children with Cancer and Serious Blood Disorders. We believe that by adopting these words from ASK's statement of philosophy, we can together fulfill the mission of having a great preschool year with your child/ren.

WE BELIEVE children need a learning environment which will:

- ♥ nurture each preschooler as a unique and valuable child of a caring God
- ♥ encourage the total development of each child (physically, socially, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually)
- ♥ encourage a strong feeling of self-confidence and respect for others
- ♥ provide first-hand opportunities for the child to grow
 - ♥ by observing
 - ♥ by inquiring
 - ♥ by exploring
 - ♥ by creating
 - ♥ by asking
 - ♥ by seeking
 - ♥ and by finding.



SAMPLE SCHEDULE

9:30 – 11:00	Centers, small group instruction, art activities
11:00 – 11:20	Circle time
11:20 – 11:50	Snack time, music, movement, unit instruction, stories
12:00 – 12:30	Outside play or Gym

ARRIVAL

Parents/Caregivers need to bring their children into their classroom. Parking is available in our lot on Mulberry Street. Additional parking is available in a lot located at the corner of Monument, Robinson St. and Park Avenue. Please hold children's hands when walking through the parking lot. **PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO COME INTO THE BUILDING ALONE.**

SCHOOL HOURS: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Please text or email Ellen (804-405-5912 or ellenkittrell@yahoo.com) by 10:00 a.m. when your child is sick or will not be attending school for any other reason.

CENTER APPROACH

Our classrooms are organized into special learning centers - art, blocks, books, home living/dramatic play, music, nature/science, manipulatives and sensory table. Children are provided free choice in moving from one area to another with teachers and assistant teachers offering guidance one-to-one or in small groups.

CHURCH SUPPORT

First Baptist Preschool is 71 years old! We are proud of our role in providing the best quality preschool experience for children in the Richmond area. The First Baptist Preschool is viewed as a community ministry made available through this facility. First Baptist Church provides our space. The Church appoints a Board of Directors which meets to review budget, salaries, tuition and needs or concerns expressed by the administrator.

DIAPERS

A well-stocked diaper bag includes 3 diapers, **WIPES**, plastic bag, and a complete set of clothes (even socks!) Wet pants are not the only accidents at school. Spilled water or paint often necessitates changing a child's clothing. Please label the diaper bag and clothing.

DISCIPLINE

For the young child, discipline is used to encourage cooperative behavior. The following methods are used by our faculty:

1. Giving positively worded directions: You may sit on the floor or on a chair. Walk inside. Run outside or in the gym. Remember to use your words.
2. Redirection: Substitute a positive activity for a negative activity. (You may throw a beanbag - we use blocks for building.)
3. Distraction: Change the focus of the activity.
4. Positive reinforcement: "Try to catch a child being good" affirming a child's appropriate behavior.
5. Active Listening: Helping the child determine why there is a problem and helping the child acknowledge his/her feelings and/or reaction.
6. Separation from the group: When all of the above fails, only then is a child briefly (less than 5 minutes) separated from his/her classmates. The child will always be within sight of the teachers.
7. Better Choice: We use the phrase "making a better choice" instead of time-out.

PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT AND SHAMING METHODS ARE NEVER USED. A list of classroom "rules" is posted in each classroom.

DRESS

Since children learn by engaging in "hands on" experience, we will be participating in fun activities such as painting, play dough, pasting, etc. Please send your child to school dressed comfortably, in play clothes which will wash easily. For your child's safety, please have him/her wear tennis shoes. Sandals, clogs, cowboy boots, cleats, and crocs are not safe for children at school. **Please be sure to label all coats.**



HEALTH

Record of a completed physical examination and up-to-date immunizations is required prior to attendance. We are not allowed to make any exceptions. Your child's doctor has the required form. It is also on our church's Preschool website (www.firstbaptistpreschoolrva.com). Record of up-to-date immunization information is required. **Please make us aware of any atypical health information, including, but not limited to, allergies, tendency to seizures or chronic illness.**

Prescription medication, with the exception of epi-pens, is not administered by our faculty. Parents are required to complete a form authorizing the administration of the epi-pen. This form is available in the Preschool office.

Skin products, such as sun screen and insect repellent, will not be administered by our preschool. Parents should be mindful that children will be outside at least 30 minutes per day and should apply these products as needed before the child arrives at preschool. Exception: Diaper ointment or cream will be applied as needed, **but only when provided by the parent**. Please send ointment, marked with your child's name, to be kept in your child's classroom.

For the protection of your child and others in our preschool, parents must keep him/her at home when he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- a temperature of 100 degrees or more
- a heavy nasal discharge
- cough
- vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- any communicable disease.

Please keep your child home if he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally not him/herself. (This is often the first sign of ensuing illness.) If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified to come for your child. ANY CHILD SENT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS WILL NOT BE READMITTED THE FOLLOWING DAY WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S NOTE STATING THAT THE CHILD IS READY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL. Please notify the school immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease

Please note that there are other symptoms of illness that will keep your child out of school that are not listed above. Please be vigilant as to unusual symptoms or behaviors in your child which might indicate illness. The preschool will also be observant and if your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified to come for him/her.

PLEASE NOTE: YOUR CHILD MUST BE SYMPTOM FREE FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. (This includes being fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT BENEFIT OF FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION.)

Your child may also need to stay home in the two following situations:

- When he/she is fussy, cranky and generally not him/herself, it is often the first sign of ensuing illness.
- When you have one sick child at home, it is frequently wise to keep siblings home also, as they have already been exposed to the illness in question and are likely to transmit it to their classmates as well.

We ask that you use your discretion in these two situations, and help us prevent outbreaks of illness in our school. This will benefit your children and all their classmates.

Please notify the school immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease. Please remember also that we are a PEANUT FREE SCHOOL.

INSURANCE

All children enrolled in First Baptist Preschool are covered by accident insurance while at school. Claim forms are available from the administrator.

THE LADDER OF COMMUNICATION

Our goal is to maintain a quality program. We are interested in suggestions and questions. Please discuss your classroom concerns with your child's teacher. Please address your administrative concerns directly to Alex Hamp.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As a young child separates from his/her family for the first time, much understanding and cooperation is needed between the teacher and family. As parents you know your child, his/her unique characteristics and special needs. This information is important to the teacher in helping to meet your child's needs.

The norm for most preschools is for the children to remain and the parents to leave. While we understand that many of our families are hesitant to leave, we have observed that like most children, our children do better when the parents leave. We will be glad to work with you and your child through this process.

Communication between home and school is very important. We ask that you notify us by email or written note regarding changes in your child's schedule, carpool changes, or changes at home which may affect your child. Any changes in carpools or transportation arrangements require advance written notification. We will not allow children to leave school with someone other than their parents without proper written permission. Also, for your child's emotional security, please explain any changes in your child's regular schedule to him/her.

We ask that you be involved this year. Share your talents with your child's class. Be concerned with your child's progress. We encourage you to volunteer in your child's class. Please, visit us often.

SAFETY

At First Baptist Preschool, your child's safety is our top priority. We have an off duty City of Richmond police officer who provides daily security for us. In addition, your child will participate in monthly fire drills, as well as annual tornado, earthquake, intruder, and evacuation drills. In the event that our preschool is to be evacuated, we will proceed to the Robinson Street parking lot. You would then be contacted by your child's teacher.

- Please make sure your child is within reach and in sight **AT ALL TIMES** when you are on the portico, the sidewalks or in the parking lot.

Every effort will be made to prevent accidents, but in the case of any accident needing more than simple first aid, the parents will be notified immediately.

Siblings and friends may visit a classroom only when accompanied by a parent or caregiver who assumes full responsibility for them. Our liability insurance covers only children currently enrolled in FBC Weekday.

Our staff is obligated by law to report all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect in accordance with 563.1-248.3 of the Code of Virginia.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The safety of your children and our faculty is our **FIRST** priority.

EMERGENCY/INCLEMENT WEATHER SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY

- **School closing or delays will be announced through email and on our Facebook page.** This decision is made independently of the decisions made by surrounding school districts and private schools.
- School will be closed if our facility does not have water or electricity at 8:00 a.m.
- These days are **NOT** made up!

2016-2017 First STEP Calendar

Family Orientation & Interviews	September 19
First day of class	September 21
Election Day – No School	November 7
Thanksgiving holiday – No School	November 22-24
Christmas holiday – No class	December 15 ~ January 2
Spring Break – No class	April 2-6
Last day of class	May 17

First STEP Contact Information

Alex Hamp	Administrator of First Baptist Church Preschool	358-5458, ext. 155
Jane Gordon	Co-Teacher	513-6035
Ellen Kittrell	Co-Teacher	405-5912
Denice Grawe	ASK Program Coordinator	658-5910

Additional Resources through ASK:

Amy Godkin	Director of ASK	399-9041
Matt Bitsko	Psychologist	828-9300, ext. 3
Katie Barber	Child Life Specialist	828-2304
Robyn Dillon	Social Worker	628-0422
Alma Morgan	Educational Specialist with the Hospital Education Program	628-4679
Tom David Siebert	Chaplain	628-1123

“Like” us on Facebook under First Baptist Preschool



www.firstbaptistpreschoolrva.com