

## OUR PHILOSOPHY.....

First Friends Preschool at First Baptist Church is a developmentally appropriate program for children ages 2 to 5 years. We believe children benefit most by being exposed to a variety of information that will build upon their interests and natural curiosity. The program includes topics such as shapes, colors, numbers and letter recognition. Other areas explored are simple math, science, nature, cooking, creative art and music, walking field trips, outdoor and indoor play and a variety of subject themes. Social, emotional, spiritual and physical development is integrated with academics to meet the needs of the whole child and to better prepare them for elementary school. Curriculum is taught through a balance of teacher-directed lessons and child-directed (center play) activities. Children learn best through sensory, hands on activities that encourage problem solving in real life situations.

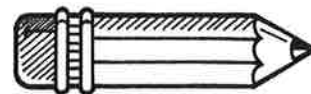
At First Friends Preschool, we view child's play as their "work". Play provides opportunities to explore and to make sense of the world around them. We provide a variety of "learning centers" to allow children to gain confidence and independence as they find success in their choice of activities. These centers provide an enriching environment to socialize and work together. Center activities might include art, blocks, dramatic play, reading, science, math, manipulative skills and much more.

We believe each child is uniquely and wonderfully created by God whose ideas deserve respect and support from their peers and teachers. We encourage children to express their opinions, follow their curiosity and develop at their own pace. We believe that "children are a gift from God" (Psalm 127:3) and we also believe we "are serving Christ by serving children".

The ultimate goal at First Friends Preschool is to provide a safe, nurturing and positive learning experience for each child. We hope we are laying the foundation for "Building Life-Long Learners!"



## Highlights about First Friends Preschool At First Baptist Church



\*August 1<sup>st</sup> is the cut off for Vigo County Schools, therefore, this is the cutoff for First Friends Preschool. This gives the child a natural progression into Kindergarten.

\*We follow the VCSC calendar for holidays and vacations. Our start date in the fall and our end date in the spring is **not** the same as the VCSC.

\***Immunizations are required** to attend First Friends Preschool. We follow the CDC guidelines concerning immunizations. A copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization records must be on file by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

\*Classes offered at First Friends Preschool:

**Beginner's** - "The little green frogs" (age 2 by Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>) - **does not** need to be potty trained

**Middler's** - "The learning lady bugs" (age 3 by August 1<sup>st</sup>) - needs to be potty trained

**Pre-Kindergarten** - "The busy bumblebees." (age 4 by August 1<sup>st</sup>) - needs to be potty trained

**Parents Time Out Program** - "The friendly fish" (for children ages 2-4) - **does not** need to be potty trained

\*During the Preschool hours the church doors are **locked**. Each family needs a Parent Card to enter the building. We ask that you have this card with you whenever you come to Preschool. \$5.00 is given back to you when the card is returned at the end of the school year. The safety of your children is our number 1 priority!!

\* **Kids in the Kitchen** is offered once a month with Miss Gina. The children learn about the kitchen, utensils and of course, cooking. We make their snack for them to eat that morning.

\*We have a **lead teacher and an assistant** in each class.

Our teachers have degrees in education OR experience working with young children. Our assistants have a love for children and experience working with them.

\*We have an **early bird** morning drop off beginning at 8:30 am.

The cost is \$1.00. You must walk your child in. No need to sign up, just walk them in and the Director will show you where to go. If there is a delay due to weather or other circumstances we **do not** offer the "early bird" drop off.

\*Our "arrival time" daily is conveniently called: "**Kiss & Go**".

A car pool line is formed and a staff member carefully gets your child out of the car. They guide them into the building. The Director is there to greet them and guide them back to their classroom. This is very convenient especially if you have younger siblings in the car. We start getting the children out of the car beginning around 8:55 am.

\*Our Pastor's hold "**Chapel Time**" for 10-15 minutes on a weekly basis. This includes a bible story and maybe a song or two. We also go over our monthly prayers and scriptures. This is held in the sanctuary.

\*We respect the religion of all of our students and families. **Christian values** are an important part of our classes ..... such as sharing, forgiving and loving one another. Prayer time/devotion is a part of our day too, before snack time, and maybe for a classmate who is sick.

\*A one time "**snack fee**" is collected in the fall at Parent Orientation. This money should be given directly to your child's teacher. If possible, please pay in cash with the correct amount and put it in a sealed envelope with your child's name. The teacher is responsible for buying the snacks for your child.

\*Each day your child is in Preschool they have the opportunity to improve their gross motor skills by playing outside or in Esken Hall (Fellowship Hall). Our playground is a favorite activity for the children, as well as riding bikes, scooters, playing with balls, bubbles, and sidewalk chalk and other large motor activities.

\*"**LEARNING IS IN THE BAG**" is offered to our Preschool children and their families. These are educational games/toys that can be checked out for you to use at home with your child. Parent guidance and supervision is needed to insure that "all the pieces" make it back into the bag for others to enjoy. This is a great way to reinforce at home what your children are learning at Preschool. Just look for the colorful cart outside the Preschool office.

\***Summer opportunities for enrolled Preschool children** - Preschool summer day camp - one week held in July (Summer at the Schoolhouse) and Summer Parents Time Out Program (8 week session held one day a week from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm) More information is available in the Registration Packet.

## WHAT DOES MY CHILD DO IN PRESCHOOL?

A typical day at the First Friends Preschool will include a mixture of free play, circle time, group activities, learning centers, snack-time and large motor development activities.

We do offer special weekly activities such as "Chapel Time" with one of our Pastors in the sanctuary, "Music Time" is offered once a week and "Kids in the Kitchen" is offered once a month with Miss Gina, the Preschool Director. We learn about cooking, kitchen utensils and we make their snack for the day.

Many of our classes begin their day in free play where each child may choose a toy, activity or a friend to play with.

Circle time may consist of book reading, discussing the day, date, month and weather. It will also consist of prayer time and discussing the letter or number of the day. The child might also learn a new song or finger play.

Group activities are usually located at tables and are usually theme based. These activities are varied but can include cooking, drawing, painting, coloring and writing.

Centers are an opportunity for the teacher to work one-on-one or in small groups for a more focused approach to learning. Centers are set up for the children to participate in. Independent centers may include writing, looking at books, sitting at a listening center, puzzles, blocks, Legos, stringing beads, Play-doh, writing on white boards or making a craft. Teacher facilitated centers are an opportunity to individualize academic activities to a specific child or group of children.

We try to model healthy snack choices by offering water, crackers, fruits, vegetables, bread, peanut butter, etc. We will occasionally have sweet snacks on special birthdays or holidays. Blessing the food is just one of the ways we incorporate our Christian faith into our curriculum.

Large motor development time is in the fellowship hall or outside on the playground area (weather permitting). We also have a bike track for the children to enjoy. Our "recess" time is spent mostly as free play but occasionally organized specific skills are encouraged such as throwing/catching a ball, skipping, jumping, etc.

Our Pre-K classes use the state standards for Kindergarten readiness and incorporate these standards into their themes. Our Pre-K classes focus more heavily on phonetics, recognizing and writing the alphabet letters and numbers and number understanding.

Learning at First Friends Preschool will be in the form of age-appropriate discussions, hands-on activities and theme-related adventures. Our environment is structured, yet many different activities take place within our day. You can be assured that your child will be challenged through individualized care at his or her skill level. Our goal is to build the foundation so that each child will be ready to have success in elementary school!!!! A great learning experience awaits your child.

