

# Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures 2016-2017



**FIRST PROTESTANT**  
SCHOOL OF NEW BRAUNFELS

*"Let the little children come to me...for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven."*

*Matthew 19:14*

# First Protestant School 2016-2017

Welcome to First Protestant School! First Protestant School operates as a licensed child care center that's dedicated to providing a nurturing and educational environment for children 6 weeks to 11 years old. We strive to create a meaningful and trusting relationship between children, families, and staff. At First Protestant School our professionally trained staff creates an environment that is educationally active and emotionally safe for children, families and staff to grow. We also hope to help each child build the foundation needed for successful Christian living now and forever.

We know that there is a lot to consider when selecting a child care facility for your child and family and we want you to know that we pride ourselves on offering the best quality care for each individual child. We are committed to working hand in hand with parents towards helping each child develop their full potential. We believe that together we can make a difference and help prepare your child for the life ahead of them along with creating the building blocks to lead a Christian and loving lifestyle.

As caregivers, we understand that our children are the most precious gifts we hold. Therefore, we at First Protestant School pledge to strive daily to meet the standards of excellence that your child deserves. We would like to thank you for allowing us to be such a special part of your child's life.



Sheenae Hernandez-Garcia  
FP School Director, (830) 606-4110 x12  
[sheenae@firsprotestant.com](mailto:sheenae@firsprotestant.com)

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

First Protestant School is devoted to creating an environment full of learning experiences that will meet the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and developmental needs of each individual child.

- *Spiritual: We believe that Christian principals are essential in providing children with a sound foundation for their future growth. Through our Christian curriculum, we are able to meet this task.*
- *Physical: We recognize the need to provide an age-appropriate physical environment for each child, and have designed an environment and program to meet the physical needs of our students.*
- *Mental: We strive to provide children with a safe, secure, risk free learning environment to develop their emerging skills. We recognize that parents are their child's first and most important teacher and feel it is important for the parents to be part of their child's growth. Therefore, we will do our best to keep parents informed of their child's progress and activities and encourage parents to be active in the classrooms and school.*
- *Social: We provide channels by which children are able to experience ways to develop socially through basic Christian concepts.*
- *Developmental: We believe that that the majority of a child's learning foundation is established at a young age. We offer a variety of experiences in the classroom. As part of our curriculum, we implement developmentally appropriate learning centers, circle time, instructional time, one on one time with teachers, story time, indoor & outdoor play times, and meal times. Once your child reaches the pre-school age there is a greater emphasis on language development, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, social and emotional development, and physical health and safety.*

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Hello my name is Sheenae Hernandez-Garcia and I am the Director of First Protestant School. I am a New Braunfels native and graduated from New Braunfels High School in 2001. My 14 years of experience in the childcare education field begun back in 2001, as a toddler co-teacher, right here at First Protestant School. Since that time, I have worked with children of all ages. I spent several years as a co-teacher, lead teacher, assistant director, and now director. My role as the director begun back in January 2009.

I currently hold a Director's Certification from the Texas Department of Family Protective Services and have completed over 450 hours of child development training throughout my career.

On a personal note, I became a wife to my middle school sweet heart, and now loving husband, Michael back in November 2009. In August 2014, Michael and I welcomed our first son Gannon into our lives and will be welcoming our second child this September. Becoming a mom has given me a whole new outlook on life and has truly shown me what it feels like to be blessed. Before becoming a mommy myself, my older brother blessed our family with 2 beautiful girls, Cailin & Harper. In August 2015 his family welcomed their first baby boy Jamison. Being their aunt definitely prepared me for becoming a mom and has truly been a blessing.

My interest, beyond early childhood education, include spending time with friends and family, playing and watching volleyball, shopping, competing in BBQ cook offs, and eating great food. But truly, most of my spare time is spent just enjoying time with my husband and son.

My journey here at FPS may have begun in 2001, but for as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to care for children. This career choice is a choice that I would chose over and over again if given the opportunity. Becoming the Director of FPS was not only a major accomplishment for my career but it was the day God blessed me with my dream job. It is my hopes to not have only started my childcare education career here at FPS, but I would love to retire here as well.

To all of my past, present, and future families- Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives and caring for your children.

Thank You,



Sheenae Hernandez-Garcia

To Contact Director:  
Email- [sheenae@firstprotestant.com](mailto:sheenae@firstprotestant.com)  
Phone- 830-606-4110 ext.12

Directors Office Hours:  
8AM-4PM Monday through Friday  
*\*hours are subject to change and vary throughout the school year. All conferences with the director should be scheduled in advance at the front office or with director.*



**\*Dates subject to change\***

May 31	Summer Program Begins
June 5-9	FPS Vacation Bible School *Dinner 5:00-6:00, Bible School 6:00-9:00
June 8	Summer Chapel Begins
June 17	Father's Day Breakfast 7:00-9:00
June 19	Happy Father's Day
July 15	FPS Family BINGO Night 7:00-9:00
July 27	Last Summer Chapel
August	No Chapel & No SNG Classes
August 9	Parent Night 6:30-7:30; aka "Meet the Teacher" but for the parents. Parents are encouraged to come without their child so the teacher can explain the upcoming school year and parents can communicate with the teachers.
August 19	Last Day of PRESCHOOL Summer Program <b>FPS Early Release and Teacher Workday; CLOSED at 12:00PM, Sack Lunch</b>
August 22-26	Preschool and FPS Kindergarten Transition Week
August 26	Last Day of SCHOOL KIDS Summer Program (grades K-5 <sup>th</sup> )
August 29	First day of Fall/Spring 2015-2016 Program
August 29-September 9	Scholastic Book Fair
September 2	Fall Pictures Day 1; Class Schedules TBA
September 5	<b>FPS CLOSED- Labor Day Holiday!</b>
September 7	First Fall Chapel
September 9	Grandparents Day Breakfast; Served in gym 7:00-9:00
September 11	Happy Grandparents Day
September 16	Fall Pictures Day 2 and Makeup Day; Class Schedules TBA
September 22	FPS Comal County Fair Day, Snack served in class 9:30-10:00, exhibits in gym 10:00-10:30; Parade on front lawn 10:30-11:00, weather permitting
September 23	<b>FPS CLOSED- Comal County Fair Parade</b>
October 17-21	Kindergarten parent teacher conference; all conferences are to be scheduled with the kindergarten teacher, based on the teachers availability. All conference times are on a first come first serve basis.
October 28	Fall classroom parties during child's lunch time
October 31	Thanksgiving Feast tickets go on sale
October 31-November 11	SOS Food Bank Can Drive
November 3	Wurstfest Lunch, 12:00-12:45, in the gym with students 3 years of age and older
November 11	Last day to purchase Thanksgiving Feast tickets; tickets MUST be purchased in advance.
November 16	FPS Thanksgiving Feast, Silent Auction and Chapel (11:00-12:30); Chapel in the sanctuary 11:00-11:30; Thanksgiving Feast in the gym 11:30-12:30; Silent Auction in gym (11:00-12:30)
November 21-25	NBISD & CISD Thanksgiving Holiday
November 23-25	<b>FPS CLOSED- Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
December 1	<b>Wassailfest (6:00-8:30); FPS CLOSSES at 5:00PM due to the traffic and road closures Wassailfest creates.</b>
December 5-9	Christmas Program Practice, 10:00-11:00, in the sanctuary with students 3 years of age and older- Students should arrive to school by 9:30 this entire week.
December 9	FPS Christmas Program 6:30-7:15 in the First Protestant Church Sanctuary with students 3 years of age and older.
December 23	NBISD and CISD early release
December 26-30	Christmas classroom parties during child's lunch time <b>FPS CLOSED-Christmas Holidays</b>

December 31	New Years Eve (Saturday)
January	<b>Winter Festival- Times and Events TBD at a later date</b>
January 1	Happy New Year! (Sunday)
January 2	Kindergarten Class resumes
January 27	Spring Pictures day 1; class schedules TBA
February 3	Spring Pictures day 2 and makeup day; class schedules TBA
February 10	Valentine classroom parties during lunch time
February 13-17	In-House Registration Summer/Fall program 2017/2018
February 20-24	FPC member Registration Summer/Fall program 2017/2018
February 27-March 3	Open Registration Summer/Fall program 2017/2018
March 6-10	Spring Break; No Kindergarten, preschool only- <b>official date TBA after school districts release their 2015-2016 school/academic calendars</b>
March 13-17	Spring Break; No Kindergarten, preschool only- <b>official date TBA after school districts release their 2015-2016 school/academic calendars</b>
April 6	Class and Kindergarten Graduation pictures; schedules TBA
April 13	Easter Classroom parties during lunch time Easter Egg Hunt during AM playground time
April 14	<b>FPS CLOSED-Good Friday</b>
April 16	Easter Sunday
April 17-21	FPS Coin Drive; Children will be asked to bring different coins throughout the week as a fundraiser for FPS.
April 24-28	Week of the Young Child; children will participate in activities throughout the week; schedule TBA
April 28	FPS Week of the Young Child Balloon Release at 10:00am in the parking lot
May 1-5	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 10	Last Fall Chapel
May 12	Mother's Day Breakfast served in gym 7:00-9:00
May 14	Happy Mother's Day
May 19	Last day of Kindergarten Program Pre-K Graduation Ceremony in FPS gym Zebras 8:30-9:15 and Ladybugs 9:30-10:15 Kindergarten Graduation Ceremony 10:30-11:30 in FPS gym Lunch on the Lawn 11:30-12:30 near the church front door facing Seguin Street, weather permitting. Box lunches will be available, must be pre-ordered. Price and menu items TBA.
May 22-26	No Kindergarten, Preschool only
May 26	<b>FPS Early Release and Teach Workday; FPS will close at 12:00, Sack Lunch Day. NBISD and CISD Early Release-Last Day of School</b> <b>**Since FPS will be closing early we will NOT be providing after school van run or after school child care**</b>
May 29	<b>FPS CLOSED- Memorial Day</b>

**\*\*Other important FPS dates to be announced\*\***

Field Trips: Wear your FPS Field Trip shirt

Every Wednesday is Chapel Day; Wear your FPS chapel Shirt

Every Friday or any day that falls before a FPS closure/holiday is SACK LUNCH Day

Every Friday is school spirit day: Wear your FPS pride shirt

Fundraiser Days: FPS Pride Shirt

## **OUR DAILY PROGRAMS**

Each classroom will spend their days involved in developmentally appropriate learning centers, circle times, instructional times, one on one time with the teacher, indoor & outdoor playtimes, story times, and meal times. It is our goal to provide the safest and most developmentally appropriate, Christ-centered environment for your child.

### **Infant and Toddler Programs**

Our infant and toddler programs are designed to be a home away from home for your baby. Our desire is for you to feel as though your child is being cared for just as if you were the one caring for him/her. We will provide a safe, nurturing environment where all of your child's needs are met promptly. The teachers will provide each parent with a daily schedule of how your child will spend his/her day. Even though the teachers in these classrooms have a schedule, the individual needs of the children tend to guide the schedule and come before any scheduled activities planned.

It is FPS policy to provide a comfortable place with a seat within the classroom or facility that enables our mothers to breastfeed their child. FPS encourages the right for mothers to breastfeed and/or provide breast milk for their child while in our care.

### **Preschool-2 Year Old Program**

This is the year of beginning to grow independence, learn manners, socializing with friends, and potty training. Your child will spend his/her days involved in both group and individual playtime. Learning how to share and socialize with others is given special attention. Each classroom will have its own schedule. The teachers will provide each parent with a daily schedule of how your child will spend his/her day. Children are lovingly encouraged and taught how to use the potty, but are also diapered on an as needed basis. We understand that learning how to go potty is a developmental stage in a child's life.

### **Preschool- 3 Year Old Program**

This is year of independence, educational growth, and making friends. They will be introduced to understanding print and letter/sound associations. Your child will spend their day in both individual and group curriculum time which will implement developmentally appropriate learning centers, circle time, instructional time, one on one time with teachers, and story time. Now that your child has reached the pre-school age there is a greater emphasis on language development, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, social and emotional development, and physical health and safety.

### **Kindergarten Prep Program- 4 Year Old Program**

Pre-School 4 year old program: This is the year where we see children blossom in their understanding of print and letter/sound associations. It is also during this time where children begin making choices and charting their thoughts and feelings. The focus on language development, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, social and emotional development, and physical health and safety will prepare each child for the foundations they will need to be prepared for kindergarten aka "Big Kid School".

### **Kindergarten Program- 4 to 5 Year Old Program**

This program is typically provided for the child who turns 5 right after the school year begins (September 1<sup>st</sup>). FPS recommends that students in this program have completed

a pre-k program here at FPS or at another day school. It is our desire to provide our students with a true kindergarten school experience. Your child will spend their morning (8:00AM-12:30PM) involved in structured curriculum taught by a certified kindergarten teacher. Student attendance in this class is crucial and will provide your child with the routine schedule he or she will need when moving to "Big Kid School". This program will focus on mastering language development, literacy, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, social and emotional development, and physical health and safety. This is truly a wonderful class to transition your child into a public or private school kindergarten.

As part of the extended kindergarten program (12:30PM-6:00PM) the students will also have the opportunity to learn through well planned learning centers that allow for child choice and self-directed play, small groups, and supportive teaching designed to ensure academic success.

### **After School Care Program**

This program is a blessing for our parents. We provide transportation from certain schools in the New Braunfels Independent School District. The schools from which we provide transportation can and may change from year to year. Transportation is offered for those schools that the majority of our children attend and van runs are based and scheduled according to each individual public schools dismissal time. Please check with your child's public school for their dismissal time, as this may change from school year to school year. After school, your child will be brought to our facility to participate in the following activities: snack, homework, free play, organized play, art, and indoor & outdoor play time. We make it our policy to work with the parents to provide an individualized homework plan for each child. Students enrolled in our after-school program may not be over age 11 or above grade 5.

### **School-Age Summer Care Program**

FP School provides a separate program in the summer for our school-age children grades K-5th. It is our desire to provide a place for our school kids to come when public school is not in session. During this time, your child will spend their days involved in free play, organized group play, projects, field trips, indoor & outdoor play, and much more. Registration for this program is during in-house and open registration time (see school calendar for dates). This program is offered to our in-house students (Ex: exiting kindergarten and after-school care enrollees) first and then filled on a first-come first-served basis during open registration (see school calendar for dates).

### **Stretch-n-Grow**



*Fabulously Fun Fitness for Kids!*

First Protestant School is so excited to bring the Christian physical fitness program called *Stretch-n-Grow* to our school. *Stretch-n-Grow* allows our kids the opportunity to learn early the importance of staying healthy and fit in a fun, exciting way. All children in our older 2 year-old classes through our kindergarten program participate in the *Stretch-n-Grow* program. The cost is \$13 per month and is added to your tuition as an activity fee. We want every child to experience this wonderful program as the benefits for the young child are immeasurable.



Stretch and Grow also provides optional fitness camps that parents may register for at an additional cost through the Stretch & Grow program. During these camps FPS will sign your child out from the FPS program and will not be liable for your child during this time. Parents are also required to sign a release form at the FPS office BEFORE your child is released to participate in the Stretch & Grow camps.

### **What is *Stretch-n-Grow*?**

*Stretch-n-Grow* is a comprehensive fitness program for kids, committed to helping educators and parents establish a foundation of exercise and proper nutrition at an early age, before habits gel. The *Stretch-n-Grow* program teaches children the fundamentals of a healthy lifestyle. With weekly emphasis on exercise and good food choices, the extensive curriculum covers virtually every wellness issue...self-esteem, safety, hygiene, and environmental issues are just a few examples of discussion topics. Classes are taught at child care centers by *Stretch-n-Grow* coaches who make exercising, "EXERCiting!!" Since 1992, hundreds of thousands of children across the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Guatemala, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain and the United Kingdom have participated in the *Stretch-n-Grow Fitness Program!!*  
[www.stretch-n-grow.com](http://www.stretch-n-grow.com)

## **OUR PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF PROCEDURES**

### **Hours of Operation**

First Protestant School is open year 'round – Beginning with our fall program in late August through our summer program ending mid-August. Our hours of operation are 7 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday. In order to comply with the TDFPS Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, First Protestant School is not allowed to open its doors until 7 AM. **Please see our school calendar for important dates to remember in our program as well as the dates that FPS will be closed.**

### **Arrival and Departure**

An adult MUST accompany all children when entering the building and to their classroom or designated drop off area. Once in the classroom, parents should make sure their teacher or a designated FPS staff member is aware that the student has arrived. Teachers are responsible for signing in each student upon their arrival. FPS will be held responsible for your child beginning at the time that is documented on the FPS sign-in sheet.

First Protestant School views our program as an educational facility, not a daycare. Children are expected to arrive and be in attendance by 8:30AM each day, in order to benefit from the curriculum and the program. Having our students in attendance by 8:30AM also allows the teacher to fulfill the lesson plan for the day without having to leave the activity they are doing with the rest of the class to get late arrivals settled in. FPS would kindly ask that parents contact the FPS at 830-606-4110 by 9:00AM if your child will be absent for the day. **FPS' official cut off time for drop will be 9:30AM (effective August 17, 2015)** unless the student is excused by a medical professional or parent has given FPS office prior notification.

If your child's drop off location is the school gym, and you will be dropping off BEFORE 8:00 AM, FPS recommends that your child eat breakfast before he or she arrives to FPS. If breakfast items are brought to FPS for staff to serve to your child, please make sure all food is packed in a spill-proof container that will keep food at proper temperature until

8:00 AM when the students head to their classrooms. All breakfast items will be served in the classroom where the children can have proper seating and supervision during while eating their breakfast. Also keep in mind that ALL students of FPS are served a morning snack at 9:00 AM every morning.

An adult **MUST** accompany all children when exiting the building and in the parking lot. Children should be picked up in their designated classroom or assigned area (if children are not in their designated classroom, check the classroom door for their location). Once in the classroom, parents should make sure their teacher or a designated FPS staff member is aware that the student is leaving. Teachers are responsible for signing out each student at the time of their departure. FPS will not be held responsible for your child after the time that is documented on the FPS sign-out sheet.

### **Child Release Policy**

The parent or designated person must come into the school to pick up their child and check out with a FPS staff member. This is necessary for the safety of your child and so that our records can remain accurate. **NEVER send a minor sibling or relative WITHOUT A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE to pick up.** If you designated someone other than a custodial parent to pick up your child, that person must be on the on the emergency contact & authorized pick up person list of the child's enrollment papers and have a valid driver's license. Children will only be released to persons who are designated on the emergency contact & authorized pick up person list located on the enrollment form filled out at the beginning of the year. Staff will ask to see a picture ID and a copy will be made of the ID and kept in the child's file. Please let your child's teacher or the office know, in writing if possible, when someone who does not usually pick up will be doing so. If there is any question about who is picking the child up, the child will not be released.

FPS suggest that parents leave their cell phones in their vehicle when picking up their child. Parents must **NEVER** leave young children unattended in the car. Once your child is signed out, the parent is responsible for **COMPLETE** supervision. Please do not allow your child to wander/run in the halls or leave the building ahead of you. If parents need to discuss their child's progress or any concerns, a scheduled conference is needed and can be scheduled at the front office. Teachers are busy supervising children and need to have their focus on the classroom. Please take children directly to your vehicle and safely buckle them in. If any FPS staff feels that a parent who is picking up a child is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, they will notify local law enforcement and will not be released. We are obligated to report any such occurrences.

Verification of legal custody- When there is a non-custodial parent it is the responsibility of the parent with legal custody to notify the school. We will not withhold a child from a parent on the request of the other parent without the current certified copy of your Temporary Orders, Final Decree of Divorce, Order in Suit Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship, Restraining Order, or Protective Order. We will follow custody agreements exactly as written. The orders we receive must be certified copies and signed by a judge. In the absences of the court order, both parents have legal rights. It is FPS policy to not become involved in custody battles and will remain the advocate for the child.

## **OUR DRESS CODE AND BELONGINGS**

### **Dress Code**

Children should be dressed in clothes that are comfortable and easy to move in. Please keep in mind that this Texas weather changes daily so all children should be dressed in

weather appropriate clothing. Tennis shoes are the safest footwear for your child while at FPS. Boots (Cowboy & Rain), flip flops, sandals, crocs, or other slick bottom shoes are dangerous on the playground and should NOT be worn to school. Dresses and skirts may be worn, but please have your child wear shorts or bloomers underneath the dress or skirt.

### **Extra Change of Clothes**

All children, infants through kindergarten, must bring 2 sets of clothes to school in a Zip-Lock bag labeled with your child's name. All items MUST be labeled – FPS is not responsible for lost items. Extra clothes should include outerwear, underwear, shoes, and socks. This bag will be kept on your child's hook or in his/her classroom in case of an emergency. If a child should wet or dirty their clothes, the teacher will assist the child in cleaning up and changing into clean clothes. The dirty clothes will then be placed in a plastic bag and put on the child's hook. The school will not wash soiled clothes. If a parent does not provide the school with extra clothes or when the child has used his or her extra clothes, the parent will be contacted to bring in another set of extra clothes.

### **Personal Items**

All personal belongings need to be clearly marked with the child's first and last name. A small blanket and a small pillow may be brought for nap time. Nap items will be sent home every Friday to be laundered.

Toys and personal items should be left at home; however, please feel free to bring books, musical CDs, or items that enhance learning in the classroom. These items will be returned after they have been shared with the class. If a personal item or toy should find its way to FPS, your child's teacher reserves the right to have the child place it in his or her bag or ask the child's parent to take it with them. FPS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items.

## **OUR FOOD PROGRAM**

### **Snacks and Lunch**

**FPS IS NO LONGER A PEANUT FREE SCHOOL!** Special Diet Forms are required for ALL food allergies and can be filled out at the FPS office. These forms are required by the TDFPS and MUST be completed on or before the start of each program (summer or fall) your child is enrolled in. All special diets or food restrictions for medical purposes MUST have documentation and specific instructions from a medical professional.

AM & PM snacks are served daily. Lunch is served Monday through Thursday. Our monthly menus are posted on the front office bulletin board, your child's classroom bulletin, and on our school website. If you provide your child's meals and/or snacks from home you must fill out a Special Diet Form, which is located at the FPS office. By doing so, FPS is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting your child's daily food needs. All food allergies must be documented with a doctor's note BEFORE FPS can withhold food items from a student's lunch or snacks as provided by FPS. This includes any milk substitutes or any special diets preferred/required by a parent for their child while at FPS.

On Fridays or any day that falls before a FPS closure/holiday, your child must bring a sack lunch that does not need to be refrigerated or heated in the microwave. If FPS must provide a sack lunch for your child on a Friday, the cost will be \$5 and will be billed to your account. *All lunch fees must be taken care of within 5 school days unless automatic debit arrangements have been made in the tuition agreement form. Additional lunches*

will not be provided until outstanding lunch fees have been paid. In such instances, parents will be contacted to provide a lunch.

### **Substitute Food/Snack Form**

Parents may bring snacks or lunch for the class to celebrate birthdays, holidays, special events, etc. However, a substitute food/snack form must be filled out and turned in at least one week prior to the food being brought to school. A substitute snack is any item that does not appear on the FP School menu. Substitute food/snack ideas are pizza, kid's meals, cookies, cupcakes, etc. **All substitute food/snack items must be store bought.** Substitute SNACKS (ex: cookies or cupcakes) may be brought Monday-Friday for AM or PM snack time. Substitute LUNCHESES (ex: Pizza or McDonalds) can only be served on Fridays or last day of the school week. Any substitute snacks brought without proper notification or within 48 hours of serving the snack will not be served to the children-- NO EXCEPTIONS.

## **OUR EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Emergency Relocation Plans**

Emergency evacuations are practiced monthly. The following are our emergency evacuation plans:

- A. Tornado Alert - Children sit in hallways.
- B. Relocation - If we leave the church campus, we will relocate to the Civic Center down the street. (375 South Castell Avenue New Braunfels, TX 78130 (830) 221-4011)
- C. Relocation from Downtown - If the downtown area is evacuated; we will meet at New Braunfels High School. (2551 Loop 337 New Braunfels, TX 78130 (830)627-6000)
- D. Fire Drill - Children will be routed to their designated safety zone outside the school building.

In the event that an emergency situation involves our school or poses a threat to our school or church, our school will go into a lock-down mode and all doors leading into the school will be locked until the danger to the school has passed. Parents may view a copy of the "Emergency Preparedness Plan" at any time during operational hours at the FPS office.

## **OUR ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

The following forms must be turned into our office prior to your child being left in our care.

### **Registration Form**

Parents must fill out and sign the registration forms. Along with filling out the registration forms, all registration fees are deadline to ensure your child's enrollment and spot in the program for which he or she is being registered. FPS will not accept registration forms without the payment of the registration fee. In-House Registration is primarily held at the end of February every year allowing parents to register their child for the upcoming summer and/or fall program. Parents must fill out one form per child. The tuition rates are determined by your child's age on the first day of the summer program for the summer program and by September 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall program - **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE DATE.** FPS reserves the right to fill your child's spot if his or her enrollment form and fees are not

received by the designated due date. See *Registration Fees section for more details.*

### **Enrollment Form**

Parents must fill out and sign the Enrollment Form. By signing this form, you are stating that all of the information on the form is valid and current. It is also stating that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by all of the policies and procedures set forth in the First Protestant School Parent Handbook. By signing this form, you are agreeing to all of the rules and procedures that FP School must follow. This form must be on file on or before your child's date of admission. You will be notified by email, text or in writing of any changes to this form and/or any changes made to the policies and procedures in the parent handbook.

### **Important Dates:**

Every year FPS makes the best effort to notify our families and parents of school events, closures, early release days, or any other event that may affect our families' daily and work schedules. This list of dates and events is located near the front of this handbook. We have also printed a second list and placed it in your child's enrollment packet. Please make sure to make time to look over these dates so that you can mark your calendars as well as make arrangements for child care on days that FPS is closed. Reminders of these closure dates are either emailed, text, posted throughout the school and/or on classroom doors. FPS understands that the majority of our families and parents has busy lives & careers and depend on the services of FPS so it is our intention to only close FPS if and when it is necessary. Holiday closure dates (ex: Christmas Break) are usually the time of year when our student attendance is at an all-time low, so FPS will close for these dates. *Please see tuition section of handbook for details on refunds and payment policy for holiday closures*

### **Health Care Professional Statement**

Your child's physician must complete and sign the health care professional statement before your child is allowed to stay with us. By signing this statement, your doctor is stating that your child is healthy enough to be enrolled in our program.

### **Driver's License**

A copy of the parent's driver's license must be given to the FP School office before enrollment. If your child lives with both parents, then a copy of both parents' driver's license is required. If the child lives with one parent, then a copy of that parent's license is required as well as the parent that the child does not live with if that other parent will ever be picking up the child. If a child does not live with either parent, then a copy of the driver's license of the custodial guardian is required. For any child not living with his/her biological or adoptive parent, written documentation must be provided stating the rights of the person claiming to be the guardian.

FP School also requires a copy of the driver's license be given to the school office of any person(s) listed on the enrollment form as a designated person that can pick up your child. Anytime someone new will be picking up your child, you must submit in writing a statement giving that person permission to pick-up your child. A copy of that person's driver's license will be made and filed in your child's file along with the written statement. If you will be calling FPS to give someone new permission to pick up your child, FPS staff will ask you for the person's full name on their driver's license along with a second form of information on his or her driver's license (ex: their DL number, date of birth, or address).

### **Immunization Record**

Parents must provide FPS with a copy of your child's immunization records to keep on file. All immunization records will be verified by FPS office staff. These immunization records will also be audited by the Comal County Health Department and must meet their requirements. Each time your child receives updated immunizations, the FPS office needs an updated copy of this record. All immunization records will be audited in-house at least once a year. If your child's immunizations do not meet Comal County Health Department requirements, you will be notified. You have 2 weeks to give us an updated record. If at the end of the 2 weeks we still do not have an updated record, your child will be dropped from enrollment. If it is not in the best interest of your child to receive immunizations, we require an affidavit stating exemption from immunizations for reason of conscience.

### **Vision and Screening Documentation**

The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for the following children who are enrolled in a child-care center:

- First-time enrollees who are 4 years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are 4 years of age by September 1 of each year will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment.

Parents must provide FPS with a copy of the screening results signed by your child's physician, which will be kept in your child's file in the FPS office. If your child is fixing to turn four, it is a good idea to go ahead and get this screening done. We must have the documentation of this screening on file on or before your child's fourth birthday.

### **Student Conduct, Discipline and Guidance**

According to the DFPS Minimum Standards, discipline must be individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate with the child's level of understanding and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. Measures we use include talking with the child about the incident and what we can do to prevent its reoccurrence, taking away a privilege, cleaning the area, or sitting in an area away from the group in a "thinking spot" (time out is one minute per age of the child), Following the consequences, appropriate apologies and discussion of the incident is used. If the child hurts another child will help with the care and apologize to the injured child. Incident reports will be given to the parents of all children involved. Our goal, in accordance with the Texas State Minimum Standards, is to ensure the safety of ALL students. Biting and injury to other children may require the parents to conference with the staff and/or director. This conference will include discussing a plan of action. Every child in our care deserves to feel safe. FPS reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program due to the behavior of the child or parents. Parents and employees will be given a copy of Minimum Standards Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance, to read, sign and will be stored in the child's and/or employee's file.

### **Changes to Enrollment Information**

Anytime there is a change in any information included on any of the above forms, you are required to notify the office immediately. Changes such as a new address, a new job, or **new telephone numbers** must be immediately corrected or edited on your child's enrollment forms located in his or her file. Failure to do so could result in the FPS office

staff not being able to contact you in an emergency situation.

## **OUR MEDICATION, ILLNESS, AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Medications**

#### Over-the-Counter Medications

FPS will NOT administer any over-the-counter medications to children without a doctor's note. All over-the-counter medications prescribed by a doctor will be treated as a prescription medication. Also please note that any over the counter medication prescribed by a doctor will not be administered to a child as a fever reducer so that the child can remain in attendance for the day. FPS reserves the right to administer the medication to reduce your child's fever until you or someone can pick him or her up. Also, any prescribed over the counter medication will only be administered for the designated dates that the doctor notes on the prescription. If the doctor doesn't note a date or time frame, then FPS will administer the medication for the date the prescription was written and that date only.

Aspirin Substitute- FPS carries a liquid aspirin substitute (infant & child's Motrin, Tylenol or its generic form) and will only administer to a student whose parent has given written permission (on enrollment form) for the following reasons...

- Child's temperature is greater than 102 degrees and the parent or emergency contact person will be more than 30 minutes to pick up the student.
- If child's temperature continues to increase while waiting for parent or emergency contact person to pick him or her up.
- Child has documented that he or she is known to have seizures from high temperatures.

#### Prescription Medications

Anytime a parent asks the staff of FP School to administer a prescription medication, the medication must meet the following guidelines:

- Must be in the original container.
- Must have the child's name on the container.
- Must have dosage measurements.
- Must have dosage times.
- Must have date medication expires.
- Must have the name of the physician prescribing the medication.
- Must never be shared with another enrolled student or sibling.

The first dose of medication should be administered by the parent before dropping your child off at school. If it is a twice per day prescription, the second dose should be administered by the parent in the evening.

If a prescription medication is to be administered by FPS, the parent must fill out the medication chart at the FPS Office. If there is a discrepancy in the medication chart and the directions on the prescribed medication, the medicine will not be administered and the parents will be notified by telephone, text, email or in writing.

### **Illnesses**

According to the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" provided

by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, an ill child must not be admitted for care if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child-care center activities including outdoor play.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- The child has any of the following:
  - Oral temperature of 101° or greater; rectal temperature of 102° or greater; armpit temperature of 100° or greater; forehead temperature of 100° or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the child-care center's activities.
  - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea or 2 runny or loose bowel movements during his or her school day, 1 or more vomiting episodes during his or her school day, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
  - A diagnosis by a health-care professional that the child has a communicable disease and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

If your child is sent home with an elevated temperature, your child may not return to FPS until he/she has been cleared, with written documentation, by a medical professional OR fever-free without medication for a continuous period of 24 hours. If your child does NOT receive medical attention and returns to FPS after being fever-free without medication but continues to show any of the same symptoms (not limited to fever) that he or she was sent home for in the last 48 hours, FPS will require that he or she be picked up immediately. The child will not be able to return to FPS without written authorization from a medical professional. Also, FPS reserves the right to require any student that does not receive medical attention for an illness to take more than 24 hours of well time at home if, by doing so, it benefits the health and wellbeing of the child and/or the other students in the class. We understand the need for you as a working parent to return to work, but for the health and safety of all of the children at our school, it is important that this policy be followed at all times.

One of the more common communicable diseases is conjunctivitis (bacterial and/or viral), more commonly called "Pink Eye". The early signs are red eyes with some discharge or crust on the eyelids. If your child exhibits these symptoms, the FPS office staff will call you to pick up your child. Your child may not return to FPS until he/she has seen a physician and has a written order as to the diagnosis and treatment, if needed, and the date your child may return to FPS.

### **Medical Emergencies and Parental Notification**

Your child's safety is our top priority. In the event of a medical emergency, the staff will first ensure the safety of your child. We will then notify you immediately if any of the following pertains to your child:

- Your child is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional.
- Your child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from FPS as specified in the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" provided by the Texas



Department of Family and Protective Services Subchapter R [relating to Health Practices].

- Your child has been involved in any situation that placed your child at risk.
- Your child has been involved in any situation that renders FPS unsafe, such as a fire, flood, or damage to FPS as a result of severe weather.

FPS will notify you of less serious injuries when you pick up your child from FPS. Less serious injuries include but are not limited to minor cuts, scratches, and bites from other children requiring first-aid treatment by FPS Staff.

All parents of children at FPS will be notified in writing and within 48 hours of becoming aware that a child in our care or an employee has contracted a communicable disease that the law requires FPS to report to the Texas Department of Health as specified in 25 TAC 97, Subchapter A (relating to Control of Communicable Diseases). FPS will provide written notice within 48 hours to the parents of all children in a group when there is an outbreak of lice or other infestation in the group. FPS will either post this notice in a prominent and publicly accessible place where all parents can easily view it or send an individual note to each parent.

For additional information, you are welcome to view the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" provided by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at the FPS Office.

## **OUR CHILD CARE FEES**

### **Registration Fees**

A Registration Fee is charged each year at the time of enrollment or upon re-enrollment to reserve a spot for your child. Registration Fees are non refundable, non transferable and are specifically designed to hold a child's position (only until the students designated start date) for each registration period. Registration Fees may vary from year to year and for the class that your child has been registered for. If your child is withdrawn from enrollment for any reason, the registration fee must be paid again upon re-enrollment pending availability.

Registration is typically held in late February or early March for the upcoming school year. The school year runs for 9 months from late August to late May. Our summer program begins the 1st Monday following the closure of public schools. Summer session ends for school aged children on the Friday before public school begins in the fall. For preschool children, summer session ends on Friday one week before public school begins and the following week is a transition week between summer and fall.

### **Tuition**

FP School prefers parents to pay their tuition through automatic withdrawal. If this is not a convenient method of payment for you, you may choose to pay by check, cash, credit card, or through our E-giving website option.

Once a parent has chosen a method of payment (i.e. automatic withdrawal, check/cash/credit card, or E-giving), the parent must also choose at what time of the month the tuition will be paid. You may choose from the following options:

Tuition may be paid:

- Monthly: Entire tuition by the 1st of each month (if the 1st falls on the weekend, the entire tuition is due the Monday following the 1st)
- Semi-Monthly: ½ of the tuition on the 1st of each month & ½ on the 15th of the month (if the 1st or 15th falls on the weekend, that portion of tuition is due the Monday following the 1st or 15th)

**OTHER THAN YOUR VACATION CREDIT, TUITION IS DUE WHETHER YOUR CHILD ATTENDS FPS OR NOT.**

This policy applies to all situations including but not limited to all FPS holidays, absences due to illness, mandated or recommended school closures, bad weather, or any other circumstances. There is absolutely **no** exception to this policy. FPS school closures will not always coincide with local public school closures.

Please also note: monthly tuition for school age children is for after school hours only -- when a school age child requires care for any full day due to a school district closure, an additional \$15 per full day will be added to the monthly tuition. Student's attending FPS on these days will be provided an AM and PM snack ONLY. Students will need to bring a sack lunch for every day that he or she will be in attendance at FPS during these times.

**Drop in Care**

It is FPS policy to allow in-house part time students or previously enrolled students to attend FPS as drop in care at the rate of \$30.00 per day for 2 and older and \$35.00 for infants and toddlers. Drop in care is not always available and will only be offered if the teacher/child ratio allows availability for the drop in student. Along with availability, ALL required enrollment information and forms MUST be provided and current.

**Withdrawing From Our Program**

If you choose to withdraw your child from our program, you must stop by the front desk to fill out a *Student Withdraw Form* (form can also be printed from our website) two weeks prior to your child's last day at First Protestant School. **If you withdraw your child from First Protestant School at any time during the month, you are liable for that month's entire tuition.** First Protestant School will not reimburse or prorate any tuition fees for that month.

*Withdrawal notices given for a period of less than 2 weeks, extending into a period of time for which tuition has not yet been paid, must pay a 2 week pro-rated tuition on the date of the notice in order for the child to remain enrolled for the duration of the notice period.*

**Past-Due Accounts**

Payments are due on the 1st and/or the 15th of each month. If the 1st or 15th falls on the weekend, then payment is due the Monday following the 1st or 15th. If payment is not received within 3 days of due date, late fees will be applied to your account at the rate of \$5.00 per day. If the account is not current within 5 days of the due date indicated below, your child will be dropped from enrollment. If you indicate that you will pay your tuition by one of the methods listed on the *Tuition Agreement Form* and then wish to change your method of payment, you must see the School Director and sign a new agreement. *All miscellaneous charges (those other than tuition) must be taken care of within 5 school days unless automatic payment arrangements have been made in the tuition agreement form.* Charges not timely paid will be subject to additional fees.

### **Vacation Credit**

*Only full-time students attending Monday-through-Friday are eligible for vacation credit.*

A full-time student is any student attending FP School Monday through Friday for the entire year (Summer & Fall). Vacation credit will only be granted after your child has attended our program for one full year. One full year will be calculated by the child's one year anniversary date. Every year upon the anniversary date, the child is again eligible for one week vacation credit. If vacation credit is not taken within the year of eligibility, it will not carry over into the next year. One week vacation credit will be credited to your account only after our front office has received a *Vacation Request Form* (which can be received at FPS office or printed from our website) and that request has been approved by the director. The vacation must be taken in 5 consecutive school days. Vacation credit is awarded in kind only; therefore it is not payable to families upon withdrawal.

All *Vacation Request Forms* must follow these rules:

A request for a vacation time must be submitted to the FPS office at least 2 weeks in advance. The request must have the present date, child's name, dates of vacation, child's original admission date, parent signature, and director's signature of approval.

### **Late Pick Up Fees**

FPS closes at 6:00 PM. Please set your watches and clocks according to the FPS Office clock. Anytime a child is picked up after 6:00 PM, that child's account will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute thereafter and is payable at the time of pick up. Out of courtesy for our staff and the cost of having our doors open, please be on time to pick up your child.

### **Returned & Post Dated Checks**

Any automatic withdrawal transaction with non-sufficient funds or any checks returned to FPS for non-sufficient funds will be charged a \$25.00 service charge. If FPS receives a check for non-sufficient funds or an automatic withdrawal transaction cannot be processed, the amount owed plus the charges accrued (including all applicable late fees) must be paid for in cash within 24 hours of notification. If your childcare account is not settled within the 24 hour period, your child will lose their childcare position.

If FPS receives a second returned check or denied automatic withdrawal transaction from the same bank account, FP School will then no longer accept checks or drafts from that bank account number.

FPS does **NOT** accept post dated checks for tuition payments, merchandise, or any other payment transactions.

## **OUR CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PROCEDURES**

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in or around our school that are not labeled with a child's name will be retained by the FPS office and placed in our Lost and Found tub located in the hall of the main building. Every last Friday of the month, all unclaimed articles will be given to charity without notification.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special time in your child's life. We want to be a part of this celebration. Each teacher will decide how your child is recognized on this day. If you would like to

bring birthday snacks (cookies, cupcakes, etc.), you must fill out a substitute food/snack request one week prior to the food being brought to school. All snacks must be store bought. Please check with the teacher on what they would prefer. If your child is having a birthday party outside of FPS, it is our policy to not give out telephone numbers or addresses of any child or family. If you would like to pass out birthday invitations at FPS, bring the completed and sealed invitations to the FPS office and the first names of all the children in the class will be put on each invitation and given to them. All children in the class must be invited.

### **Student of the Week**

We consider the families that we serve as part of our school family. We want each child to be able to share his/her family with his/her classmates. Asking you to bring pictures of your family is one way that we are able to do this. Your child's teacher will let you know when your child will be the "Student of the Week" and how to prepare for this time.

### **Wednesday Morning Chapel**

Chapel will be held every Wednesday (exceptions will be noted on monthly class calendars) from 10:00-10:30 AM in First Protestant School gym. This will be a special time to learn more about God, draw closer to Jesus, and experience His love. During this time, your child will take part in lessons, stories, and worship. It is our desire that through chapel we plant the seed of God's love and help your child build a relationship with Him.

As part of our chapel program, we encourage the students to bring a small offering (just whatever loose change you have laying around) to every chapel. These monies are then used as a donation from the students and families of FPS to help with different programs involving children within our community.

### **Water Activities**

Children involved in splash day and/or trips to local swimming pools will follow all guidelines as set forth in the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child Care Centers" provided by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. This includes but is not limited to:

- Parents will be notified in writing 48 hours prior to trips to local swimming pools.
- Parents must sign a permission form (same as field trip permission form) in order for their child to go swimming at a local pool. If the permission form is not signed by the parent, the child will be cared for at FPS until the child's class returns at which time the child will rejoin their class.
- If a class is not available due to child/staff ratio, the parent will be called to come and pick up the child.
- Parents may not drive the child to and from the local pool without staying at the pool with the child. Teachers are instructed to only be responsible for the number of children originally brought on the field trip at the time of departure.

### **Playground/Outdoor Activities**

It is FPS policy to give the students a designated AM and PM playground or outdoor activity as long as weather permits. FPS will not take children outside for their entire designated playground time if the temperature is less than 45° or greater than 95°

### **Field Trips**

Children 3 years of age and older may be involved in field trips. Field trips will follow all guidelines as set forth in the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" provided by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services including, but not

limited to, the following:

- Parents will be notified in writing 48 hours prior to a field trip
- Parents must sign a Field Trip Permission Form in order for their child to go on the field trip. If the Field Trip Permission Form has not been signed by the parent, the child will be cared for at FPS until the child's class returns, at which time the child will rejoin his/her class.
- If a class is not available due to child/staff ratio, the parent will be called to come and pick up the child.
- Parents may not drive the child to and from the field trip without staying at the designated place with the child. Teachers are instructed to only be responsible for the number of children originally brought on the field trip at the time of departure.

### **Transportation Policy**

Each school/church vehicle is considered a classroom and must follow the same procedures and rules followed while on school premises. FPS offers transportation from various schools in NBISD. Our after-school care van runs are based on the number of kids we have enrolled for each school in NBISD.

FPS also offers transportation on scheduled field trips for children 4 years of age and older. All transportation situations are conducted in compliance with the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" provided by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

Due to the booster seat law required by the Texas Department of Public Safety, FPS will require all parents whose children being transported by the FPS van for field trips or after school van runs to follow the following requirements:

Children younger than 8 years of age MUST be in a child safety seat.

If your child is younger than 8 years old, BUT they are already 4'9" tall, they are NOT legally required to be in a safety seat system.

If your child is 8 years old or older, and not yet 4'9" tall, they are NOT legally required to be in a safety seat system.

## **OUR POLICIES REGARDING PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

Parent involvement and communication is very important to us here at First Protestant School. We view our relationship with you as a partnership.

### **Procedure for Parents Who Wish to Voice Praises, Concerns or Suggestions**

Parent communication is very important to us. Your praises, suggestions, and concerns are what help us run an outstanding program. Parents are always welcome to discuss anything with the school director, the front office staff, and/or the child's teacher. The school director's door is always open. However, there may be times when she is in a meeting or working with staff or children. In the best interest of your time, it is a good idea to try to schedule an appointment with the front office.

### **Procedure for Parents to Visit FP School**

Parents may visit FPS at any time during our operational times. For security reasons, we ask that all visitors and parents please check in at the front office before proceeding to

your child's classroom.

### **Procedure for Visitors, Volunteers, Therapists, or Contractors to Visit FPS**

For safety reasons, FPS does NOT allow visitors to enter the school building unless or until they have been checked in at the front office. If your child will be receiving therapy, dance classes, or lessons onsite on a frequent or regular basis while at FPS, then the therapist or instructor must comply with minimum standards that apply to employees. (Referenced from minimum standard 746.1403)

### **Procedure for Parent Participation**

We love parent participation. Parent participation is healthy for the classroom and for your child. Please speak to the front office about how you may best volunteer to help our school as well as with your child's teacher about how you may best volunteer in the classroom.

### **Parent Code of Ethics and Conduct**

Each staff member at FPS is required to follow a code of ethics as stated in our staff handbook. Each staff member is expected to treat each parent and visitor with the utmost respect. Because we are a partner with you in your child's care and are each a role model for our children, the FPS School director expects the same from our parents as is expected from each staff member. Most interactions between parents and staff are wonderful; however, in the instance that one of our staff members or the director is treated in a disrespectful manner, the following procedure will be followed:

- The staff member will have a conference with the school director.
- If needed, the parent will have a conference with the school director.
- If the staff member continues to be disrespected by the same parent even after meeting with the school director, the parent will be asked to withdraw their child from FPS. However, depending on the circumstances involved, the director reserves the right to dismiss a family from our school immediately. In this situation, no refunds will be given for the rest of that month's tuition.

### **Procedure for Parents to Review a Copy of the Minimum Standards and the Licensing Inspection Report**

Parents may review a copy of the "Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers" and FPS' most recent Licensing Inspection Report any time during Operational Times at the FPS office. All of this information may also be found online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

### **Instructions on How to Contact the Local Licensing Office, DFPS Child Abuse Hotline, and DFPS Website**

Parents may contact the local Licensing Office of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at any time.

Address: 115 Green Valley East, Suite 200  
New Braunfels, TX, 78130

Telephone #: (830) 609-5033  
Website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

The Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline can be reached at 1-800-252-5400.