

Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool Parent Handbook



VAUGHN FOREST
CHURCH

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool. Our program exists for you and your child. We will strive to provide the loving care and guidance that your child needs as he/she grows and develops.

As parents, you play a vital role in our ministry to your child. This handbook is designed to help you understand this program, its mission, and the guidelines under which it operates. You are always welcome to visit, ask questions, and make suggestions. Cooperation between parents and staff will contribute to a successful experience for your child. Our church values children and believes in families. We sponsor this Weekday Preschool program as a ministry of the church to provide a learning environment that will help preschoolers grow as Jesus grew. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

We strongly encourage parental involvement during classroom activities that may require extra assistance, such as holiday parties, field trips, etc. If you would like to assist with any of these activities, there will be a sign-up sheet in your child's classroom.

This handbook has been prepared so that you may know and better understand the program and policies. We will work together to help your child through a successful year.

On the last page of this handbook is a **Parent Agreement Form**. You will need to sign and return it to the Vaughn Forest Preschool Office. This form states that you have read and understand the policies and guidelines as set forth in the Parent Handbook.

Please do not hesitate to call the Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool office @ 334-277-0362 if you have questions regarding any information enclosed in this packet.

Vaughn Forest Preschool General Information Educational Philosophy of the Program

A child develops mentally, physically, spiritually, socially and emotionally. We are committed to providing Biblically based, age-appropriate experiences to allow each child to progress at his/her own level of ability while feeling successful. This is primarily done through hands-on activities in learning centers, and through positive Christ-like role modeling of the staff. Parent newsletters will keep you informed about each unit designed for your child's class.

The Program

The program incorporates many educational hands-on activities and allows self-discovery through instruction. Colors, shapes, number recognition and formation, letter recognition and formation, and basic phonics skills are introduced. Your child will participate in a variety of learning center activities that include art, books, blocks, puzzles and manipulatives, nature, music, and dramatic play. Social skills are developed through sharing, taking turns, thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. Bible stories and scripture are included in each teaching unit.

Vaughn Forest Preschool Staff

Vaughn Forest Preschool is staffed with Christian Educators with many years of experiences in Early Childhood Education. The student/teacher ratio is as follows:

18 months – 24 months	6 students /1 teacher
Twos	7 students /1 teacher
Threes	8 students /1 teacher
Fours	14 students /1 teacher
Kindergarten	14 students /1 teacher

School Hours:

Regular Hours Monday through Friday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Children may begin entering the classrooms at 8:55 am. If a child needs to be left at school before 8:55 am, the child should be taken to Early Room.

Early RoomMonday through Friday
8:00a.m. –9:00a.m.

Late RoomMonday through Friday
1:00pm - 2:00pm

Cost is \$5.00 per child for each hour

Tuition

Tuition payments are made in the Weekday Preschool Office and are to be placed in the Preschool Payments box outside the Weekday Office. Parents are asked to write the child's name on the memo line of the check. One check may be written for families with siblings attending the preschool. For parents paying with cash, a receipt may be obtained from the Weekday Preschool director.

Tuition is due on the first of each month. Tuition is considered delinquent after the 15th of the month. There is a late payment fee of \$20 for any payments received after the 15th of the month.

If the 15th falls on a weekend, tuition is considered delinquent after the following Monday.

If tuition and late fees are not paid by the last day of the month, the child will be dismissed unless the parent/guardian takes the initiative to make definite arrangements for payment.

There is a \$20 fee for any returned checks.

A **non-refundable** registration fee is due at the time of registration. No child is officially enrolled until the registration fee is paid.

Registration Fee - \$75.00 (Non-Refundable)

Supply Fee - \$100.00 (Non-refundable after August 1st)

Tuition is paid for 10 months beginning in August and ending in May. Monthly tuition remains the same, with no deductions for absences, holidays, or unexpected closings due to circumstances beyond our control.

day	18 Month Olds:	\$160.00 3 days	\$120.00 2 days	\$60.00 1
	2 Year Olds:	\$160.00 3 days	\$120.00 2 days	
	3 Year Olds:	\$160.00 3 days	\$180.00 5 days	
	4 Year Olds:	\$160.00 3 days	\$180.00 5 days	
	Kindergarten:	\$200.00 5 days		

May tuition is due in full by the first Tuesday in May.

The supply fee and August tuition are due on August 1st. These fees are non-refundable after August 1st.

Withdrawal

A two week notice in writing must be made for any withdrawals during the school year. You will be billed the regular tuition amount through the end of your notice. No withdrawals will be accepted after March 31st.

For a child to register for the next school year, tuition for the current school year must be paid in full. Therefore, if a child withdraws during the school year, tuition for the remainder of the current school year must be paid in full for a child to register for the following year.

Supply fees and registration fees are non-refundable.

Arrival and Departure

Parents are to walk the children to the classroom doors each morning. **Children may begin entering the classrooms at 8:55 am.** Early Room is available for children that need to arrive before 8:55 am.

Parents are encourage to arrive at school on time. **The entrances to the Preschool are locked each morning at 9:15 am.** If you arrive after 9:15 am, you will need to enter through the church office. This entrance is located on the opposite side of the church. It is the only entrance that remains unlocked throughout the day for security purposes.

School is dismissed at 1:00 pm. The preschool entrance will be unlocked at 12:30 pm. Parents of children in the One, Two, and Three (3 Day classes) year old classes are to walk in to pick up their child. Children in the 5 day Threes, Fours, and Kindergarten classes will participate in afternoon carpool. Specific instructions regarding carpool will be given to parents at the beginning of the school year. Children will only be released to persons listed on the Registration Form. This information can be updated at anytime during the school year.

Teachers will begin taking children to Late Room around 1:05 so that they may return to clean the classroom. **Any child not picked up by 1:10 pm will be charged the Late Room fee of \$5. If a child is still in Late Room at 1:11pm, the parents must pay the Late Room fee of \$5. Teachers do not have the authority to waive this fee.**

Early Room / Late Room

An Early Room and a Late Room is provided each day. Teachers take turn supervising Early/Late Room. Early/Late Room is provided on an “as needed” basis for \$5 per hour per child. This fee is paid directly to the teacher in charge. An Early/Late Room calendar will be sent home each month.

Early Room begins at 8:00 am and is for children that need to be brought to school before 8:55 am.

Late Room is provided for children that need to stay beyond 1:00 pm. Late Room ends at 2:00 pm. **Children that have not been picked up by 1:10 pm will automatically be charged the Late Room fee of \$5.** Teachers do not have the authority to waive this fee.

If a child is not picked up by 2:00 pm, the parents must pay an additional late fee of \$5 for every five minutes past 2:00 pm. Please keep in mind that the staff must be able to get their own children from school.

We ask that no food or drink be brought into Early or Late Room.

Absences

It is extremely important that your child attends preschool on a regular basis and arrives on time. It promotes continuity in learning, establishes structure and routine, and prevents disruption within the classroom.

The Kindergarten class begins at 9:00 am. Absences and tardies are recorded for permanent school records. Attendance is vital to the academic process. Excess tardies and absences result in children missing important instruction time.

If your child will be absent, it is very helpful if the parent will notify the office by calling or emailing the director. This helps the school monitor any illnesses within a classroom and the school in general.

Full tuition is due even when a child is absent. Failure to pay may cause your child to lose his/her space at the preschool.

Parent Meetings

If at any time you would like to discuss any aspect of your child's experiences, please feel free to make an appointment with your child's teacher. Drop-off and pick-up times are not appropriate times for parents and teachers to conference. The teacher must keep her attention on the children in the class. Also, it does not offer a private setting for parent and teacher to talk.

Weather Days and School Closings

There may be times that the school is closed for severe weather. Vaughn Forest Weekday preschool will follow the Montgomery Public School system. If they are closed, we are closed. This information will be listed on the local television and radio stations.

Parents can call the Weekday Preschool Office at 277-0362 for notification of any school closings or delays in opening as long as the church has power. The outgoing message will be updated with information pertaining to closings or late openings.

Severe Weather Plan

On days that there is a possibility of severe weather, the Weekday staff will be "Weather Aware". This simply means that the staff is watching the weather and will be ready to take the children to our safe place at any moment.

During Arrival Time

If severe weather occurs during drop off time, parents must stay with their children. Parents will not be able to leave the children until the severe weather has ended and the teachers are able to return to the classrooms to receive the children. Parents are welcome to come in the building and sit with the staff in the hallway. If you are at home when the warning is issued, please stay until the warning has expired.

During the School Day

If severe weather occurs while children are at school, the staff will execute the severe weather plan. Because the staff and children will be in the hallway, it will not be possible for the director to answer the phone if parents call. Parents are asked to understand that safety for all is the number one priority.

During Dismissal

If severe weather occurs during dismissal, the teachers will take the children to the hallway and stop the dismissal procedures. Parents already at school may join the staff and children in the hallway. Parents that have not left home are asked to wait until the warning is over. The staff will remain with the children.

Late Arrival Days

If for some reason, the Montgomery Public School system delays the opening of school

due to weather, Vaughn Forest will not open at 9:00. The decision to open will be based on the start time the public schools use. Arrangements for the children of our staff members must be taken into consideration. Parents may call the Preschool Number, 277-0362, for updates in this situation.

Early Dismissal

If MPS closes school early for reasons related to weather, Vaughn Forest may close early as well. If this occurs, teachers will call parents. **It is very important that we have current phone numbers for all parents.** MPS will make announcements on local radio and television stations and parents with children in the school system will receive phone calls. If this occurs, Vaughn Forest will close at least 30 minutes before MPS does. For example, if MPS announces school closings at 1:00, VF will close at 12:30.

School Closings

There may be other times that Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool must close due to circumstances beyond our control. If this situation arises, we will give parents as much notice as possible.

Discipline

It is our philosophy that the best form of discipline for a preschooler is positive reinforcement. If a child exhibits inappropriate behavior the teacher will attempt to alleviate the behavior. If the behavior continues, the child will be placed in time-out. Time-out is a time for the child to be removed from the present situation and given a moment to reflect upon his/her behavior. Our teachers will work with the child so that he/she understands what is expected at school. If the behavior continues, the child will be taken to the director in the Weekday Office. If a child is taken to the director's office, the parents will be notified. Any child that demonstrates that he/she cannot abide by the rules of good conduct, after sufficient consultation with the child's teacher and the Weekday director, he/she may be dismissed from the program.

Students causing physical harm to others (hitting, scratching, biting, etc.) while at school will be taken to the Weekday Office. Parents will be notified of the behavior. After the third offense, the parents will be asked by the director to remove the student from class until such behavior ceases.

Dismissal of a Child

Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool will handle any issues that may arise in a Biblical manner. The issue should be brought to the attention of the classroom teacher first. If needed, the director will meet with the teacher and the parents. School matters should not be discussed on social media. Failure to handle situations in a Biblical manner is

grounds for dismissal.

This program reserves the right to dismiss any child. If, after entering our program, he/she is unable to participate in group experiences or if fees have not been paid, the child will be dismissed. All children attending preschool will be asked to conform to the classroom setting.

Health and Safety

The program exercises reasonable care and judgment in all matters related to safety. In all emergencies, the program has permission to take such reasonable measures as are (in the judgment of the teacher or director) necessary for the welfare and safety of the child until a parent can be reached.

All children **must have an updated Alabama immunization record** on file in order for them to be admitted to our program.

If your child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be isolated from the group and you will be called to pick up your child immediately. Please be certain that the office has current phone numbers at all times.

In order to protect our students from spreading illnesses within the classrooms, your cooperation is vital. Children should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Children who have contagious illness or exhibit any of the following signs of illness may not attend:

- **Fever:** A fever of 100 degrees or more and the child should not attend school until he/she is fever free (without using fever-reducing medications) for 24 hours
- **Vomiting:** A child must stay home for 24 hours after symptoms subside
- **Diarrhea:** A child should remain home until 24 hours after symptoms subside
- **Contagious diseases**
- **Severe coughing / Sore throat**
- **Heavy or green nasal discharge**
- **Undiagnosed rash:** Your child should not attend school until the rash has been diagnosed and treated.
- **Pink eye or thick eye discharge:** Your child must be treated by a medical doctor before returning to school

You will be asked to take your child home should you bring your child to school with any symptoms.

In the event of exposure to a contagious disease within the group, you will be given written notice.

Teachers will not be responsible for giving medicine at school.

Due to allergies, we ask that no animals/pets be brought into the building. This includes drop-off and pick-up times.

Snacks & Lunch

We eat as a group. However, due to a variety of food allergies, children may be separated into small groups during lunch. Parents are responsible for providing a ready to eat lunch with a drink. For safety reasons, do not send carbonated drinks or glass items. Sandwiches or finger foods are encouraged. Teachers are not able to microwave or store foods in the refrigerator. Hot-dogs, grapes, or other choking hazards should be cut into small pieces. Be sure to label all food containers and send disposable spoons and forks if needed.

Snack routines will vary from class to class. Please refer to classroom instructions provided by the teacher for details on how your child's class will carry out snack.

Due to the increasing number of children that have allergies to nuts, we have established Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool as a **nut FREE school**. Please find alternative solutions when selecting items to send to school for snack and lunch.

Records

Attendance records, registration forms, health records, and identification records are kept for each child. They are on file in the Weekday Preschool Office. Please keep all forms, **especially emergency numbers**, up to date. Notify the office and the teacher of any telephone or address changes. In the case of an injury or sickness, we will attempt to contact the parents based on the numbers on the record.

Tests/Assessments

Before a child enters Kindergarten, a Kindergarten Readiness test will be administered. The Kindergarten teacher or the director will administer this test as a means of measuring your child's maturity level, and overall readiness for Kindergarten.

Progress Reports

Quarterly progress reports are sent home for children enrolled in the Four Year Old and Kindergarten classes. If you would like to know how your child is progressing, please feel free to set up a time to talk with your child's teacher.

Chapel

Chapel is held weekly. This is a special time for all to come together and praise God. It is time for Bible stories, singing, and learning scripture. Lessons taught in chapel will be reinforced in the classroom throughout the week.

Clothes

Dress your child in loose, comfortable clothing. Washable play clothes are strongly recommended. All children are required to wear shoes. No slip-on shoes, like flip flops, are allowed. Shoes such as *Crocs* that have a back strap are permitted.

Please label all removable clothing such as sweaters, raincoats, and jackets. Any items left at school will be placed in the church lost and found.

Parents are asked to keep an extra set of clothes in a zip-lock bag in your child's back pack. In the event of an emergency, if a child does not have a change of clothes, the parent will be called and asked to bring a change of clothes to school.

Diapers / Changing Policy

Diapers are changed on a schedule twice a day and more as needed. Parents need to provide diapers and wipes.

Please notify the teacher if your child is being potty trained at home. The teacher will help with this process. Once the child begins wearing pull-ups to school, please continue this by not sending him/her to school in diapers anymore. This helps the teacher establish a routine with the children.

All children entering the 3, 4, and 5 year old classes must be fully toilet trained and able to care of themselves in the bathroom. Children that are still wearing pull-ups to school are not considered to be toilet trained. A child should be able to identify when he/she needs to use the restroom.

Restroom Use While at School

Procedures for going to the restroom at school may be different than the routine used at home. For example, at home a child usually does not have to wait in a line to go and he/she can take his/her time. At school, there may be a line so a child needs to learn not to wait until the last minute to get in line. Also, because friends may be waiting to go next, a child needs to use his/her time wisely.

Things to practice at home:

1. Practice not waiting until the last minute to go to the bathroom.
2. Practice not removing your shoes and clothes while in the restroom.
3. Practice using your time wisely.
4. Practice dressing completely before leaving the restroom.
5. Practice washing your hands and placing the paper towels in the garbage can.
6. Practice using the correct amount of toilet paper.

Outdoor Play

The children at Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool go outside every day, weather permitting. The children's play area is an enclosed and gated area that contains age appropriate playground equipment. Dress your child appropriately to enjoy God's beautiful world. This includes sending jackets when the weather is cold.

Toys

Our staff works hard to plan classroom activities for the school day. Wide varieties of toys have been placed in the classroom and are rotated on a regular basis. Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school unless requested by the teacher. Watch for show and tell details on your monthly classroom calendar. Please avoid sending toy weapons to school.

Classroom Celebrations/ Parties

Birthday party invitations can only be passed out at school if every child in the class is included. All boy or all girl party invitations are fine. Otherwise, please mail your invitations. Please refer to classroom instructions regarding celebrating birthdays at school.

What the Children Will Learn While They Play

- To learn about God, the Creator of all things and people
- To learn about God's son, Jesus, and what He did on earth
- To get along with others - to be polite, fair
- To share with others - toys, games and experiences
- To explore new things and ideas.
- To express himself / herself through words, clay, paint, crayons, music and stories
- To plan - what to do next?
- To listen - to stories and directions
- To look at books and learn how to use them
- To spot differences - in color, sizes, shapes and sounds
- To play outside - developing big muscles and learning to take turns and follow directions
- To eat with others - learn to relax - practice good manners
- To care for himself / herself and his/her belongings - keeping up with lunch bags, tending to bathroom needs, returning toys and tools at pick-up time
- To think of others - gifts for Mom, Dad, siblings, classmates, etc.

Ways Parents Can Help

- Pray that our preschool program will be successful in reaching all of our children.
- Have your child bring a backpack to school each day large enough to carry a lunch box and a folder.
- Bring your child on time every morning.
- Contact us if your child is not coming to school.
- Know and appreciate your child's teacher. Call if a problem arises.
- Read all letters and information sent home or posted in the hallways or on classroom doors.
- Remember to pay preschool tuition on time.
- Talk with your child each morning regarding school rules, manners, sharing, taking turns, etc.

Extracurricular Activities

Several extracurricular activities are available for our children to participate in at Vaughn Forest Preschool. They are offered at an additional cost. Parent will have the opportunity to learn more about these activities at the orientation in the fall. The activities are listed below with a brief description of each.

Abakadoodle

A teacher from Abakadoodle comes once a week to Vaughn Forest. In Abakadoodle classes your children will: ignite their imaginations, strengthen thinking skills, develop fine motor and language skills, explore their creativity and art materials, and celebrate their uniqueness.

The Big Green Bus

The Big Green Bus is a school bus that has been converted into a safe and fun preschool gymnastics facility. The bus will travel to our school once a week for a convenient, structured workout. The children will learn the basics of gymnastics on the balance beam, horizontal bar, vault, tumbling mats, and rings. Lesson plans are based on the Junior Olympic Developmental Program. Classes are taught by Amber Holley.

Dance

Jill, with Leaps of Faith, comes to the school and offers a dance, ballet, and tap class.

Parent Agreement

Pease sign and return to the Vaughn Forest Preschool office

I, _____, whose child, _____, is enrolled in Vaughn Forest Weekday Preschool program, have received a copy of the Parent's Handbook. I have read and understand the policies and guidelines as described in the Handbook, and I agree to abide by them.

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Date)