



**Virginia Hills Baptist Church**  
Preschool

# Parent and Family Handbook

2006 Belle View Blvd.

Alexandria, VA 22307

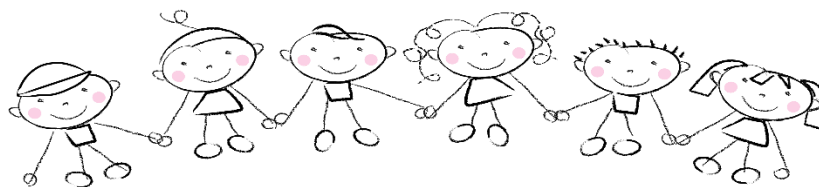
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## Welcome

This handbook is planned for your use. It is designed to explain the VHBC Preschool program, better equip you with all of the necessary information for you and your child(ren) to have the best preschool experience, and to show you how you can help your child make the necessary adjustments.

## About VHBC Preschool

VHBC Preschool is a ministry of Virginia Hills Baptist Church. It was originally organized as a “Mother’s Day out” so mothers could enjoy some “child-free” hours each week. In this program, a child is always learning and developing. Each day brings opportunities to play, investigate, and express ideas through:

**Creative Activities** -- Self-expression through the use of paints, clay, crayons, manual tools, and other materials.

**Field Trips** – The older classes visit points of interest in our area to help the children establish appreciation for people who contribute to their lives.

**Group Living** -- Planning, working, and playing in an organized environment so that desirable habits and attitudes, independence, and responsibility are established.

**Language Experiences** -- Enjoying stories, verse, conversation, and dramatization.

**Music Experiences** -- Responding rhythmically to songs, singing, and listening to music. Introduction to various instruments.

**Readiness Experiences** -- Offering basic fundamentals of learning.

**Relaxation** -- Indoor/outdoor play and quiet time.

Our physical facilities include 8 classrooms, creative movement area, and an outside playground. The building is located at 2006 Belle View Boulevard in Alexandria, VA with approximately 6,554 square feet of indoor space.

Enrollment capacity at Virginia Hills Baptist Church Preschool is no more than 90 children at any one time.

Virginia Hills Baptist Church and Preschool carries full liability insurance.

## Religiously Exempt Child Day Center

VHBC Preschool operates as a Religiously Exempt Child Day Center under Section 63.1-196.3 of the Code of Virginia. We are inspected annually by the Fairfax County Department of Health and the Fairfax County Fire Marshall for compliance in order to retain our state exemption. We operate under state mandated ratios for teacher to child within each age group as follows:

Age Group	Child to Staff Ratio
0 – 16 months	1 staff to 4 children
16 – 24 months	1 staff to 5 children
24 – 36 months	1 staff to 8 children
36 months – 5 years	1 staff to 10 children
5 – 9 years	1 staff to 20 children
9 – 12 years	1 staff to 25 children

## Staffing

Our staff consists of:

- Preschool Director
- Preschool Assistant Director/Administrators
- Preschool Teachers
- Preschool Teacher Assistants
- Preschool Music and Movement Teacher(s)
- Before and Aftercare Teacher(s)
- Before and Aftercare Administrator(s)



Teachers and staff are required to have a college degree and/or experience in working with young children. Our teachers are loving, caring and attentive. We seek to help children develop their abilities to the fullest, and to imbue them with a sense of self-worth and confidence. Staff members are required to earn continuing education credits in order to remain current on the latest trends, ideas, and concepts in early childhood education. Please check out the “Staff Bios” section of our website for detailed information regarding each teacher. Job Descriptions are available in the Preschool office upon request.

All staff and substitutes are required to have an annual certificate of health and tuberculin test (PPD) on file as well as regular background checks required by law.

## VHBC Preschool Objectives

**Cognitive.** To help children:



- Ask questions;
- Cultivate a developmentally appropriate foundation for numbers, art, reading, and writing skills;
- Develop and cultivate creativity and memory;
- Develop an increased attention span;
- Develop simple reasoning;
- Gain awareness of their role in a dynamic and diverse world of people, places, and things;
- Learn visual discrimination, matching, comparing, sorting, and organizing;
- Solve problems;
- Understand fact and fiction (or the difference between a truth and a lie);
- Understand cause and effect.

**Language & Emerging Literacy.** To help children:



- Develop enjoyment of stories and awareness of use of books;
- Develop and demonstrate age-appropriate verbal and print communication;
- Develop Foundational emergent reading skills (concepts of print, phonemic awareness, and phonics);
- Develop emergent writing skills (developmentally appropriate drawings, dictated stories and messages, beginning letter formations);
- Develop speaking and listening skills (participating in conversations, asking and answering questions, describing things, adding details, speaking audibly, clearly, and in complete sentences);
- Gain exposure to age-appropriate concepts in order to improve and expand cognitive processes, vocabulary, and communication skills.

**Physical.** To help children:



- Cultivate a love for healthy activities. Develop gross motor skills;
- Develop self-help skills (feeding and washing hands, for example);
- Develop muscle control, balance, and coordination (climbing ladders, opening doors, and putting on coats);
- Practice healthy lifestyles and living (wellness, rest, exercise, health, and nutrition);
- Strengthen fine motor skills in preparation of writing skills by manipulation of age-appropriate objects;
- Using a variety of activities and projects, develop appropriate coordination;
- Understand body awareness (sitting next to a friend rather than in her lap).

**Social & Emotional.** To help children:



- Accept appropriate individual and group responsibility. Regulating one's own behavior and emotions;
- Develop and exhibit a healthy self-esteem, self-worth, and self-control and promote the same in others;
- Develop a working memory, curiosity for the world, and persistence;
- Develop friendships with other children and healthy relationships with adults;
- Create a positive personal identity (liking oneself and building confidence, for example);
- Follow age-appropriate boundaries that create a daily routine;
- Learn through individual and group experiences to show respect, love, kindness, and patience toward others;
- Understand and obey simple directions.

**Spiritual.** To help children:



- Cultivate a relationship with Jesus;
- Enhance an awareness of God's presence in the world and of God's love;
- Share the love of God and His world with love toward all people;
- Think of the church as a special place to learn about God and Jesus.

## A Day at Preschool

**Health Inspection.** Teachers will inspect children upon arrival. Children should be kept at home when they show any of the following symptoms: sore throat, earache, diarrhea, swollen glands, runny nose, fever, rash or other obvious symptoms.

**\*See Guideline of When a Child Can Return, these must be followed to keep our kids and staff healthy and happy. Your cooperation in this is appreciated.**

**Working, Playing, and Learning Together.** Each child chooses from a variety of activities such as looking at books, working with puzzles, manipulating blocks, creating works of art, or playing in home-living and other centers.

**Worship Training.** Informal worship experiences including Bible stories and saying grace at mealtimes.

**Sharing Group Experiences.** Singing songs, listening to music, responding to rhythms, taking nature walks, going on field trips, listening to stories or poems, talking together, and dramatizing stories all contribute to make VHBC Preschool a happy place!

**Music/Movement.** All classes attend music/movement each week. Music/Movement classes may include singing, playing instruments, following directions, rhythm, and movement to music.

**Cleaning Up.** There is a specific place for all materials and equipment in each room. After materials are used, they are put back in their proper places. Each child assumes responsibility for cleaning the area and putting away materials that have been used.

**Eating Together.** Eating together gives each child an opportunity to learn desirable table manners, good food habits, and the give and take of conversation. Children bring lunches from home. Please put the child's name on the outside of the lunch box. Please pack food that is nutritious and that enables a child to feed himself/herself. Candy, gum, nuts, and soda are not acceptable. Please do not send foods that must be chilled, warmed, cooked, or cut up. Avoid messy foods (no GoGurt, please!). To avoid waste, send an appropriate amount of food, as what is not eaten will be returned in the lunch box so that you are aware of what your child ate (if possible). Please note we also encourage the eating of "growing" (a protein, etc.) foods prior to any carbohydrates, fruits, or sweets. Mid-morning snacks should be included as well as an afternoon snack for those children staying past 1:00.

**\* We do not provide lunch with the exception of our Thanksgiving lunch, Pizza Day, and perhaps another special occasion that your teacher will make you aware of.**

**Developing Physically.** Using playground equipment and creative movement games to aid in physical development.



**Quiet Time.** While naps are not a part of our daily routine, periods of activity are alternated with periods of quiet.

### **Sample Class Schedule**

- 9:00 Morning Work and Free Play
- 9:20 Projects & Centers
- 10:20 Cleanup & Snack
- 10:45 Music or Movement
- 11:10 Bathroom Break
- 11:15 Circle Time
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:15 Playground
- 12:45 Pack up & Story time
- 1:00 Dismissal

### **Before and Aftercare**

VHBC Preschool offers a Before care service beginning at 8 a.m. and an Aftercare service that goes until 5:30 p.m. This is a mixed age program which allows the children to interact with various age groups, but still in a very well monitored setting. More information and a schedule of fees as well as registration forms can be located on our website or in the Preschool Office.

### **Field Trips (Pre-K only)**

Classroom field trips will be scheduled throughout the year for the Pre-K classes. A permission form will be required before your child can attend each of these events.

Teachers and Parents provide the transportation to and from these field trips. Parents must be fingerprinted by the state and have that on file with the Preschool Office in order to transport children that are not their own. Parents may always transport their own children to and from field trips without being fingerprinted. As each trip approaches, teachers will arrange what parents can attend, and which children will need transportation. Children's car/booster seats will need to be made available. Parents are welcome to meet the class at the field trip venue and take their child home when the field trip is over; simply notify the teacher beforehand. On select field trips, younger siblings are allowed to attend but will be required to pay their own admission fee. Parents will be notified about which field trips siblings can attend.

The Activity Fee paid in September covers the costs of these field trips, as well as a school shirt that we ask each pre-kindergartner to wear to make them easily identifiable by parents and teachers

### **Summer Camps**

At the conclusion of each school year, Summer Care/Camps are offered on a weekly basis. Registration is separate and will be available in the Spring.

## Policies and Procedures

### Admission Requirements

- Classes are available for children ages 18 months to 5 years of age.
- Our preschool year runs from August through June. The child is considered enrolled for the entire school year. We follow the Fairfax County Public School schedule for holidays and closures. Any exceptions will be noted on the preschool calendar which is regularly updated on the Preschool website.
- A registration fee is required upon enrollment and should accompany registration forms. This non-refundable fee covers the cost of administrative paperwork and insurance.
- A copy of each child's Birth Certificate and a Virginia Health Form must be on file before they can attend.

### Attendance

Each school day is integral to a coordinated program that provides the best possible education. Students are expected to attend school every day, on time, unless sickness or other special family circumstances interfere. Parents should email [offices@vhbcpreschool.org](mailto:offices@vhbcpreschool.org) and their student's teachers to report absences. Please report the reason for your child's absence so we can make decisions about communicating with other parents regarding contagious illnesses.

Please make every effort to schedule appointments after school including those with doctors and dentists. Although there may be occasions when it is unavoidable, students benefit from consistency. If a student must leave school early or arrive late due to a doctor's appointment or another compelling reason, please send a note to the teacher or email 24 hours prior to the absence. Absences for religious holidays are the exception.

Chronic lateness is disruptive to the other members of the community and detrimental to a child's social and academic adjustment to the school day. The opportunity for socializing that begins each school day is an important part of the curriculum, providing important time for the children to experience the give-and-take of a classroom community and develop the friendships that enhance each student's school experience.

### Behavior Management

In order to promote the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social well-being and growth, staff shall interact with the child and one another to provide needed help, comfort, support and:

- Respect personal privacy;

- Respect differences in cultural, ethnic, and family backgrounds;
- Encourage decision-making abilities;
- Promote ways of getting along;
- Encourage independence and self-direction; and
- Use consistency in applying expectations.

Behavioral guidance shall be constructive in nature, age and stage-appropriate, and shall be intended to redirect children to appropriate behavior and resolve conflicts.

## Birthdays

We encourage parents to use snack time at school as your child's official birthday party. You are welcome to provide a special snack for the class upon the teacher's approval. It's the best way to "invite" the whole class for a party that is appropriately short and fun. Teachers welcome mini cupcakes, healthy snacks and other simple refreshments sent from home. Keep in mind that children in your child's class may have allergies and those restrictions must be taken into consideration. Parents must plan in advance with classroom teachers for all treats at school.



## Classroom Placement

Classroom placement is dependent on many factors including the age of the child and the number and length of day attending. If there are multiple classes with the same age and schedule, other factors such as boy/girl ratios, ratios and new/returning student ratios are considered. Twins will normally be assigned to the same class in the younger age groups but separated for the Pre-K year, however, parents' preferences can be taken into consideration with regard to twins. **Classroom placement is not determined until mid-August due to changes in enrollment over the summer. All decisions by the Director are considered final.**

## Closings/Inclement Weather

Closings and late openings for reasons of inclement weather will be the same as those for Fairfax County Schools. Early dismissals do not usually affect our schedule when the public school is dismissing early for inclement weather, as the conclusion of our day is well in advance of the public schools needing to dismiss; however, any change to this policy will be clearly communicated. Closings are broadcast on most radio and television stations. VHBC Preschool will notify parents via email and Brightwheel message to announce delays, closings, last minute information, etc. Be sure that your contact information is kept up to date in Brightwheel. This information will also be posted on our website (<https://www.vhbcpreschool.org>) and Facebook page as soon as it is decided.

Snow days do not necessarily require make-ups, as extra days have been worked into the school calendar, however, consideration may be made under unusual circumstances.

VHBC Preschool does not participate in online instruction. In the event that Fairfax County Public Schools declare a virtual learning day VHBC Preschool will treat it as a cancellation.

## Communication

### Email

Your child's teacher(s) will communicate via their class email more detailed and specific class information.

### Face to Face

Other means of teacher/parent communication include quick conversations in the morning and/or at pickup, notes home, etc. Please remember to keep drop off and pick up as timely as possible so that it is efficient for the class and the school.

### From you, to us

Parents are asked to email the teacher and [offices@vhbcpreschool.org](mailto:offices@vhbcpreschool.org) or message us on Brightwheel to communicate with us. This allows all parties involved to be aware of any situation regarding your child.

In order for someone to have permission to pick up your child, they MUST be listed as an Additional Contact on your student's profile. Their contact information must be entered and they will be assigned a 4 digit PIN to allow them to check your child in/out. In an emergency you may email [offices@vhbcpreschool.org](mailto:offices@vhbcpreschool.org) to add someone to the list. Anyone picking up your student must have their own Brightwheel check-in/out information.

### Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is distributed via email and hardcopy in backpacks from the Preschool Office. Please take the time to read it carefully as it will contain pertinent dates and items of interest.

### Online

The Preschool website is available 24/7 and is updated regularly with school wide information. It can be found at [www.vhbcpreschool.org](http://www.vhbcpreschool.org).

### Phone

In order for our teachers to focus on the children in their care, they are not available to take phone calls during the preschool day. If you need to contact a teacher by phone, please call the preschool office at 703-971-4223. The office staff can relay a message or, in the event

of an emergency, get someone to cover the class while they take a phone call. If you leave a message, please do not expect a return phone call during the preschool day. They will do their best to return the call when their class is dismissed. Please remember that some of our staff have extended hours teaching during Aftercare.

### Progress Report

Parents will receive an informal student progress and assessment report no later than February. Individual conferences may be requested at any time. Pre-Kindergarten classes have scheduled parent-teacher conferences at the end of the year.

### Events

The Preschool hosts a number of events during the school year that parents and children are encouraged to attend.

- Back to School Night
- Meet the Teacher
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Christmas Program
- Parent's Night Out
- Art Show & Spring Festival
- End of Year Family Picnic
- Preschool Prom
- End of Year Program
- Graduation

Student Portraits will be offered twice throughout the school year—in the fall and again in the spring. Spring Portraits will also include cap and gown pictures for our Pre-K classes, so we will take each Pre-Kindergartner's picture as those pictures are incorporated into our end of the year program. You are under no obligation to purchase. Sibling photos can be arranged by individual request.

### Forbidden Staff Actions

Our program staff is forbidden to do the following:

- Use physical punishment, such as: striking a child, roughly handling or shaking a child, restricting movement through binding or tying, forcing a child to assume an uncomfortable position, or using exercise as a punishment;
- Enclose a child in a small confined space or any space that the child cannot freely exit him/herself; however, this does not apply to the use of equipment such as cribs, play

yards, high chairs, and safety gates when used with children preschool age or younger for their intended purpose;

- Allow punishment by another child;
- Separate a child from the group so that the child is away from the hearing and vision of a staff member;
- Withhold or force food or rest;
- Use verbal remarks which are demeaning to the child;
- Punish a child for toileting accidents;
- Punish a child by applying unpleasant or harmful substances.

## Fundraisers

To keep our tuition competitive and affordable, we often have fundraisers throughout the school year. While we invite you to participate in as many as you feel led, and are able, please know that we do not expect every family to participate in every fundraiser. Our goal is to provide a variety of opportunities so that each family can choose those that are most suitable to their family and budget. We welcome parental assistance with many of our fundraisers. See the Director for details.

## Gift Giving Policy

At holidays, birthdays and the end of the year, parents and children often want to remember their teachers in a special way. Parents and children sometimes create personal cards and/or simple, homemade gifts for teachers and staff members. Gifts of books may also be given to specific classroom libraries or the school library. Families wishing to express their appreciation are encouraged to do so in a way that involves the children and is meaningful to the teachers.

## Inclusion

We want everyone to feel welcome here. We make every effort to work with families to mainstream children with special needs into our preschool. Based upon the request and/or type of modification being requested, participation in a program may be dependent on such things as scheduling and/or contracting specialized staff, which could impact days/times of the program.

VHBC Preschool works very closely with FCPS Child Find to accommodate all children. Specialists are welcome to come and observe and/or work with children during the preschool day with prior approval of the classroom teacher and the Director. If a child has an IEP or IFSP, a copy of that is required for our file as well as an Exchange of Information Consent Form to allow us to communicate with specialists and any other program the child attends.

## Lost and Found

We keep items left behind during the school year. They are stored in our lost and found at the bottom of the stairs inside the double red doors. Several times during the year we will schedule a retrieval day. Items not claimed after the retrieval days are donated to a local charity.

## Personal Belongings

We have many new and exciting things for the children to play with at school. Therefore, we ask that children leave their toys at home. The preschool is not responsible for any article brought from home.

All outerwear and belongings are to be labeled with your child's name. Teachers will take the children outside if the weather permits (above 32°) so be sure to send appropriate outerwear and shoes that are safe for the playground (closed toe). If rain boots are worn in the morning, please change into playground appropriate shoes, as it may not be raining during playground time.

## Schedule and Holidays

VHBC Preschool begins August 28, 2023 and ends June 14, 2024.

VHBC Preschool holidays will coincide **mostly** with those of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). A full preschool calendar is available on our website.

## Student Expectations and Discipline

We believe that children need boundaries in order to feel secure about themselves and their environment. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. The basis for our Discipline Policy is an organized classroom and prepared staff members. At VHBC Preschool, we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and the child. We also believe that if an interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, then discipline problems are at a minimum. If inappropriate behavior does occur, we begin with a positive and Christ-like approach. We also make it a priority to praise appropriate behaviors as an effort to minimize inappropriate behaviors. Some of the methods used to accomplish this are:

- Redirection: Encourage a child's good behavior and/or redirect his or her activity.
- Time Out/Think Time: One minute per year of age, no more than three minutes. Defined as time away from the activity. The child is encouraged and allowed to return to the activity as soon as possible.

- Discussion: The teacher will try to help the child identify his/her behavior and possible alternatives to avoid consequences.
- Behavior Report: If a child's inappropriate behavior continues and/or severity denotes an unresolved problem, the parent will be notified.
- Behavior Intervention Meeting: If an on-going behavior persists, a meeting may be called by the parent, the lead teacher and/or Director. More individualized methods of Behavioral Management can be discussed that are within reason.
- Sending a Child Home: Only as a last resort, at the discretion of the Preschool Director, and when a child fails to respond to the appropriate measures taken by VHBC Preschool staff.
- Suspension: If three Behavior Reports are utilized within a nine week period and methods agreed upon in Behavior Intervention Meeting are failing, then a week suspension MAY occur. Fees are continued to be paid during this time.
- Termination of Services: Utilized only when the severity of a problem is great enough that it could endanger the safety of the child(ren)'s welfare. This is after consultation with the Director, Teachers, involved Staff members, and Parents. This is considered a drastic measure and it is the hope of our school to be avoided. However, if a child's behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of one or more of the other children or team members, and that threat cannot be eliminated, it may be utilized.

VHBC Preschool welcomes parental involvement and cooperation in all areas of discipline. We reserve the right to discontinue services with any child/parent whose needs we cannot meet. The key to effective discipline is consistency—it is our mission and goal to provide a warm, loving atmosphere in which every child is given the opportunity to grow and learn.

## Student Forms

In addition to the Birth Certificate and the Virginia School Entrance Health Form, the following forms are required to be submitted on Brightwheel prior to the child's first day of attendance:

- Emergency Evacuation form
- Family Handbook Acknowledgement form
- Field Trip Permission form
- Photo Consent form



## Supplies

We are currently requiring a Supply Fee for Toddlers (2 year olds) and Preschoolers (3 year olds) and a Supply & Activity Fee for Pre-Kindergarten. Those amounts will be invoiced and due no later than September 1. The amounts will be determined each year based on the cost of supplies and activities. Occasionally, teachers may ask students to bring in special supplies for a



project. Student and chaperone costs for field trips, including transportation, are also covered by the Supply & Activity Fee.

## Tuition

- A Deposit Tuition of one month is payable on June 1st and will act as your final payment for the year. This payment is non-refundable if your child is not withdrawn by August 1st.
- Tuition is then payable for 9 additional payments for Preschool (September through May). Your Deposit acts as your June payment.
- Tuition may be paid in full at the beginning of the year or divided into equal monthly payments. Tuition paid in full for the entire year by September 1st receives a 10% discount. Each month you will receive an invoice on the 25th payable by the 1st for the following month's tuition. A late fee of \$10 will be added to the tuition not paid by the 5th of the month. There will be no refunds for temporary absences or illnesses. A \$25 late fee will be assessed for overdue fees of any amount not paid by the last day of school and monthly thereafter for any and all overdue account balances.
- All payments must be made through Brightwheel. You may set your Brightwheel Account up for Automatic Payments if you so choose.
- There will be a \$25 fee assessed for funds returned from the bank or declined credit card transactions. All future payments may be required to be paid by cash or money order.
- All fees paid to Virginia Hills Baptist Church Preschool are for services rendered and are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution.
- There is a \$25 discount per month for each additional child in a family.
- See website or Preschool office for current tuition schedule.

## Visiting Classroom

If you would like to visit your child's classroom or you want to have someone who is working with your child come and observe them in the classroom environment, you must receive prior approval from the classroom teacher and the Preschool Director.

## Ways Parents Can Help

1. For the safety of your child and for preparation time for the teachers, please have your child at school at the designated drop-off time. Bring your child to the appropriate door and deliver them to their classroom.  
**\*Be sure to sign your child in and out each day on the Brightwheel app. or the class iPad.**
2. Help your child dress comfortably in clothing that is durable, washable, and appropriate for weather conditions. The child's name should be on all outerwear – coats, hats,

gloves, and scarves. A change of seasonably and size appropriate clothes should be kept in the child's backpack. Please have your children wear close-toed shoes at all times.

3. Have your child attend regularly unless ill. Please call or email the school to explain any absence.
4. Teach self-reliance by encouraging your child to work independently when possible. Allow plenty of time for this.
5. Refrain from discussing your child in his/her presence.
6. Work with your child's teacher concerning any problems that may arise.
7. Show interest in your child's work and in projects that are sent home, understanding that not every activity or project will make its way home.
8. Take time to listen to your child's daily experiences and discuss them with real interest.
9. Help your child anticipate happy experiences at preschool!
10. Pick up your child promptly at their designated pickup time. There will be a charge of \$5 per child for every five minutes late starting 5 minutes past the pickup window. If you arrive for pickup after the start of Aftercare (1:15), your child will be taken to Aftercare and you will be charged the Aftercare Fee of \$25. **\*Be sure to sign your child in and out each day through Brightwheel.**

## Withdrawals

VHBC Preschool and Before & Aftercare understands that circumstances beyond one's control can result in a child needing to withdraw during the school year. A written 30-day notice is required and the Withdrawal Form is available on our website (<https://www.vhbcpreschool.org>) as well as in the Preschool Office. The 30 days begins once the Withdrawal Form has been received. Policy states that the parent/guardian remains responsible for tuition until the opening spot can be filled. Due to the fact that we will not be able to fill spots toward the end of the school year, after March 1st, remaining tuition balances will be due.

## Health and Safety Rules and Regulations

### Accidents/Incidents

VHBC Preschool will immediately notify one of the parents should an accident occur. Regarding minor injuries, only washing, band-aids, and ice can be administered. Each parent of a child will be notified of any accidents/incidents that involve multiple children. Incidents will be reported through Brightwheel. Please be aware that, due to privacy, we may not be able to disclose other children's names.

## Biting Policy

Biting is a common and developmentally appropriate behavior in young children, especially those from 9-30 months. Generally, children over the age of 3 have developed more appropriate ways to communicate. Experts in the field of child development report that biting occurs chiefly as a result of the child's inability to communicate. Children may become upset by a new experience and may use biting as a response. We understand it is upsetting to parents and caregivers when it occurs. The goal is to replace any undesirable behavior with more effective ways of managing any uneasiness within a child. The following are examples of pre-emptive strategies we employ:

- For toddlers, positive teething activities will be provided to comfort and soothe their gums.
- When children bite out of frustration or anger, behavior will be redirected to some other activity and the child will be shown an alternate way to communicate. The use of language will be encouraged to express wants and needs.
- Parents will be notified if their child is bitten at school. However, in order to protect the privacy of all families, the name of the biter will not be disclosed.
- If a child bites frequently, staff will utilize a more intensive approach which involves carefully observing the child to determine precipitating events and maintaining a log to help track the behavior.
- Biting incidents will be communicated to the parents/caregivers of the biter to ensure staff and parents are working together to understand and prevent this behavior.

## Emergency Plans

VHBC Preschool abides by Fairfax County regulations to have a determined amount of Fire Drills each year so that the children are comfortable with the procedure should an emergency arise. The Preschool Administration works directly with County Officials should any other emergency arise and will take any appropriate and necessary action. VHBC Preschool currently has emergency safety plans in place for Fire, Lockdown, and Inclement Severe Weather. Please reach out to the preschool admin for more information.

## Fire Drills

As required by Fairfax County Fire Marshall, our preschool will hold monthly Fire Evacuation Drills so that the children and staff are comfortable with emergency procedures.

## Lockdown/Shelter in Place Procedures

VHBC Preschool has Lockdown and Shelter in Place Procedure Plans and will be implementing this with the staff.

## Managing Illness/Sending Children Home

A child will be excluded from care if he or she displays any of the following symptoms:

- an illness that prevents the child from participating in program activities or resting comfortably;
- an illness that results in greater care needed than the Preschool staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- **fever of 100.0 degrees or higher;**
- unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of serious illness;
- persistent diarrhea;
- vomiting;
- mouth sores;
- rash with a fever or behavior change;
- purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids);
- tuberculosis;
- impetigo;
- pinworm;
- head lice or scabies;
- strep infection;
- chicken pox;
- etc.

The Preschool Director may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of any sick child. In accordance with The Department of Public Health, parents must notify the Preschool Director in the event their child has contracted a communicable disease. This will help prevent spread and keep everyone informed to minimize outbreaks. When an outbreak occurs, preschool families will be notified by the Preschool Office and, whenever possible, written information will be made available.

## When a Sick Child Can Return



These guidelines are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. These guidelines will be observed unless your child has a doctor's release that specifically re-admits them to the

school prior to the guideline listed below. Be assured that we follow these guidelines with all students to best minimize the spread of viruses, etc.

<b>Chicken Pox (Varicella):</b>	Cannot return until 7 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.
<b>Diarrhea (uncontrolled):</b>	Defined as an increase in the number of stools compared with a child's normal pattern, with increased watery stool and/or decreased formed consistency that cannot be contained by diaper or toilet use. The child cannot return until he/she has had normal stools for 24 hours. If a child is on medication that causes diarrhea, we require a doctor's note for the file (which we can keep for further reference).
<b>Fever:</b>	Must be fever free for 24 hours <b><u>without the use of medication.</u></b>
<b>Head Lice (and other infestations):</b>	In the case of lice, must have been treated and nit free (please note this is a different policy than public schools) and in other instances of infestations (scabies, etc.) must not return until 24 hours after treatment has begun, and in all instances students must be checked by the Director before returning.
<b>Hepatitis A:</b>	Cannot return until one week after the onset of illness or until the immune serum globulin has been given to the appropriate children and team members in the program as directed by the responsible health department.
<b>Impetigo:</b>	Cannot return until 48 hours after treatment has begun.
<b>Measles:</b>	Cannot return until 6 days after the rash appears.
<b>Mouth Sores:</b>	Must have a doctor's note stating that the child is non-infectious.
<b>Mumps:</b>	Cannot return until 9 days after the onset of swelling of glands near the ear.
<b>Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis):</b>	24 hours after documented treatment for conjunctivitis has begun.
<b>Rash:</b>	With any rash accompanied by a fever or behavior change, the child cannot return until they have a doctor's note stating that the illness is not a communicable disease.
<b>Ringworm:</b>	Cannot return until 24 hours after starting treatment or a doctor's note stating the child is non-infectious.

<b>Rubella:</b>	Cannot return until 6 days after the rash appears.
<b>Shingles:</b>	Child needs to be excluded only if the sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing, until sores have crusted.
<b>Strep Throat:</b>	24 hours after documented treatment has begun.
<b>Tuberculosis:</b>	Must have a doctor's note stating that the child is non-infectious.
<b>Vomit:</b>	Must not have vomited for 24 hours.
<b>Whooping Cough:</b>	Cannot return until 5 days of appropriate treatment has been started.

## Mandated Reporters

All preschool staff members are familiar with the procedures for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect. Code of Virginia 63.2-1509-A identifies all preschool Staff as mandated reporters, so by law we are obligated to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Social Services Office.

## Pick Up and Drop Off

We are resuming parent pick up and drop off. Please come in through your child's designated door and drop them off at their classroom. We know goodbyes can be hard, especially at the start of the school year, but please refrain from lingering after dropping off your child. This will help keep the hallways clear for other families and staff as well as help your child adjust faster. Check in and check out are done using your Brightwheel app and the QR code outside each classroom. Each person picking up and dropping off your child must have their own unique pin. For help or questions, please email [offices@vhbcpreschool.org](mailto:offices@vhbcpreschool.org).

**Kiss and Ride:** Kiss and Ride is now by request only, starting October 1st. Please be patient while waiting in the pick up/drop off line and listen to instructions from staff. Staff are not allowed to secure your child in their car/seat.

**Speed Limit:** We require all vehicles entering the driveway, driving through the lot, and exiting the driveway to drive at a **maximum** of 15 mph. This is for the safety of the adults and children that are entering and exiting the building.

**Cell Phones:** Cell phone use (talking or texting) is prohibited while dropping off and picking up your child. This will aid to ensure that distractions are limited as vehicles are entering/exiting, and adults/children enter/exit.



**Parking Spaces:** The Fairfax County Fire Department and our insurance carrier require that these parking rules be in place and enforced. Parking is prohibited along any yellow curb AT ANY TIME. DO NOT PARK ALONG THE YELLOW CURB BY EITHER OF THE DOWNSTAIRS DOORS. DO NOT PARK ALONG THE FENCE LINE OF THE PLAYGROUND. These are designated Fire Lanes and parking is prohibited by the Fire Marshall. There are many designated parking spaces. If anyone transporting your child does not abide by the kiss and ride rules, they will be given a warning. Additional infractions may result in your child's removal from our program.

## Playground Rules

Our playground rules are also for the safety of the children in our program and the families who use our playground during non-preschool hours. It is hard for us to enforce our playground rules during school when those same rules are not applied during non-school hours. Therefore, please keep a careful eye on your children and enforce these rules with your children anytime they are playing on the Virginia Hills Preschool playground(s).

1. No throwing objects (sticks, rocks, toys, etc.)
2. No climbing on TOP of the equipment at any time
3. All playground equipment is to be used for its intended purpose ONLY
4. Please clean up the playground after use



The Playground will be closed when:

1. Wind speed is 15 mph or higher
2. Lightning storm
3. Any weather conditions that the Director deems unsafe

## Toileting

Children must wear some type of underwear. Pre-K students must be potty trained. Younger children who are not potty-trained MUST wear pull-ups or disposable diapers (no cloth diapers). Please send extra diapers with your child. We do not potty train, but will work with you as best we can when this time occurs.



## About Our Church

The following is a schedule of weekly activities at Virginia Hills. You are cordially invited to attend any service and to participate in the programs of the church. If you don't have a church home, we welcome you to check us out and plug in. If you do have a church home, we would love to see you at any of our special events.

Sunday:	Morning Worship Service with Facebook live stream	11:00 am
Wednesday	Bible Study and Prayer Meeting	6:30 pm
	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm

VHBC Preschool is operated by Virginia Hills Baptist Church and is an extension of its ministry in the community. The director of VHBC Preschool, who is elected by the church, makes regular reports to the church. The teachers are selected by the Director and Board of Deacons.