



first presbyterian early learning center

Student Handbook 2019-2020

**First Presbyterian Church
1169 Clark Street,
Covington, GA 30014
(770)786-7321**



Dear Friends,

Welcome to First Presbyterian Early Learning Center! I cannot begin to tell you all the amazing things that happen at our school. As many of you already know, our school is a place of exciting learning activities; however, it is so much more. Our school is more of a family because of the strong bonds built between teachers and students and the school and families. I promise that you will fall in love with FPELC.

As you know, children are our primary concern at FPELC; however, the relationships between the staff and the FPELC families are also imperative. As we work together we can help your children grow to be successful, life-long learners. We value you and appreciate that you are sharing with us your greatest gift—your child. Upon entering a partnership, we will together ensure that your child has a safe, happy, and successful school year. We are all dedicated to making FPELC a stepping stone to your child's bright future!

Thank you for choosing FPELC. We are delighted to be the chosen school for your family, the guardians of what is truly precious to you.

God bless,

Darlene Alley

FPELC Director

**FPELC Monthly Studies, Bible Verses,
and Important Dates 2019-2020**

Month	Study	Bible Verse	Important Dates
August	Clothes	<i>"Do to others as you would have them do to you."</i> Luke 6:31	Training for Staff 8/1-2 Preplanning for Staff 8/5-7 Open House 8/8 FPELC Starts 8/12
September	Water Pipes	<i>"The gathered waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good."</i> Genesis 1:10	Labor Day Holiday 9/2 Someone Special Day 9/13
October	Boxes	<i>"When I am afraid, I put my trust in You."</i> Psalms 56:3	Fall Break 10/7-11 Costume Parade 10/30 Class Parties 10/30-31
November	Thanksgiving/ Wheels	<i>"I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds."</i> Psalms 9:1	Election Day (no school) 11/5 Scholastic Book Fair 11/4-8 Thanksgiving Break 11/25-29
December	Christmas	<i>"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."</i> John 3:16	Christmas Program 12/2 Class Parties 12/18-19 Christmas Break 12/20-1/6
January	Rocks	<i>"Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock."</i> Isaiah 26:4	Teacher Work Day 1/6 Students report back 1/7 MLK Holiday 1/20
February	Bread	<i>"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."</i> Matthew 4:4	Valentine's Parties 2/12-13 Inclement Weather Days/ Winter Break 2/14-18
March	Ants	<i>"I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."</i> Philippians 4:13	Spring Family Festival 3/20
April	Easter/Flowers	<i>"He is not here, he is risen!"</i> Matthew 28:6	Easter Egg Hunt/Parties 4/3 Spring Break 4/6-10
May	Exercise	<i>"The Lord is my strength and shield."</i> Psalms 28:7	Teacher Appreciation Week 5/4-8 Graduation 5/14 Last Day 5/15 Post-Planning for Staff 5/18-19

2019-2020 FPELC Teachers:

We are blessed to have a group of amazing teachers here at FPELC! They truly are a gift to us all, and they cherish the time they have with our children.

Purple Room (1 year): Mrs. Jade and Mrs. Jenny

Blue Room (2 year): Mrs. Linzie and Mrs. Rebecca

Orange Room (3 day 3 year): Mrs. Maci and Mrs. Misty

Red Room (5 day 3 year): Mrs. Meg and Mrs. Andrea

Green Room (Pre-K): Mrs. Kathy and Mrs. Kelley

Music: TBD

Spanish: Mrs. Rebecca

STEM: Mrs. Heather

Chapel: TBD

If you have an emergency that cannot wait until the next school day, you should contact Director, Darlene Alley at 770-786-7321, ext. 4 or you can email her at fpelcdirector@gmail.com. You may email the teachers anytime at the class emails: purplefpelc@gmail.com, bluefpelc@gmail.com, orangefpelc@gmail.com, redfpelc@gmail.com, and greenfpelc@gmail.com.

FPELC Philosophy

At First Presbyterian Early Learning Center, we understand that children are unique individuals who learn at their own pace and in various ways and that learning should be fun, safe, meaningful, and challenging. Through the use of active play and structured activities, we provide learning opportunities which aid children in developing their academic, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. It is our honor to work in partnership with families during this important and special time. Please note that because of our small size and limited hours, we are not required to be licensed by the state of Georgia and thus do not have a license.

THE ABCs of F.P.E.L.C.

Please check the following pages for answers to commonly asked questions and an explanation of procedures. If there is something you do not find here, give me a call!

Office: 770-786-7321 ext. 4

Email: fpelcdirector@gmail.com

Attendance: School is important, and we believe that we are helping to set a good precedent for our children. Whenever it is possible, your child should be in attendance. When a child is registered here, it is understood that the registration is for the entire school year. We are unable to hold a spot for long absences when the tuition is not paid.

Bags: Each student at FPELC needs to bring a **full-sized** bag to school each day. We prefer that you use a bag that is easy for your child to handle and that fits easily on the hooks outside each classroom. Please be sure that a folder and/or binder can fit into the bag.

Birthdays: We want to celebrate your child, and you are welcome to make special arrangements for a special snack on the day closest to his/her birthday. Please speak with your child's teacher about restrictions and scheduling.

Board: FPELC is fortunate to have a superb Board of Directors, made up of church members and parents, who meet to discuss needs/issues important to our school. Rev. Steven Barnes, Darlene Alley, Cheryl Meichsner, Miriam Wheeler, Judy Hooten, Jay Bailey, and Cornequa Bell are the current members.

Breakfast: Please make sure that your child has had breakfast before arriving at school. Breakfast with you is a special gift. Children will not be able to finish breakfast after arriving at school.

Changes in Pick-Up: If you have a need to change the end-of-the-day pick-up routine for your child, please write a note to your child's teachers and place it in his/her bag or call the preschool (770-786-7321 ex. 4). The mornings can be confusing times, and it is extremely helpful to the teachers to have the change in writing or to get that information from you at a time other than carpool. If the name of the person picking up your child is not on your registration list, we will make sure that the name on your note and the person's ID match. Please do not email or text same-day changes to director.

Change of Clothes: Each child must bring a change of clothes in a labeled Ziploc bag. The teachers will store them and have them ready if needed. Please include a shirt, shorts or pants, underwear (if potty trained), and socks in your child's bag.

Church Staff: There is always plenty of action in the school, but there are many people working "upstairs" making this a great place to be, including:

- Rev. Steven Barnes, Senior Pastor
- Peni Kehoe, Church Secretary Treasurer
- Bernard, Dot, and Stephanie of "Final Touch" who work diligently to keep our space clean and ready.

Class Colors: You will notice that we speak about each class according to the flag color at the classroom door. I am sure you can imagine that children who have just turned three don't want to be in the "two year old class." To alleviate that confusion, we identify each class by their color. This works well, and the children quickly pick up their room's color. Make sure your child helps you remember the color!

Conferences with Teachers: If you need to have lengthy discussions with your child's teachers, please arrange to speak with them at times other than drop-off and pick-up. They are happy to make appointments to meet with you when you have questions or concerns. The times in the morning before class and/or in the afternoons after class are busy and hectic for everyone. Your help in quick transitions at those times will help everyone have a more successful day.

Creative Curriculum: We are very proud to say that we use *The Creative Curriculum* as a foundation for our learning center. We plan meaningful, developmentally appropriate activities for each child based on the principles of *The Creative Curriculum*. This curriculum centers the learning on interest areas in the classroom, where children study a theme each month and make choices about spending time in areas most appealing to them.

Diapers/Potty Training: In the ones/twos classes, we are happy to help your child at any stage of his/her "training" adventure! Please let us know how we can help. If your child needs diapers or pull-ups, please keep a supply of them here. They will be safely stored, and you need not send them each day. The teachers will keep you posted when your child needs a fresh supply.

Dress: Childhood is an adventure! Please dress your child daily in clothes that are comfortable and can get messy. Art activities are a big part of our day; and though we will do all we can to protect clothes from paint, etc., spills, splashes and slips do happen! **Please send your child in comfortable tennis shoes/closed toed shoes that allow them to play without worrying about shoes. Please also note that sandals of any kind become frustrating to students on the playground as mulch gets trapped in them.** Make sure that your child does not wear anything that could become a choking hazard. Hair beads, tiny hair barrettes, beaded necklaces and beaded bracelets are prohibited.

Drop-off/Pick-up: We are happy to offer drop off and pick up from school at the Brown St. entrance of the church. You may drop off your child between 8:50 and 9:10 in the morning and he/she will be brought to your car again after school. You will be given a number to hang from your rear-view mirror, to assist us in identifying cars quickly, so that our line moves swiftly and safely. At the end of the school day, from 12:50 until 1:10, teachers will have your children ready in the same area and help them into your car. **You will need to buckle them in. Teachers are not permitted to buckle.** This may be done very quickly in the line, or you can pull into our parking lot by the Chamber if you need more time. Please make every effort to be ready to pick up your child on time. Please **do not talk** on your phones while in the drop-off/pick-up line so that we can keep things moving. We cannot form a traffic line on Washington St. during drop-off or pick-up. If you get to the carpool spot before teachers and students in the morning or afternoon, either drive around the block or park in the empty lot across Washington St. Students in the Purple and Blue classes will need to be brought into the building and dropped off at their classrooms until after Fall Break. You may use the Washington Street entrance with the keypad.

Fees/Tuition: Tuition is due on or before the first school day of each month. Although tuition is paid at the start of each month, it is not actually payment for that particular month. As the school days in each month vary greatly, the tuition has been divided into equal monthly payments to be made during the year. Full tuition is due each month regardless of absences for any reason. To benefit all of us, and make payments easier, we use payment envelopes. Please see that your child's tuition is in the envelope and that the envelope is placed in your child's bag at the first of each month. Our school depends on your prompt payment. We prefer check or online payments, but if you need to pay with cash, it must be handed directly to the Director. Do not send cash in your child's backpack. **On the 5th of the month, a late fee of \$25.00 will be added to any payments not received.** If a student's tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month (except in August and April which would be the 20th), that student may be dismissed from the school. A \$25 fee will be charged for returned checks. There is an option to pay by credit card online through our website at www.fpelc.org. Online payments will require parents to add \$6 to offset processing fees. An Activity Fee (\$40) is due with each child's August tuition unless paid at the time of registration. This fee covers special guests, field trips, school shirts, special events,

etc. If a Green room child's tuition is not paid in full before Graduation, that child will not be able to participate in the Graduation ceremony.

Field Trips: We will go on walking field trips throughout the year on or near the Covington square. Each student will receive a school shirt to wear on the field trips. We encourage parents to attend the field trips with their children when possible. Permission forms will be sent home in advance with details of the outings.

First Day Fear: The first day of school can be a scary experience for many children (and many parents, too)! Please be assured that we will do everything in our power to make your child safe and happy. Most often, the best way to do that is with a quick and happy drop-off time. Allowing your child to see that you are okay will go a long way in helping him/her feel better faster. Please assure your child that you are happy about all that awaits him/her at school and that you will be back soon to hear all about it. A quick goodbye is better than a long, drawn-out goodbye for both parents and children. The whole class will be able to begin its fun when the students and teachers have been left to get busy. (Darlene will have shoulders available just around the corner if you need a moment after you leave!)

Fundraising Events: As many of you know, church-based preschool programs always need more than tuition payments to run effectively, and we are no exception. We do, however, try to make raising needed funds as interesting and painless as possible! We have three main events: we will be selling 50/50 raffle tickets at the beginning of the year, the Scholastic Book Fair in early November, and in the spring we host our unbelievable *Spring Family Festival*. Your support of these events is imperative to our school. Many more details will follow in the months to come!

Illness: If your child has been ill in the past 24 hours (including, but not limited to, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, swollen glands, infection, or rash) it is necessary that he/she be kept at home. If you would not want your child to "get it," please do not expose other children to "it!" We will also follow the Newton County School System policy for lice; students will be sent home, must use treatment, and nits must be removed before child can return to school. As the safety of every child here is our utmost concern, we will notify you immediately if your attention is needed after your child arrives at school. Please remember that if your child is sent home from school for one of the above-mentioned symptoms, he/she will not be able to return to school the following day. **Your child will need to be symptom free without the use of medication for a minimum of 24 hours before they return to school.** To let us know about your child's absence, please call 770-786-7321, ext. 4 and leave us a message. You may also email your child's teacher.

Inclement Weather Policy: FPELC will follow the decisions of the Newton County School System as pertains to weather. If Newton County Schools are closed, we will be closed. If the school system chooses to start school on a delayed schedule, we will follow the schedule they set through 10:00 a.m. If the school system decides to start school later than 10:00, we will be closed. The director will also email everyone, post the information on our media sites, and text through the Remind app.

Labels: Please be sure to label EVERYTHING that your child brings to school (jackets, hats, sweaters, etc.). You would be surprised how many identical or similar items arrive here at the same time!

Late Arrival: We make every effort to begin our day on time, and we appreciate your help. If you should be too late for the drop off line, please come to the school entrance on Washington St. and use the touchpad to open the door, escort your child to his/her class and allow him/her to begin the day as quickly as possible. If you should forget the number (and cannot reach the director on the phone) please use the main church entrance on Clark Street. Please remember that a great deal of the academics is taught at the beginning of the school day when the students are fresh, so it is important to be at school on time.

Late Pick-up: We understand that emergencies arise, but we thank you in advance for your promptness in retrieving your child. At the end of the school day, your child is ready for his/her time with you! Our teachers

use the time immediately after school to wrap up the current day and make plans for the next one. This is a vital time for them. Upon the third late pick-up, you will receive a bill from FPELC charging one dollar/minute for each minute after 1:10pm.

Lunch: Please pack a healthy lunch that is easy to access and does not need refrigeration or heating. Ice packs are a great way to keep items cool and tasty until time to eat. Please refrain from sending “junk food” type items such as canned soft-drinks, candy, etc. For all our students, but especially for those in 1s and 2s where choking is a hazard, please make sure that the students have small, bite-size pieces of their food (i.e., grapes cut in half). The children love eating lunch together, but often they eat far less than you might imagine.

Parent Participation: We welcome your help and appreciate your support of projects during the year. There will be many ways for you to be involved here, and we are thankful for your help. We love to have our parents volunteer in their own child’s class (or in all the classes). Please let us know if you have a special interest or talent that you would like to share with the school or just your child’s class (i.e., science experiments, cooking, painting/art, music, etc.)

Photographs: Please check our closed Facebook Group, FPELC, for updated pictures throughout the school year. Some parents have asked that their children not be photographed for public use. To respect that, we ask that you not post pictures of school events that have children that are not yours in them on your personal social media pages.

Student Scholarship: In 2008, a scholarship fund was created to help us give children the wonderful start available at FPELC. Please consider donating to this fund on special occasions and make it known to others that a gift to our scholarship fund is a tangible way to make a difference. We hope that the *Jean Graham Memorial Scholarship Fund* will continue for years and years, and we appreciate the help of many friends of FPELC.

Snacks: We will be responsible for providing your child with a snack each day in the Purple and Blue rooms. On some occasions, your child may be part of a cooking center where he/she will prepare a special snack, and sometimes our snack offerings will be based on the theme of study. We hope to make snack time a pleasant part of the day that gives your child a boost during the morning away from home. Please let your teacher know if your child has special needs or requirements. You are welcome to send a snack for your child instead of the class snack.

Spirit Day: On the last Friday of most months, we have a special school-wide Spirit Day. All students are asked to wear their school shirts on these days. We also bring in a pizza lunch for those wanting to participate. If you would like your child to participate that month, you will need to add \$3 to their monthly tuition payment. There will be a place to mark this on their tuition envelope. This is optional. For planning purposes, all Spirit Lunch payments will be needed with tuition at the beginning of the month.

Behavior Policy

Biting, hair pulling, hitting, kicking, pinching (or any behavior that is a threat to other children) is not unexpected behavior for toddlers and preschoolers. However, these behaviors can be harmful to other children and staff. We will strive to determine why a child is exhibiting this behavior and resolve the issue. However, if the issue cannot be resolved, this policy will protect the children that are affected. Names of the children will be kept confidential.

When an incident occurs:

For the child that is affected:

- First aid is given if necessary.
- Parents are notified.

For the child that exhibits the behavior:

- The teacher will firmly tell the child, “No!”
- The child will be placed in time out for no longer than the child’s age (one-year-old, one minute)
- Parents are notified
- An Incident Report is filled out with location, time, participant behaviors, etc.
- The child will be taught to use words instead of actions.

1st offense—verbal communication to both families with written documentation to be kept in the school on file.

2nd offense—verbal communication with both families with written documentation to be kept in the school. If the second offense is in the same week (within 5 school days), the offending child will be sent home for that day, and a conference will be scheduled with parents to discuss the child’s behavior and how it may be modified with a written plan. The staff will also shadow the child to determine the cause of the behavior.

3rd offense—if a child has a third behavior issue within a 3-week period, the child will be suspended for 2 school days with written communication going home to the parents of the offending child warning that if another incident happens within a 5 day period, the child will be removed from the program. When the child returns to school, shadowing of the child by staff will continue. Another conference may be scheduled to modify the behavior plan.

4th offense—the offending child will be removed from the program

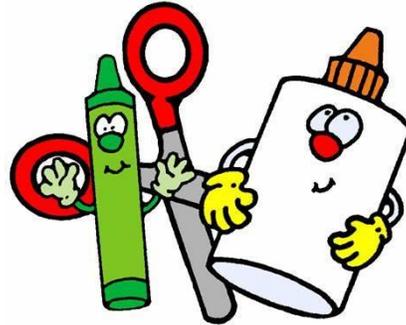
If a child, who has been through steps 1, 2, and 3 and goes 3 weeks (15 school days) without a behavior incident, we will go back to step one. The director can modify this policy if the safety of the other children is a concern. Any modifications will be discussed with the parents and a behavior plan will be put into place.

We will strive to be proactive about preventing further incidents by shadowing a child to try to determine the cause of the behavior. We will communicate with the parents throughout the process, and we will work together with the parents to teach the child more appropriate responses. We will also give positive attention and approval for positive behaviors.

2019-20 FPELC Supply Lists

Purple (1 year) Room:

- 2 rolls of paper towels
- 1 canister of disinfecting wipes
- 1 refill packages of baby wipes
- 2 boxes of tissue
- 1 packs of glue sticks
- 2 cans of disinfecting spray
- 1 pack heat-sealed laminating sheets



Blue (2 year) Room:

- 1 ream copy paper
- 1 package white card stock
- 2 packs of glue sticks
- 3 rolls paper towels
- 2 boxes tissues
- 1 packages baby wipes
- 2 bottles hand sanitizer
- 2 cans disinfectant spray
- 1 canister disinfecting wipes
- 1 pack of large toddler crayons
- 1 pack of construction paper
- 1 pack heat-sealed laminating sheets

Orange, Red (3 year) Rooms:

- 4 rolls of paper towels
- 3 boxes tissues
- 1 canister of disinfecting wipes
- 1 pack of construction paper
- 1 pack of glue sticks
- 1 bottles hand soap
- 1 container of hand sanitizer
- 1 box of gallon Ziploc bags
- 1 box of quart Ziploc bags
- 1 package white cardstock
- 1 ream copy paper
- 1 pack heat-sealed laminating sheets
- 1 pack of colored card stock

Green Room (Pre-K):

- 2 containers of disinfectant wipes
- 1 can disinfectant spray
- 1 pack of washable markers
- 1 box of 24 count crayons
- 1 pack of glue sticks
- 3 rolls of paper towels
- 2 boxes of tissues
- 1 ream copy paper
- 1 package white cardstock
- 1 pack of white index cards
- 1 pack of colored card stock
- 1 pack of construction paper
- 1 pack heat-sealed laminating sheets
- 1 box gallon Ziploc bags
- 1 bottle hand sanitizer