

The logo for Donelson First Academy is enclosed in a black L-shaped frame. The word "DONELSON" is written in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "FIRST" is written in the same font, followed by the word "Academy" in a black, cursive script font.

DONELSON
FIRST *Academy*

Parent Handbook 2021 - 2022

Information in this handbook may be updated periodically.
Parents will be notified when an update has taken place.

~ Updated June 2021 ~

Dear Families,

Welcome! Thank you so much for choosing Donelson First Academy to care for your child! We are a ministry of Donelson First and we want to connect with and support our families in every aspect of their lives, whether it be spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally, or socially.

Our goal is to provide a welcoming, safe, and developmentally appropriate Christian environment filled with warmth and encouragement for each and every child. We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transition between home and school. We also strongly believe that daily communication and a sense of trust between parents and teachers are essential to fully meeting your child's needs.

We want to provide the highest quality Christian childcare for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this, we depend on parents to be responsible and active childcare consumers. We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined and provide us with all the necessary information about your child.

Please don't hesitate to communicate any questions, concerns, or suggestions that you might have for us. Again, thank you for beginning your childcare journey with us here at Donelson First Academy.

Sincerely,

Teri Robbins
Program Director
Donelson First Academy

OFFICE INFORMATION

Address: 2526 Lebanon Pike Nashville TN, 37214 (Building E)

Phone: 615.622.5641

Website: donelsonfirst.com

Email: academy@donelsonfirst.com

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Donelson First Academy is licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services and is inspected yearly by the State Fire Marshal, Health Department, and the Department of Human Services.

Donelson First Academy follows the rules and regulations set up by the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS). If there are questions regarding policies, please discuss them with the Director. Parents will receive a copy of DHS general regulations upon enrollment and must sign an acknowledgment of receipt of the DHS regulations summary.

Donelson First Academy is a ministry of Donelson First. Please refer to page 19 of the Southern Baptist Convention's "The Baptist Faith and Message" outlined below:

Article XV: The Christian and the Social Order: "All Christians are under obligation to seek and make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. To promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth."

Donelson First Academy operates year-round. While in our care, your child will participate in a variety of activities such as:

- Working with paints, crayons, blocks, play dough, manipulative materials, science experiments (Pre-K), cooking, tasting, etc.
- Stories, rhymes, films, music and drama
- Daily Bible stories and verses
- Games to enrich number, letter, shape and color concepts, as well as phonics and readiness skills
- In-school visitors such as a dentist, nurse, veterinarian, forest ranger, fireman, police officer, etc.
- Acquiring good health and cleanliness habits
- Emotional growth by learning to share, take turns, work and play with others
- The most important of all: becoming aware of self and the love of God in a Christian atmosphere

OUR PHILOSOPHY IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN

We will teach children that there is a God, and that He has a Son named Jesus. God loves them and Jesus loves them. We would like to see each child have some freedom of choice and self-expression and have opportunity for creative expression, each child should learn to think for him/herself and we try not to do for children what they can do themselves.

We want to have a positive approach, using kind firmness and we make suggestions more often than we give commands.

We strive to give children the reason why we do certain things and to finish what they have begun.

We remember that children like to help and have responsibilities. We consider all children in the group and refrain from having favorites or from letting some children have more than their share of privileges.

We are alert to needs that must be met every moment we are with the children and we use soft voices when speaking with children. We remember that we do not have to be talking with the children for them to learn.

We learn to talk WITH children, not just to them and we listen when children feel like talking and sharing with us.

We pray for each child in our class daily and we strive in our discipline to be consistent, anticipate trouble and avoid unpleasant situations, and let the aggressive or disobedient child know that we still love him/her but disapprove of his or her actions.

We pray with our children using simple words and short sentences. We give each child an opportunity to pray out loud if they desire. We teach the love of God in all that we say and do. When we pray with the children, we say God and Jesus rather than Lord, Master or Father and we show each child love and affection so that they will see Jesus in us.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

An enrollment package for each child must be completed by the parent/legal guardian before a child will be enrolled in our preschool. A current preschool immunization record, signed by a health care provider, is required by the Health Department. Each child must receive all required immunizations before entry unless there is a **medical** reason certified by a health care provider or statement from the **parent's spiritual leader** that such immunizations go against their religious principles.

To apply for admission to Donelson First Academy, the applicant must complete and return all forms, including shot records, as well as the non-refundable enrollment fee of **\$150** to the Donelson First Academy office no later than **2 business days prior** to child's start date. A pre-enrollment tour is required by the state of Tennessee before admission. Once a tour has been completed, we will do our best to accommodate parents requesting certain days per week, if we have availability.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the director in writing of any changes of address, phone number(s) care and/or custody changes, or any other pertinent information regarding the family. For the safety of your child(ren), all records must be kept up to date.

ENROLLMENT FEE

A nonrefundable **annual** registration fee of \$150 is due at the time of enrollment and every additional calendar school year that my child is enrolled at Donelson First Academy. The registration fee contributes to classroom supplies, building usage, and administrative costs for the year.

OPERATING HOURS

Operating hours are 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, year-round, from August – July, except for dates outlined in the yearly calendar.

Parents are requested to inform Donelson First Academy office by 8:00 a.m. if a child is going to be absent for the day. This helps us maintain appropriate ratios for the classroom and also helps your child's teacher effectively plan for the day.

We operate as a school and as such all children must arrive **no later** than 8:45 a.m. Late arrivals must be communicated to the Academy Director or Supervisor prior to 8:30 a.m. Late arrivals without notification will not be admitted and will still be charged tuition.

Please check your calendar to see what days we are closed. Dates may be added to our calendar throughout the year, and parents will be notified of all changes/additions to our calendar via e-mail. It is your responsibility to keep up with closings and make alternate arrangements for childcare. Donelson First Academy is not responsible for recommending alternate childcare options during the times that we are closed.

Because our costs remain the same throughout the year, we rely on the specified tuition to be paid each month in order to meet our expenses. No credits, refunds, or make up days shall be given for individual absences. If Donelson First Academy is in session and your child is out (vacation, illness etc.), you will be charged full tuition to hold your child's place.

WEATHER CLOSINGS

Please be sure to watch your e-mail for openings and closings due to inclement weather. Donelson First Academy will make the decision on school closings, as we do not always follow MNPS for inclement weather and notify parents once the decision has been made. We will report our closing information on NewsChannel 5, send an email, post on our Facebook page and send a text to enrolled families via the "Remind" app/texting service. It is your responsibility to keep informed of these situations, so please be near your phone, computer, or TV for early closings or late openings. No tuition credit will be given for snow days, as we cannot control the weather.

PICKUP AND DROP-OFF

Our doors are locked 24-hours a day. Families are issued 2 key fobs upon enrollment that will open our doors for them during their child's enrolled time at preschool. Children are **NOT** to be left alone in a classroom, the gym, hallways, playgrounds, or parking lots and must be brought to their classroom and signed in upon arrival. Only adults 18 years of age and older will be allowed to drop off or pick up children.

Please be courteous to your child's teacher by having your child here no later than 8:45 a.m. By arriving later than 8:45 a.m., your child misses out on important announcements, free play, and other fun activities.

Siblings that come with parents to drop off or pick up children must always remain with parents. **CHILDREN AGED 16 OR YOUNGER ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE UNATTENDED (IN A VEHICLE, HALLWAY, OR CLASSROOM) AT ANY TIME** as per stated by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services.

All children should arrive to preschool clean and fed, regardless of the time of arrival. Also, we will strive to send your child home with a clean diaper and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off your child.

Any person, other than someone that normally picks your child(ren) up must be listed on the Emergency Forms as being able to do so. A verbal conversation in person or via phone call from a parent or guardian giving permission must be made to the Director or the Administrative Supervisor.

Parents/legal guardians must inform the Director or Supervisor, **in writing**, when their child will be picked up by someone other than themselves. Persons other than parents/guardians must come to the Director's office to submit their driver's license (serves as a picture ID) and the reason for picking up the child. Persons other than a parent/legal guardian will be accompanied to the child's classroom by the Director or Supervisor.

If an emergency arises and written notice cannot be given for a change in a child's dismissal, a call must be placed to the Director informing her of the name and physical description of the person picking up the child. Donelson First Academy **will not** allow anyone not listed on the child's information sheet to leave the premises with another child unless given written or verbal authorization by the child's parent/legal guardian to the Director or Supervisor.

Because we begin charging a late fee for children not picked up by **5:00p.m.**, all children that are still at preschool (and that have not been enrolled in extended care) at 5:00 p.m. will be brought to the office. Because our security system is on a time-lock system, families will notice that their key fobs do not work after 5:00 p.m. and they will have to be buzzed in by someone in the office. You will then be required to sign a Late-Pickup Acknowledgement Form. **Late fees are \$10.00 per minute, per child** and will be applied to your child's account and an invoice will be sent via e-mail.

Only adults 18 years of age and older that are listed on your emergency pick up form may pick up children. Children are not allowed to be picked up by another person from Donelson First Academy and held on the premises in order to avoid a late pick-up fee, this includes team members of Donelson First Academy that are leaving for the day. Children that are picked up late will only be dismissed to a parent by the Director or Supervisor.

Donelson First Academy reserves the right to drop a child from enrollment whose parents/guardians are chronically late in picking up their child.

Parents that are legally separated or divorced must submit documentation of separation/divorce, and a copy of the custody agreement must be placed in the child's file. **THIS IS A REQUIREMENT BY THE STATE OF TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES.** Refusal to give proper custody documentation may result in custody issues for parents.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH DHS REGULATIONS, IT IS OUR POLICY NOT TO RELEASE A CHILD TO ANYONE WHOSE BEHAVIOR MAY PLACE THE CHILD IN IMMEDIATE RISK!

EVERY CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF 9 YEARS OLD MUST BE IN A CAR SEAT OR BOOSTER SEAT WHEN RIDING IN A VEHICLE. THIS IS A TENNESSEE STATE LAW.

DROP-IN DAYS

Drop-in days are only available to currently enrolled students and depend on availability for the day requested. At least a 24-hour request is required with the director by email, phone, or verbally in person. The cost for drop-in care is \$40.00 per day.

SIGNING CHILDREN INTO AND OUT OF CLASSROOMS

DHS requires that parents/legal guardians sign each child into and out of their classroom on the sign-in sheets provided. These sheets are very important not only to keep attendance of children, but more importantly, necessary for teachers to have during a time of emergency. Teachers are required to take their sign-in sheets with them whenever they take their children from their classrooms for any reason. During a fire, tornado or other emergency, teachers need to be able to check their sign-in sheets against the children they have with them to make sure everyone is accounted for.

IT IS THE PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THAT PERSONS OTHER THAN THEMSELVES KNOW TO SIGN YOUR CHILD INTO THEIR CLASSROOM IN THE MORNINGS AND TO SIGN THEM OUT IN THE AFTERNOONS.

Parents/legal guardians are to sign their children out every afternoon when picking them up regardless of the time. Persons other than parents/legal guardians picking up children must come to the Director's office to sign children out, show a valid I.D., and be accompanied to their children's classroom.

VISITORS

ALL Visitors are required to sign in and out at the front desk upon entering the Donelson First Academy building and will also be given a Visitors badge to wear while in the building. **While we are practicing our COVID-19 protocols, only state or emergency employees will be allowed access to the building.**

CHILD REMOVAL FROM THE PREMISES

Parents will be informed in advance of their child's removal from the premises **except in case of emergency** or pursuant to investigative procedures conducted in accordance with child abuse laws.

If an emergency arises and we must remove your child from the premises, you will be notified as soon as the situation is stable. If children are removed due to acts of God or other emergencies, please **DO NOT CALL US**. We will contact you. We send out information to parents via the "Remind" texting app. A message will be sent informing parents of the emergency and our plans to reunite them with their children. Please remember that we only have one phone line to use to contact parents, and if parents are calling in, we will not be able to contact you.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

WE ARE REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND STATE LAW TO REPORT ANY SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT REGARDING THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE. Information regarding the signs of child abuse and who to contact if you suspect child abuse and/or neglect is always available in the office.

RECORDS

Donelson First Academy keeps records of enrollment, attendance, health and identification, permission to administer medication, documentation of incidents with a child or parent, accident reports, late pick-ups, and emergency contact forms on each child.

Parents are required to fill out Emergency Contact information, giving full details (including cell phone numbers) on where we can reach them in an emergency, persons to whom the child may be released, their child's doctor and hospital of preference.

Permission to Administer Medication forms must be completed for Donelson First Academy to administer any physician-prescribed medication to your child. These medications **MUST** be authorized by your child's physician before any medication will be administered. Only emergency medications will be administered to a child (i.e., asthma medications or Epi-pen).

RESERVING A SPACE FOR YOUR CHILD IN OUR PROGRAM

In order to reserve a space for your child in our program, a **non-refundable** Enrollment Fee must be paid at the time of enrollment (no matter when child is enrolled during the year) and then every additional year that a child is enrolled at Donelson First Academy. The Enrollment Fee contributes to our classroom supplies, building usage, and administrative costs for the school year.

The Enrollment Fee for enrolling at Donelson First Academy is \$150.00 annually.

Upon receipt of your Application Fee, if a parent wants a space held for their child, we will hold that space for your child in our program for 30 days. For us to hold a space for a child longer than 30 days, the Application Fee **and** the tuition for the held months must be paid on the monthly due date (see "Preschool Tuition" section below).

PRESCHOOL TUITION

Tuition payments are due **BY NOON, ON the last working day of the month for the next month (example: tuition for April is due on the last working weekday of March) during morning drop off.** Tuition paid any time after the date due at morning drop off is considered late and your account will be charged accordingly. Monthly tuition is payable to Donelson First Academy. Personal checks, direct payments from banks and debit/credit cards are the only forms of acceptable payment. There is a \$35 returned check fee that will be assessed to any account with a returned check. **A \$50 late fee will be applied to your account if your child's tuition is not received by the last working day of the prior month at morning drop off.**

Tuition **may not be sent with children in their lunch boxes or backpacks, or left with teachers.** Parents/legal guardians are to come to the Director's office to make all payments. Receipts are available upon request, and a statement with a yearly tuition total is given to each family in January for tax purposes.

Listed below are the monthly tuition charts:

Infants - 3-months through 15-months:

- 5 days per week \$915.00
- 4 days per week \$805.00
- 3 days per week \$695.00
- 2 days per week \$585.00

Preschoolers - 16-months through Pre-Kindergarten:

- 5 days per week \$825.00
- 4 days per week \$715.00
- 3 days per week \$605.00
- 2 days per week \$495.00

Days missed at Donelson First Academy due to holidays, vacations or illness will **NOT** be discounted, as we continue to hold a space for your child until he or she returns. If a holiday falls on a day that your child attends preschool, **we do not “trade out” days.**

If tuition is not paid within 14 days of the due date, the child could be dismissed from the academy and their space forfeited. Upon leaving the program for any reason all tuition must be brought to a zero balance.

Parents must give a two-week notice in writing if they are withdrawing their child from our program. If notice is given at the beginning of the month, one-half of the month’s tuition must be paid. If notice is given during the month, there will not be a refund for the days that the child does not attend for the month. If no notice is given, the entire month’s tuition will be payable to Donelson First Academy immediately.

Because our costs remain the same throughout the year, we rely on the specified tuition to be paid each month in order to meet our expenses. No credits, refunds, or make up days shall be given for individual absences. If Donelson First Academy is in session and your child is out due to vacation, illness etc., you will be charged full tuition to hold your child’s space.

SUMMER PROGRAM TUITION

Although we are a year-round preschool, operating August – July, many parents choose to take their children out of the Academy for the summer and return in the fall. Intent to return paperwork will be sent home before our Spring Break each school year. This paperwork **MUST** be completed and turned in on the date provided, or your child’s place will be forfeited.

Children enrolling for our **School Age Summer Session ONLY**, will need to pay a \$50.00 non-refundable enrollment fee to hold a space for our summer session.

If your preschool child enrolls with us during the summer, the annual yearly enrollment fee will be at a prorated cost to you.

All children enrolled in the Donelson First Academy as well as parents, will follow all rules set for the Academy while on campus or could forfeit their space at the Academy.

WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS BEFORE ENTERING DONELSON FIRST ACADEMY

Your child will need the following items before entering Donelson First Academy:

- All enrollment paperwork, a current immunization record signed by your pediatrician, and the \$150 enrollment fee.

- A backpack or bag with a complete change of clothing (including underwear, diapers or Pull-Ups) to be used in case of sickness or accident and a bottle of water for use during the day – this bag should be brought to the Academy each day and placed on your child’s hook inside his or her classroom.

- An Emergency Bag (a gallon-size Ziplock bag) marked with the child’s name in permanent ink will be kept in the classroom (used only for emergencies – not everyday use) Items in the Emergency Bag should be changed out seasonally or when food expires. The following items should be included in the Emergency Bag:
 1. A complete change of clothes (including underpants, pull-ups, or diapers and socks)
 2. One nonperishable meal including juice (items such as Vienna sausage, Spaghetti-O’s, fruit or pudding must have a pull top and not require a can opener). No food shall be included that needs to be heated. All foods must be within their expiration date.
 3. A spoon or fork or straw, if needed
 4. Your child will need a 2-inch rest mat (if you have trouble finding one locally – we have them here that we buy to have on hand. We do not make any profit on these mats, and they are \$15.00) along with a crib sheet and light blanket for rest time.

SCHEDULES AND ROUTINES

Schedules are posted on each classroom wall and are followed as closely as possible. Routines such as playtime, lunch, and rest occur at about the same time each day with flexibility being allowed. Teachers will send home monthly calendars and newsletters informing parents of the month’s activities.

There is always a balance between free choice and adult-directed activities, table and interactive activities, and group and center choice activities.

REST TIME

DHS requires that each child have a two-inch rest mat, crib sheet and light blanket for rest time. No king-size pillowcases or tight mat covers may be used in place of a sheet. All children must observe a rest period in the afternoon. DHS requires that all children observe one hour of reclining rest. Children are not required to sleep but must rest quietly on their mats until the time designated by the teacher for them to get up and put their rest items away.

Blankets and sheets are kept by the teacher in separate plastic boxes with a lid and are marked with the child’s name. No thick blankets or pillows are permitted.

Mats will be cleaned and disinfected by the teachers at the end of each day. Sheets and blankets will be sent home at the end of each week to be washed and it is the parent’s responsibility to make sure that they are returned the following week, unless they need to be cleaned before the end of the week due to illness, soil, etc. Donelson First Academy does not provide extra sheets and blankets.

CLOTHING

Outdoor play is an important part of our program as well as a DHS requirement. DHS will only allow us to play inside if the weather is below freezing (32 degrees), if the heat index is higher than 95 degrees, or if it is raining. Therefore, all children must be dressed appropriately to play outside or to be outdoors for other activities except

in extreme weather. Because children will daily encounter a variety of experiences, clothing should be of a play type to permit participation in all activities. Tennis shoes **must** be worn daily. **Open-toed sandals, flip-flops, and shoes with slick bottoms are not permitted.**

Also, please make sure that you apply bug repellent with a low percentage (7% or lower) of DEET (such as Avon Skin-So-Soft, OFF, Cutter, etc.) and sunscreen at home. Donelson First Academy will not apply bug repellent here at the Academy. During the summer, sunscreen **MUST** be applied before coming to preschool.

All hats, jackets, etc. **MUST** be labeled with your child's name. Parents are responsible for providing jackets, hats and coats when needed. The Academy does not provide extra clothing garments. All children will go outside regardless of whether they are dressed appropriately – so please help us by dressing your child in the correct clothing for the season!

FOOD

***DONELSON FIRST ACADEMY IS A "NUT FREE" PRESCHOOL. Please do not bring ANY nut products, including peanut butter or granola type bars with nuts in them.**

The Director must be notified in writing of all food allergies and a notice will be posted in your child's room alerting the teacher and any substitute of any allergy that your child may have.

Each child is to bring his/her own lunch in a clean and sanitized lunchbox with milk in a thermos with a straw or a sippy cup, and water. All lunches must be in a lunch box. Please label your child's lunch box (on the outside), thermos and all food containers with your child's name in permanent ink. **Lunches should be kept cool by using a commercial cold pack.** The meal must be well balanced and finger foods are preferred. All food will be served at room temperature. Teachers cannot leave their classes unattended to heat food. All items must be labeled at home, prior to being brought to the academy.

Additional snacks for aftercare must be provided by the parent each day a child attends aftercare. This snack should be kept separate from your child's lunch and specifically labeled "aftercare snack" so that a teacher does not mistakenly give a child his/her aftercare snack for lunch.

No extra food/snacks are kept at DONELSON FIRST ACADEMY. If your child does not have an extra snack, you will be asked to bring them one.

CUT GRAPES, STRAWBERRIES, HOT DOGS, HARD CHEESES AND OTHER "TOUGH" FOODS INTO SMALL, BITE-SIZED PIECES. THESE ITEMS POSE A CHOKING HAZARD DURING LUNCH.

JUICE, SODAS, AND CANDY ARE NOT ALLOWED. LUNCHES MUST CONSIST OF ONLY ONE SWEET.

Fruit Rollups, fruit snacks, Jell-o, cookies, pies, cakes, puddings, pop tarts, and sweet cereals are all considered sweets. **Candy sent with lunches will be returned home in the child's lunch box. We ask that any candy that comes with a "Lunchables" be removed before being sent to preschool.**

Hard candy and gum are choking hazards and children **must** throw these away **before** entering the building.

Children and infants must be fed breakfast before arriving to preschool. DHS requires that we sit with each child to prevent choking, so teachers are unable to feed children during arrival due to other responsibilities taking place.

Any time food is to be shared at the Academy, a note will be placed outside of the child's room to notify parents (e.g., food allergies or parties) of the shared food.

POTTY TRAINING

We will not potty train your child for you. We are here to **assist** you in potty training your child, we will follow the schedule you have implemented at home and do our best to make potty training successful for you and your child. Also, children must be potty trained **BEFORE** entering the older three/young four-year-old class.

TOYS

Donelson First Academy has adequate age-appropriate toys for the children. **All personal toys should be left at home** unless they are considered a security item for the children in our infant and 15-month-old class **OR** there has been a show and tell day planned for our older students. Donelson First Academy is not responsible for personal items brought to the program that become lost or broken. **Toys that teach or show aggression such as swords, knives or guns are not permitted. This includes any cartoon characters that promote aggression or violence.**

MOVIES

On occasion, movies and children's videos may be shown in our classrooms (i.e., movie day). These will be shown only with the approval of the Director, and we must have a parent's signature approval before children are allowed to watch the movie.

PLAYTIME

Children are not permitted to play violently or aggressively while at the Academy. Examples of violent or aggressive behavior would include playing with knives or guns or pretending to play with knives or guns, or actions as play fighting etc. Children will be sent home on the third offense.

SCHOOL RULES

Children will have school rules that they will be expected to follow. Parents, Grandparents, and anyone that drops off or picks up a child is expected to follow these rules as well.

- No running inside the building.
- Hitting, pushing, biting, kicking, or spitting other children or adults will not be allowed.
- All clothing should appropriately cover the body and contain no foul language or inappropriate content.
- No smoking, illegal drugs, or weapons are allowed on the Donelson First Academy premises.

PACIFIERS

Pacifiers are only permitted for use in our infant and toddler classrooms and must be labeled with the child's name. Pacifier clips or any kind of attachment to the pacifier are not allowed. This includes Wubba Nubs with the small stuffed animals attached. This is in accordance with the State of Tennessee and Department of Human Services regulations.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is always welcomed and encouraged at Donelson First Academy. During the year teachers will ask parents to send food for parties, to help in the classroom, or be involved in other activities. Parents will receive a calendar at the beginning of the school year or at the time of enrollment that shows when children are involved in special programs and other functions.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

We believe that communication between teachers and parents is very important. When we accept new children into Donelson First Academy, we like to be sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that may arise. We feel that we are a team raising your child. If we can work together then your child can feel secure in knowing that they have two families who love them very much. We are always glad to be a part of their lives.

We welcome questions, feedback or discussions of any kind that affect a positive outcome for your child. Sensitive issues will be discussed by letter, phone or a scheduled conference. We will provide you a newsletter each month that details some of the activities that we are doing, events that will be happening, days off or any other pertinent, fun or helpful information that may be of interest to you.

Our main method of communication to our parents is e-mail. For this reason, we ask that each parent have a valid e-mail address that they check daily. We encourage parents to check their e-mail several times a day in case we send information about our preschool. We also use the "Remind" texting app. to notify parents of special events, reminders and emergency situations. It is IMPERATIVE that all parents sign up for this service.

All parents/legal guardians should check the board outside of the Director's office on a regular basis for important information, special announcements, etc.

Please feel free to talk with your child's teacher! You may request a parent/teacher conference at any time during the school year to help us better serve your child's needs. During your conference, you will have the chance to speak to your child's teacher about any concerns that you may have.

“OPEN DOOR” POLICY

While your child is in our care, you can always be assured that our doors are open to you. “Open Door” does not mean that we keep our doors unlocked. For the safety of the teachers and the children, our security system allows us to keep our doors locked at all times. Families are issued 2 key fobs at the time of enrollment, that will unlock the doors during their child's enrolled hours. If a key fob is lost or stolen, a replacement fob will be given at your expense. Each fob is \$20.00.

Although it can be hard, the best thing that you can do to help your child adjust is to drop him or her off in the classroom, give them a hug and a kiss and tell them to have a good day.... then leave. You are welcome to call us as often as you like during the day and we will go and check on your child for you. We LOVE texting pictures of your kiddo to you as well!

We appreciate you taking into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling. Please keep in mind that there may be times when it is not possible for us to answer the phone. If the phone goes unanswered, please do not become alarmed. Simply leave a voice mail and the Director or Administrative Supervisor will call you as soon as possible. We check our messages every 30 minutes and will be glad to return your call.

PARTIES

We love to party! If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please schedule this with your child's teacher ahead of time. Some ideas for a party might include bringing cupcakes or cookies or providing pizza and juice for the children to share with the class on that day.

Please also check for food allergies in your child's class when you are planning a party. Remember that Donelson First Academy is a **Nut Free Program**.

Please be selective in choosing party favors, remembering that as a ministry of Donelson First, we do not support violence of any kind – any favors that we deem harmful will not be allowed and all-party favors must be age-appropriate for your child's class.

RISKY BEHAVIOR OF TRANSPORTERS

The safety of the children enrolled in our preschool is of utmost priority to us. This means that if we deem a person not fit to transport a child from our preschool (i.e., suspicion of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol), we will immediately notify the proper authorities and request help for your child.

PARENTAL CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS

Parents should communicate with the Director and teacher responsible for the care of their child regarding any concerns or questions they may have about their child and not discuss these issues with another teacher or parent. If the matter cannot be resolved with the teacher, then a conference should be requested with the teacher, Director and the Director of Preschool + Children's Ministries of the church.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

WE ARE REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND STATE LAW TO REPORT ANY SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT REGARDING THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE. Information regarding the signs of child abuse and who to contact if you suspect child abuse and/or neglect is always available in the office.

MEDICATIONS

A medication permission form must be completed before the Academy will administer any medication (either physician-prescribed or over the counter). All medications to be given to a child must be in the original container marked with the child's full name and be in date (not expired).

The Director, Supervisor and the Director of Preschool + Children's Ministries are the only team members that administer medication. A list of all medication and times given will be kept in the Director's office. A form listing all dosages and times given will be signed by the Director, Supervisor or the Director of Preschool + Children's Ministries at the time the medication is given. Parents are to come to the office and sign the medication form at the end of the day.

Parents/legal guardians are not permitted to leave medication of any nature in their child's backpack or diaper bag, including anything applied to the skin (e.g., diaper rash cream, bug repellent or sunscreen). All medication must be secured in the office in a locked box.

HEALTH ISSUES AND ILLNESS POLICY

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you bring your child to the Academy while he or she is sick (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, continuous coughing, runny nose other than clear, draining eyes or ears, unexplained rash, lice, etc.). If you are not sure if your child is well enough to attend, please call and discuss it with the Director or the Supervisor.

Masking your child's symptoms with over-the-counter medications and bringing them to the Academy is also inconsiderate to all families involved. A sick child should be allowed to recuperate fully at home for 24 hours after an illness so that the other children and the teachers do not risk unnecessary exposure.

According to the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services we are unable to keep actively sick children at the Academy, and it is the parent's responsibility to make alternate child-care arrangements in the event of illness. If your child is absent due to illness, regular fees still apply.

The following regulations are licensure rules for child-care centers serving preschool children and have been set up by the Department of Human Services.

- Donelson First Academy will not be able to accept a child for the day that appears ill or shows any sign of fever, respiratory symptoms, diarrhea, vomiting, eye or ear drainage, rash, runny nose with colored mucus, lice or sore throat.
- If your child becomes sick over the weekend or during the evening, please call the Academy office and let us know the nature of the illness. This allows our faculty to keep track of any illnesses which may occur or spread in our facility. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. Please follow the outline below when deciding whether to send your child back to the Academy after an illness:
 - Fever – Child must be fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT the aid of medication
 - Diarrhea – Child must be symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT the aid of medication
 - Vomiting - Child must be symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT the aid of medication
 - Runny nose with colored mucus discharge – Check with doctor ** (child must be symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT the aid of medication)
 - Rash – Must be seen and diagnosed by a doctor
 - Discharge from eyes or ears – Must be seen and diagnosed by a doctor
 - Lice – Child needs to be treated and nits removed before return. A release form from your doctor must be submitted to the Director before the child will be allowed to return to Donelson First Academy.
 - Communicable diseases – Chicken pox, measles, mumps, conjunctivitis (pink eye), influenza, etc. The child may return when the incubation and contagious period has passed and the child is well enough to resume normal childcare activities. A release form from your doctor must be submitted to the Director before the child will be allowed to return to the Donelson First Academy.
 - Hospitalization or surgery - A release form from your doctor must be submitted to the Director before the child will be allowed to return to Donelson First Academy.
 - Impetigo and diagnosed Strep – Although your child may be on antibiotics, he or she continues to be contagious for 24 hours after the first dose and cannot return to Donelson First Academy until this time period has passed.
 - Scabies or Lice - Proof of treatment and a release form signed by a doctor must be presented to the Director before being readmitted to Donelson First Academy. If a child is found to have scabies or lice while present at Donelson First Academy, the child will be removed from the classroom and the parent will be called to pick him/her up as soon as possible.

****Although some physicians say that it is okay for a child to return to school with colored mucus coming from the nose, Donelson First Academy's policy states that mucus must be clear for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. If a child returns to school and still seems to be ill, an excuse from the physician to Donelson First Academy's Director must be presented before the child will be readmitted.**

Donelson First Academy is not licensed to care for sick children. If your child develops any of the symptoms mentioned in this section while in our care, you (or someone you have designated) will be called to pick up your child immediately. **IF WE CALL A PARENT TO PICK UP A CHILD WHILE AT SCHOOL, THAT CHILD WILL BE REQUIRED TO STAY AT HOME THE FOLLOWING DAY. YOUR CHILD MAY RETURN TO THE CENTER 24 HOURS AFTER THE SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS END (meaning if your child has been sent home with a fever, diarrhea or vomiting, they cannot return until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without the aid of medications.)**

A sick child must be picked up within 45 minutes from the time the parent is called. If not, the Department of Human Services requires us to notify them. The Academy reserves the right to drop a child from enrollment if he/she is not picked up within 45 minutes.

- Parents of every child enrolled will be notified if one of the following communicable diseases has been introduced into the preschool:
 - Hepatitis A, food-borne outbreaks, salmonella, shigella, measles, mumps, rubella, pertussis, polio, Hemophilus influenza type B, meningococcal meningitis, scabies, lice, strep, conjunctivitis (pink eye), chicken pox, hand, foot and mouth disease
- Parents will be notified of other children who have been sent home with diarrhea, vomiting, or sore throat.

DISCIPLINE

Appropriate discipline will be administered as needed. Discipline will be reasonable, developmentally appropriate considering the age of the child, and in terms the child can understand. **SPANKING OF ANY NATURE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.** Donelson First Academy uses praise and encouragement of good behavior rather than focusing on the negative. Timeouts will be within a reasonable time limit of one minute per year of age of the child and **will not be overused.** Teachers will use measures such as involving the child in another activity or redirecting the child's attention. **Punishment related to food, toileting, or rest is prohibited.**

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR / EXPULSION POLICY

Donelson First Academy reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior continuously causes bodily harm to others, is a constant disruption to daily routines, is unable to participate in group experiences, or if the staff feels the program does not meet the needs of the child. Parents/guardians will be notified of potential behavior problems and the staff will make every effort to correct the problem with both the parent and child.

For a first behavior offense, a meeting will be scheduled so that the teacher and Director can meet with the parent and the student to talk about the child's behavior. Parents will be asked for suggestions on how to handle / manage the child's behavior and the teacher will try those suggestions in the classroom. Meeting notes will be documented and a copy will be given to the parents and a copy will be placed in the child's file.

If a second offense arises, a meeting will be scheduled so that the teacher and the Director can meet with the parent and student again. At this meeting, parents will be asked to discuss underlying issues at home or in the

community that might have led to the offense. While in this meeting, parents will offer suggestions that will help the teacher better understand the child's behavior and how to correct it. At this point, a change of class may be discussed (ratios permitting) to see if the child's behavior changes. A change of class is not guaranteed though, and is based on availability in the child's age group. In this meeting, a list of community resources that specialize in behavior issues will be given to the parents. The Director will recommend that the parents speak to their child's pediatrician as well to see if he/she has any suggestions. Meeting notes will be documented and a copy will be given to the parents and a copy will be placed in the child's file.

If the behavior continues for a third time, a meeting will be scheduled so that the teacher and Director can meet with the parent and student again. At this meeting, the Director will outline the child's behavior and let the parents know that no progress has been made in class and that because of this, dismissal from our preschool will take place. A list of other preschools in the area will be provided to the parents in order to try to secure a space. Meeting notes will be documented and a copy will be given to the parents and a copy will be placed in the child's file.

Documentation of serious behavior problems will be kept in the child's records and parents will be asked to sign incident reports.

BITING

We want you to understand that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in infant through 30-month classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect their child may be bit or will bite another child at some point. We totally understand that parents are concerned and can get upset when their child is involved in a biting incident, but again, please remember is developmentally appropriate behavior. Children at this age cannot verbally express themselves and this is when biting commonly happens. Reasons a child may bite include teething, stress, frustration, imitating behavior, personal space is violated, a sign of affection, or to even obtain attention.

When biting occurs, we comfort the child who has been bitten. We then firmly let the child who bit know that "biting hurts" and we may offer him/her an object to bite instead, such as a cold teething ring. All parents will be notified via an "incident report" when a biting incident has occurred. The staff will not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. All information is considered confidential and will not be disclosed.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Our preschool doors are locked 24-hours per day. Only families of enrolled children have access to open our doors during the time that their children are present. Donelson First Academy has taken every precaution to ensure the safety of everyone should there be an emergency. ADS Security Systems provides fire security for the preschool and contacts the fire department automatically for us should our alarms go off. Should there be a fire or other emergency, the fire and police departments are notified immediately.

Necessary practice drills are held regularly to make sure our staff and children know how to respond. All members of our staff are trained in CPR and first aid and our teachers have detailed instructions to follow for emergencies.

No one will be admitted to the building in an emergency to pick children up. We will notify you of our plans as soon as the children are safe from harm – at that time, we will begin dismissal to parents/guardians.

We use Remind101 (www.remind.com) as a text service to notify parents of emergencies in our program. A text will be sent to all families that are enrolled with us detailing the situation and how to reunite with the children.

An emergency form is kept on file for all children and calls will be made to each family in the event of an emergency, after we have assessed the situation and have made sure that all of the children and teachers are okay.

Please refer to our Preparedness for Disasters Policy for information regarding definitions of severe weather and what we do in the event of severe weather.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are not permitted at drop off or pick up times. Your child deserves your full attention at morning drop-off and during afternoon pick-up. There are also times that your child's teacher may need to convey information to you. If you are on your phone, they may not be able to share this important information with you, so please finish all phone calls BEFORE entering our preschool building.

ANIMALS IN THE BUILDING

No animals may be brought into Donelson First Academy without the prior approval of the Director.

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP

- Teach your child self-reliance. Encourage your child to do things for him/herself.
- Drop your child off and leave as quickly as possible. Linger may cause separation anxiety for your child.
- Walk your child to class as much as possible rather than carrying them
- Confer regularly with the teacher about your child, but refrain from discussing the child in his/her presence.
- Take an interest in the Donelson First Academy and whatever your child brings home.
- Take time to listen to your child's daily experiences and discuss them with real interest.
- Buildup in your child a wholesome, friendly attitude toward the teacher and Donelson First Academy.
- Live, work and play as a family group.
- Report to your child's teacher any upsetting experiences that you think will help the teacher better understand your child.
- Help your child anticipate happy experiences in relation to Donelson First Academy.
- Cooperate as much as possible with your child's teacher when discipline problems arise.
- Make sure we can reach you at all times in case of an emergency.
- Be on time in bringing your child to school and in picking him/her up.
- Read with your child on a regular basis from the Bible. (Children's Bibles are available.)
- Make sure your child has a reasonable bedtime and is well rested.
- Let us know of ways we may be able to minister to your child and to your family.
- Make sure we know of problems your child may be having such as nightmares, sleepwalking, chronic ear infections, etc.
- Let us know what is going on with your child if he/she is absent for more than two days.
- Let us pray for you and with you during times of need.
- Pray for our staff and children daily.