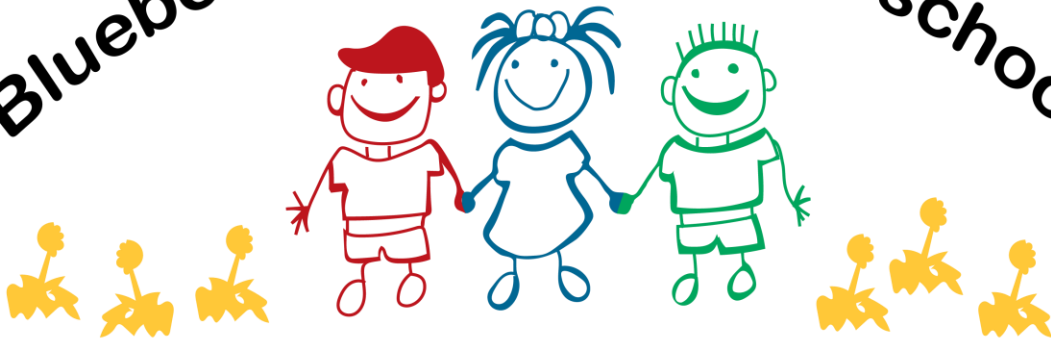


Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool



First Methodist Church

Marble Falls, Texas

Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Our Philosophy

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool is an outgrowth ministry of the Family Ministries Division of The First Methodist Church that offers experiences and activities that promote the growth and development of the whole child. We believe in ministering to each child's needs academically, spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally while offering Christ to all.

Each child is unique and is presently in his/her individual stage of development. Our goal is for children to reach their own potentials through the most appropriate methods while providing a nurturing environment.

We strongly believe in the importance of promoting self-esteem, being accepting of others, being curious, being expressive, feeling loved and secure, and being full participants in God's world.

Our program is constructed to meet the needs of young children by providing a variety of activities. Activities include stories, music, art, crafts, cooking, dramatic play, Bible lessons, games, and other experiences that will promote a positive and productive learning environment.

We are committed to preparing your child for life's experiences by molding a healthy and strong individual who is confident and ready for the world of education. It is also our sincere desire that the seeds planted through the spiritual guidance your child receives at Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will blossom and flourish for many years to come.

Schedule Options and Monthly Tuition

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool serves

Infants (6 weeks to 12 months)

12 - 18 Months old

Toddlers (12 months to 24 months)

2 year olds, 3 year olds, and Pre-K (4 & 5 year olds).

A \$50 monthly tuition discount is given when families enroll more than one child for 5 days or \$30 for 3 days.

Schedules for the 2023-2024 School Year

Monday - Friday 7:30-5:30 Infant Room \$705 Month

Monday - Friday 7:30-5:30 Toddlers and 2 year olds \$695 Month

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 7:30-5:30 Toddlers and 2 year olds \$460 Month

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 8:30-2:30 Toddlers and 2 year olds \$410 Month

Monday - Friday 7:30 - 5:30 3 & 4/5 year olds \$670 Month

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 7:30 - 5:30 3 & 4/5 year olds \$430 Month

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month.

Scholarships may be available. Contact the preschool director for an application.

The preschool is in operation from August 16, 2023 through May 23, 2024, and follows the Marble Falls ISD calendar for vacation days. In the event of severe weather, we will follow Marble Falls ISD's decision to cancel school. Please tune into one of the local radio or television stations for current school information. Should MFISD start late due to bad weather, Bluebonnet MP will start at the same time. Typically, MFISD starts at 10:00. If MFISD dismisses early due to bad weather before the end of our day (5:30), we would follow their schedule. Please let your child's teacher know if you do not have a child enrolled in Marble Falls ISD so that the teacher may call you in the event of severe weather.

Registration and Fees

Registration will be open to all children ages 6 weeks through five years of age. Your child does not need to be potty trained to participate in the toddler, two and three-year-old programs. We ask that they are before entering Pre-K. **The following forms must be completed and returned prior to your child's first day.**

I. Registration Form

- Parent's acknowledgement of the *Handbook of Operational Policies* (signature required on Registration Form)
- Parent's acknowledgement of *Discipline and Guidance Policy* (signature required on Registration Form)
- Parent's permission for *Photographs and Sharing of Information* (signature required on Registration Form)

II. Current Immunization Record/Exemption Form

III. Wellness Statement signed by a physician or a health care professional

- Vision/Hearing Screening Results (if applicable)
- TB Test Results (if applicable)

Registration fee: \$150.00. This fee is due at the time of registration and is non-refundable. This fee will cover all non-personal school supplies. Registration begins in March for Bluebonnet families and the end of March for the public. If you withdraw from the program at any time and wish to return later during the year, there will be another fee due. Registration fees are annual and are due prior to the beginning of each program year. After a child is enrolled in the program and has attended, a registration fee cannot be transferred to another child. Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes. A family that has more than one child enrolled in 5 days will be given a \$50 off for the second child and \$30 off if enrolled in 3 days.

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. Tuition is figured on a yearly basis and therefore the amount is not flexible with long or short months. Tuition is not prorated due to absences or holidays. Staffing and other operational expenses are arranged based on fixed enrollment levels and must be met on a continuing basis. Refunds or reductions in tuition are not available for the time a child is absent. **A late fee of \$10.00 per day will be assessed after the third business day.** Full payment is due each month, regardless of any absences, holidays, or school closures. Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool requires a **30-day written notification** of intent to withdraw your child from the program. All fees must be paid in full at the time the notice is given. If you withdraw during the summer prior to August 1st, you will be refunded any tuition paid, but not the \$150.00 registration fee. **No registration refund will be given after July 1.** If you withdraw on or after August 15th, there will not be any refund on tuition issued. Withdrawals require a 30-day notice at any point during the year. Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes.

Returned Check Charge: There is a \$25.00 fee charged for all returned checks.

Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes prior to the changes taking effect.

Arrival and Departure Policy

Arrival: Our instructional program begins promptly at 8:45 A.M. Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool has a separate entrance at the rear of the church for easy access to classroom areas. Parents are asked to utilize this entrance as other activities will be conducted daily at the church. Parents need to accompany their child to the classroom and are to be left **only with a Bluebonnet Preschool staff member.** Parents **must sign their child in and out on the sheet provided each day.** Teachers may arrive early to prepare materials for lessons. **Please respect this time for the teachers by waiting in the lobby until 7:30 am to bring your child to class.** Arrangements may be made with the director if a child needs to arrive prior to 7:30am.

If you arrive after 8:45, please wait in the doorway of the classroom until the teacher can take your child into the classroom so that the other children will not experience a

disruption in their schedule. It is distracting when children arrive late and they will miss out on exciting activities planned for the day. The doors will be locked at 8:45 for the safety of the children and staff. It is our goal for your child to have a rewarding and successful experience at BMP. The core part of your child's daily academic activities will occur between 8:45 and 2:30. Teachers will request a parent conference when being tardy is excessive. Tardiness will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

To encourage your child to view preschool as a positive experience, parents are asked to exhibit attitudes of happiness, confidence, and anticipation. When you bring your child into the classroom, please make a positive statement of leaving with the assurance of your prompt return at pick-up time and leave immediately, without lingering. Distress at your departure is usually overcome within minutes. The staff will call you if the need arises.

Please do not allow your child to bring his/her breakfast into the classroom after the 8:30. If your child has not finished breakfast at the 8:30 arrival time, please sit outside the classroom with your child until he/she has finished.

Classroom time is very valuable to the children in the classroom. If you have any questions concerning your child, please speak to the director or teacher to schedule a parent conference.

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool has an open-door policy. Parents and visitors are welcome into the building at any time. Visitors must check-in in the office and will tour with the director. There will be many opportunities throughout the year for parents to volunteer! Please check with your child's teacher to see when these wonderful opportunities arise.

Departure: Please sign your child out on the sign-in/sign-out sheet located by the classroom door. **There will be a late pick-up fee of \$25.00 beginning at 5:40 pm.** Please pay by check or cash to the director or attending teacher. For emergencies, please call the director at 281-475-9618 or your child's teacher. Children will be released **only** to the parent or other individuals specified in the child's file. Anyone not recognized by the classroom teacher will be asked to show a driver's license for identification purposes.

Parents must notify the director or teacher of any changes in individuals to pick up a child.

We understand a parent's joy in sharing their experiences and knowledge with others during this developmental time in your child's life. It is best that visiting with other parents be done outside the classroom area so that children can settle quickly and start their day, or so that teachers may straighten up the classroom at the end of the day.

Drop in Rates

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool has a Drop in Policy for those who attend the 3 day program. You may bring your child on a Monday or Friday if there is space for them. You must give the Director enough notice so we may determine if we have room for your child on a Monday or Friday. The cost is \$50 a day per child.

Early Pick-Up

Please notify your child's teacher of the need to pick up your child early when you arrive in the morning so that your child's belongings may be gathered together and be ready to go at the designated time. Parents who come to pick up their child early are asked to go to the director with their request. Your child will be brought to you so that the other children in the classroom will not be disrupted.

Emergency Release

In the event an emergency affects your child's well-being, every attempt will be made to contact the parent or guardian. Should an emergency occur and a parent cannot be reached, an emergency release form signed by a parent and kept on file will allow us to notify a physician or emergency medical services. This release states that a doctor may administer any necessary treatment should an emergency occur.

Health Policy and Medications

We appreciate your cooperation and assistance maintaining a healthy environment for our school.

To maintain a healthy environment for children and staff, please use the following guidelines for determining if your child needs to be kept home from school:

An ill child will not be admitted if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
- The child has a temperature of 100 degrees or more (must be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school).
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, a vomiting illness of two or more episodes in 24 hours), rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior change, or other unusual sign, until a medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the center's activities.
- The child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease such as pink eye or strep throat, until medical evaluation determines the child is no longer contagious and can participate in the center's activities.
- **You must have a written note from your doctor stating when your child can return to school and participate in the center's activities.**

A child must be fever free, diarrhea free and vomit free for 24 hours and/or on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the center.

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool does not take responsibility for administering medication. Please adjust to give dosages of medicine before or after program hours. If your child has a special medication need, please speak to the director. BMP staff does not administer medications to children. The only exception is an EpiPen for severe allergic reactions as prescribed by a doctor.

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool does not take responsibility for administering Insect Repellant and/or Sunscreen. Parents are allowed to come to the school and administer the Insect Repellant and/or Sunscreen to their child at any time.

If your child has a contagious illness that has been diagnosed by a doctor, please notify the school immediately so that other parents can be alerted to the fact that their child may have been exposed. This includes the flu, strep throat, impetigo, chicken pox, pink eye etc.

Please make sure we have every number available to reach you at any given time. If parents cannot be reached, BMP will attempt to contact a person listed as an emergency contact on the Registration Form.

Parents will be notified of less serious injuries such as minor cuts, scratches, bites from other children, etc. when the parents pick up the child from the center.

Parents will be notified within 48 hours if BMP becomes aware of an outbreak of lice or other infestations in your child's class or group. A notice will be posted or a note will be sent home to each parent in the group. Your child will need to stay home if he/she shows signs of having lice or other infestation until the condition is cleared up.

Parents will be notified in writing within 48 hours if BMP becomes aware that a child or employee has contracted a communicable disease that is required by law to be reported to the Texas Department of Health.

Medical Emergencies

The staff of Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will do their best to try to prevent injuries to children in their care. However, we understand that accidents and injuries will sometimes occur despite our efforts to prevent them. **If a child should become critically ill or injured, Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will:**

- contact emergency medical services
- give the child first-aid treatment or CPR if needed
- contact the physician listed on the child's enrollment form, if possible
- contact the child's parent or person listed as an emergency contact if the parent cannot be reached.

If an injury appears not to be critical but the BMP staff determines the injury may need further medical attention, BMP will contact the child's parent. If the parent

cannot be reached, BMP may call EMS and will follow their advice. Parents will be responsible for payment of medical services associated with the child.

Immunizations

All children enrolled at Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool must have been immunized in accordance with the requirements of the Texas Department of Health. **Parents must provide immunization records showing all immunizations are current prior to enrollment.** Parents may obtain exemptions for immunizations in some situations. Exemptions for immunization requirements must be obtained from the Texas Department of Health. Please speak to the director if you need a copy of the recent vaccine requirement of the Texas Department of Health.

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool does not require staff to be vaccinated.

Tuberculin Testing

Documentation that your child is free of tuberculosis will be required if the Texas Department of Health in our region or local health authority determines that TB testing of children is required. Parents will be informed of this requirement at the time of enrollment or after BMP becomes aware of this requirement.

Vision/Hearing Screenings

The Texas Department of Health **requires** that all children 4 and 5 years of age be screened for hearing and vision problems. This screening should be done at a licensed or certified screener or health-care professional. BMP will need a copy of the results. Screenings may also be done here at school.

Transportation

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will only provide Transportation to School Age Children for Summer Field Trips.

School Supplies

School supply lists will be provided for personal items such as sleeping mats. Please bring school supplies to the parent orientation. **The \$150 non-refundable Registration Fee covers the cost of all instructional supplies. Please do not allow your child to bring the following items to school:**

Money	Gum/Candy	Toys unless for Show and Tell
Sodas	Red or Purple Drinks	
Pretend Weapons	Glass Containers	

Meals and Snacks

It is both mentally and physically beneficial to children when they are taught good nutrition. Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool is committed to help lay the foundation of the importance of nutritious foods. **All children need to bring a nutritional breakfast, lunch, and snacks from home each day. Children arriving between 7:30-8:15 am may bring their breakfast to eat at preschool.** We encourage snacks and lunches that contain protein which produce increased attention span and health benefits. **Please pack snacks and lunches that do not require refrigeration or the microwave.** Please make sure to put food in containers that are easy for children to open. Please label all containers, lunch boxes, and thermoses with the child's name. Please be sure to include a cold pack with your child's drink in their lunch. **Please cut hot dogs, grapes, and raw carrots into small pieces as they may cause choking in young children.** Bluebonnet is not responsible for meeting the daily nutritional needs of children.

Children also need to bring an additional sippy cup/water bottle with only water in it, to drink during the day and for outside play. Please label the sippy cup/water bottle with the child's name with a permanent marker.

Water Activities

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will not have swimming, wading, or splashing pools. Water activities will be limited to sprinklers on special occasions and water tubs or tables with just a few inches of water for measuring and pouring or other curriculum activities. Parents will be notified in advance of plans to play in a sprinkler.

Animals

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will only allow animals if the following requirements are met:

- approval is obtained from the director at least two weeks in advance
- parents are notified in advance and have no objections
- the animal will not create any unsafe or unsanitary conditions
- the animal shows no signs of possible illness
- documentation is provided at least two weeks in advance that any dogs, cats, and ferrets have been vaccinated according to the Texas Health and Safety Code
- a statement of health from a local veterinarian is provided at least two weeks in advance for all animals other than rodents (guinea pigs, mice, hamsters, etc.).

Unless arranged by the BMP director with a local zoo, the following will not be allowed at the center. Parents will be notified if any program is planned.

- Chickens, ducks, reptiles (such as snakes, turtles, lizards, iguanas), and amphibians (such as frogs and toads) will not be allowed at BMP.
- Other unfamiliar or exotic animals may not be allowed.

Field Trips

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool will not have any field trips as car seats would be needed for each child, making transportation very difficult. The Pre-k will walk to HEB for a field trip on nutrition.

Birthday Parties

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool welcomes birthday celebrations. Birthdays are a special day in a child's life. Birthday celebrations may be arranged in advance with the child's teacher. Birthday gifts will not be exchanged, but the honoree may donate a book to our library to commemorate the occasion. The teacher will read the book for the birthday child's class during story time. Celebrations will be limited to a Birthday crown, the Birthday song, and cupcakes or cookies. Children who are having a birthday party away from the center and wish to distribute invitations in the classroom may do so **only if every child in the class is receiving an invitation.**

Holiday Parties and Special Events

Parties will be held to celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the last day of school. Classes will also hold special activities throughout the year. For these events, teachers may ask for parent volunteers. Teachers may also ask parents to donate items.

Dress Code

Children should wear comfortable clothes so that they can participate in activities planned in the classroom and outside. Some activities may be messy and could possibly stain clothing. **All children must wear tennis shoes or soft-soled shoes.** For your child's safety, boots or hard-soled shoes are not allowed. On cold days, children should wear warm clothes, coats, hats, and gloves. **Please label all outdoor clothing.** Staff is not available to allow a child to stay indoors while the rest of the class goes outside. Before returning to class after an illness, your child needs to be well enough to go outside. If the weather is inappropriate for outdoor play, we will have activities in the gymnasium, have a video, or library activity.

Outdoor Play

Two playgrounds are available for children to use for outdoor play. All age groups will usually use the larger playground located next to the north side of the First United Methodist Church building. The 2-year-old classes will sometimes use the small playground located between the Kid's Corner and the education wings of the First United Methodist Church building.

Toys

Toys may only be brought into the center for special occasions such as show-and-tell. Anything brought from home will be put away by the teacher until dismissal time.

Discipline

Taken from the Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance.

Discipline must be individualized and consistent for each child. It must be appropriate to the child's understanding and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction which include at least the following:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior.

2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
3. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool is committed to helping your child feel safe and secure while providing sensible limits and genuine encouragement.

Aggressive or Disruptive Behavior

Any child who repeatedly shows aggressive or disruptive behavior will be asked to withdraw from the preschool program until he/she gets through this stage. Each case will be handled on an individualized basis as decided by the director.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Employees are required to obtain 1 clock hour of training every 12 months. Included in the training must be: prevention, recognition, and reporting child abuse and neglect. Employees must be able to indicate when a child is at risk for abuse or neglect, the internal procedures and reporting abuse or neglect. Employees must also be aware of the community centers that work with families of abuse or neglect situations.

In the event of a child who has been abused or neglected, employees need to inform the director of the situation. To report abuse or neglect, call 1-800-252-5400 or at txabusehotline.org

Parents and teachers can increase their awareness of issues regarding abuse and neglect by attending local trainings and reading informational literature. Helpguide.org lists several organizations and articles on abuse and neglect and how to obtain help and further information. Information will be sent home regarding the warning signs, prevention, lists or community organizations to notify for assistance. The National Domestic and Violence Hotline will provide callers with crisis intervention and referrals to their local family and violence service providers and other resources. Their number is 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

There is a local crisis center for families who are victim to abuse and neglect. Bluebonnet can help parents contact the center for assistance.

Emergency Evacuation and Relocation Plan

In case of fire (explosion, toxic fumes, chemical release, natural events, medical events, or human caused events)

1. Fire Alarm Sounds
2. The teacher will immediately line up the children in the classroom and do the head count to make sure everyone is there.
3. The teacher in charge of each class will quickly take the attendance chart and folder containing the children's admission information (emergency numbers and emergency medical authorizations) for that class.
4. Each group will exit the building immediately using the nearest exit route (shown on the classroom diagram) for each class.
5. Each group will relocate outside of the building and teachers will line the children up at least 50 ft. away from the building.
6. Each teacher will again do a head count, checking for attendance charts to make sure each child is accounted for.
7. The director or person in charge will make sure that everyone has left the building and that all children are accounted for. The director or person left in charge will take the first aid kit if possible and will call the fire department. (911).

In the event of tornado, natural events, or severe weather:

Follow the procedures above except **DO NOT EXIT THE BUILDING**. Instead, take the children to the designated severe weather shelter in room 404 (shown on classroom diagram). Have the children sit on their knees and cover their heads and faces with their arms.

In the event of a human-caused occurrence:

The teacher will lock their classroom door, turn off the lights and sit quietly with the children with their back against the wall adjacent to the hallway where they are not able to be seen by the window. In the event, we cannot remain in our classrooms or exit the building to our standard emergency locations, and need an alternate shelter, we will re-locate to the gym, the building located next to the school or to the chapel which is straight down the hallway towards the church office.

Per Texas Penal Code and licensing requirements, Bluebonnet is a gang free zone. An area within 1000 feet of our child-care center is a gang-free zone.

Parent Information and Communication

Newsletters will be emailed and sent home monthly to keep you informed of activities, monthly curriculum themes, and learning areas. A parent bulletin board will also be posted in the hallway. Please take the time to read all published or posted information. Special notices will be emailed and sent home if there are special activities or materials requested for projects. You will be notified in writing of any operational changes at our preschool.

You are entitled to see the minimum standards for this center. A report is available online at www.dfps.state.tx.us. The most recent inspection form is available at www.dfps.state.tx.us or from your local licensing office. Their phone number is 512-834-3195.

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged to speak with the director regarding concerns about the program, policies, procedures, or questions about their child. Parents are more than welcome to visit the center at any time as well as volunteer in their child's classroom. Please call or come see the director if you would like to observe your child in class. We welcome parents at all times. It is our goal for parents to feel that they are working in a partnership with the staff of Bluebonnet Methodist Preschool. Parents may volunteer to help with parties or celebrations, or share their special skills, hobbies, or interests with their child's classmates. Information on how to help will be posted by the teacher prior to the event. Please feel free to let your child's teacher know of your interest to help.

By law, Bluebonnet will provide a private area for nursing mothers with young children. Please ask the director if you need assistance.

INFANTS

Infants 12 months and younger must follow the Safe Sleep Policy as required by the State of Texas under the Minimum Standards.

BLUEBONNET METHODIST PRESCHOOL IS A PEANUT FREE SCHOOL!

My signature verifies I have read and received a copy of this Parent Handbook.

Signature

Date