



Preschool Policy Handbook

Albemarle First Assembly

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Welcome to Camp AFA Preschool!

We're so glad you're here. At Camp AFA Preschool, we believe every child is wonderfully made by God and filled with potential, purpose, and curiosity. Our heart is to create a Jesus-centered environment where children feel safe, loved, and eager to learn through play, creativity, and meaningful connection.

It is our joy and privilege to partner with your family—supporting your child's growth spiritually, socially, emotionally, and academically. This handbook will help you get to know our program, daily rhythms, and how we'll work together to make this a joyful, enriching year for your child.

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”
— Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your family's journey. We look forward to a year of learning, growing, and shining God's light—together.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Program Overview

Ages Served:

Camp AFA Preschool serves children ages 2 to 5 years old, including those who may benefit from an additional year of preschool before entering kindergarten. Children must meet the minimum age requirement for their class **on or before August 31** of the current school year.

Hours of Operation:

- **PS3 & PS4 Classes (3- and 4-year-olds):**
Monday – Thursday | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- **PS2 Class (2-year-olds):**
Tuesday – Thursday | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Curriculum Overview

Camp AFA Preschool uses a blended approach to early childhood education, drawing from **Abeka**, **Play to Learn Preschool**, and **ABC Jesus Loves Me**.

- **Abeka** lays a strong foundation in phonics, early literacy, and number concepts, preparing children for kindergarten success.
- **Play to Learn Preschool** incorporates hands-on, play-based activities that promote creativity, social growth, and discovery through engaging themed units.
- **ABC Jesus Loves Me** supports our Bible teaching with memory verses, interactive lessons, and age-appropriate character development.

Our curriculum is guided by the **North Carolina Kindergarten Readiness Indicators**, helping ensure that children are developing the skills needed for a successful transition into elementary school.

This well-rounded approach nurtures the whole child—academically, socially, and spiritually—through structured learning, purposeful play, and a Jesus-centered environment.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Enrollment & Admission

Camp AFA Preschool welcomes families from both our church and the surrounding community.

To secure enrollment, the following are required:

- A completed application form
- A non-refundable registration fee
- An up-to-date immunization record

Children must meet the minimum age requirement for their class **on or before August 31** of the current school year.

Enrollment is limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Once classes are full, families may choose to be placed on a waitlist and will be contacted if a space becomes available.

Priority enrollment is extended in the following order:

1. Currently enrolled students
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students
3. AFA church members
4. General community applicants



Preschool Policy Handbook

Tuition & Fees

- Tuition is due on the 1st of each month.
Payments received after the 1st may incur a late fee unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director.
- 2-Year-Old Class Tuition:
\$3,375 per year, payable in 9 monthly installments of \$375.
Payments are due on the 1st of each month, beginning September 1st and ending May 1st.
- 3 & 4-Year-Old Class Tuition:
\$3,780 per year, payable in nine monthly installments of \$420.
Payments are due on the 1st of each month, beginning September 1st and ending May 1st.
- Registration Fee:
\$100 (non-refundable)
- Late Payment Fee:
A \$25 late fee will be added to your account if payment is not received by the 1st of the month unless a payment plan has been approved by the Director.
- Extended Activities:
Extension activity fees are billed separately and are not included in monthly tuition.
- Withdrawal Policy:
A two-week written notice is required for withdrawal from the program.
- Late Pick-Up Fee
A late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after 1:10 PM. This fee will be billed to your account and must be paid before your child returns to school.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Daily Schedule Overview by Age Group

We believe children thrive with structure and routine. Each age group follows a developmentally appropriate daily rhythm designed to support their learning, growth, and well-being. While the flow of the day may vary slightly, the following outlines reflect the key components children will experience in PS2, PS3, and PS4.

PS2 Class (2-Year-Olds)

Our PS2 class focuses on gentle structure and social-emotional growth through play-based learning. Children are introduced to routines in a nurturing and developmentally supportive environment.

Typical Daily Components:

- Morning Circle Time – Bible story, prayer, simple songs, and basic calendar concepts
- Snack Time
- Learning Centers – fine motor play, manipulatives, sensory exploration, and early exposure to letters and numbers
- Outdoor Play Time
- Music & Movement
- Lunch Time
- Quiet Time – begins with 10 minutes of calm, followed by extended rest or peaceful play as needed

Developmental Goals:

- Develop basic self-help and toileting skills
 - Participate in group routines and respond to simple directions
 - Explore sensory and motor activities to build early learning foundations
 - Begin parallel play and show interest in peers
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Preschool Policy Handbook

PS3 Class (3-Year-Olds)

The PS3 class introduces more structure while continuing to build foundational skills. Circle Time and Learning Centers support academic readiness through engaging, play-based experiences.

Typical Daily Components:

- Morning Circle Time – letter, number, color, and shape recognition; calendar; Bible story and prayer; pledges; Bible memory verse
- Snack Time
- Learning Centers – themed curriculum units, phonics, fine motor activities, and art projects
- Outdoor Play Time
- Music & Movement
- Lunch Time
- Quiet Time – 10-minute calm period followed by quiet play or rest

Developmental Goals:

- Begin recognizing letters, numbers, shapes, and colors
- Follow simple classroom routines with increasing independence
- Engage in imaginative and cooperative play with peers
- Develop early friendships and begin taking turns with support

PS4 Class (4-Year-Olds)

The PS4 class prepares children for kindergarten through intentional, developmentally appropriate instruction. Lessons emphasize academic readiness, Bible integration, and social growth.

Typical Daily Components:

- Morning Circle Time – phonics, calendar and counting, letter/sound review, Bible memory verse, prayer, pledges, and seasonal concepts
- Snack Time
- Learning Centers – reinforce weekly curriculum through literacy, math, science, art, and fine motor skills
- Outdoor Play Time
- Music & Movement
- Lunch Time
- Quiet Time – a brief rest period with soft music, independent books, or quiet activities to recharge before the afternoon



Preschool Policy Handbook

Developmental Goals:

- Demonstrate early reading readiness and phonemic awareness
- Work cooperatively in group settings and transition independently between activities
- Exhibit self-regulation and problem-solving skills appropriate for kindergarten
- Form friendships, resolve conflicts with guidance, and express feelings respectfully

Preschool Extension Activities

In addition to our regular classroom learning, Preschool Extension activities provide valuable opportunities for children to grow socially, emotionally, and spiritually through special events and experiences. These may include open house, seasonal parties, class field trips (PS3/PS4 only), school pictures, and special programs such as our Christmas Program, End of Year Program (PS2/PS3), and PS4 Graduation.

Please note: These activities are considered enhancements and are **billed separately** from regular tuition. Participation details and costs will be communicated in advance through Brightwheel.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Potty Training

Children enrolled in our PS3 and PS4 classes are expected to be fully potty trained by the first day of school. Parents will be asked to sign an agreement form confirming that their child is potty trained or in the final stages of training.

[Camp AFA Preschool Potty Training Agreement](#)

We understand that occasional accidents may occur. If a child experiences frequent accidents during the first few weeks, we will schedule a meeting with the family to offer support and discuss the next steps. Please note that PS3 and PS4 teachers are not equipped to routinely change diapers or pull-ups.

For children in our PS2 class, potty training is approached as a collaborative process between parents and teachers. When both agree a child is ready, we will work together to support them with encouragement and consistency.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Meals & Snacks

To ensure a smooth mealtime routine, please follow the guidelines below:

- **Snack:**
Send a nutritious, easy-to-eat snack each day, labeled and separate from your child's lunchbox. Water will be provided during snack time.
- **Lunch:**
Pack a nutritious lunch in a labeled lunchbox, including any necessary cutlery and napkins.
 - We are unable to heat lunches, so please send items that are ready to eat
 - Please include a drink with your child's lunch (water, juice, or milk)
- **Labeling:**
All lunchboxes, containers, water bottles, and snack items must be clearly labeled with your child's name.
- **Allergies:**
If there are any allergy concerns in your child's class, your child's teacher will notify you with specific guidance.

Clothing & Personal Belongings

To help your child stay comfortable and prepared each day, please follow these guidelines:

- Dress your child in comfortable, weather-appropriate play clothes
 - Seasonal items like a jacket, hat, or gloves
- Ensure they wear closed-toe shoes suitable for active play
- Send a labeled bag with:
 - A complete change of clothes (including socks and underwear)
 - Diapers or pull-ups, if needed
- Do not send personal toys or items from home, unless it is your child's scheduled Show-and-Tell day
- Label all personal items (clothing, containers, water bottles, etc.) with your child's name
- Please send clothing that can get messy- children may paint, explore outdoors, or play in sensory bins throughout the day



Preschool Policy Handbook

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures

Families may enter the Albemarle First Assembly campus (1501 NC-24, Albemarle, NC 28001) using either the NC-24 entrance or the Judy Street entrance. All vehicles should follow the drive in a counterclockwise direction around the building to the Camp AFA Preschool entrance located at the rear.

The car line will begin at the orange cone, where staff will be present to assist with drop-off and pick-up.

Car Line Times:

- Drop-Off: 9:00–9:10 AM
- Pick-Up: 1:00–1:10 PM

Important Guidelines:

- Remain in your vehicle during drop-off and pick-up.
- Display your child's car tag clearly on the dashboard or rearview mirror for identification.
- For safety and liability reasons, staff will not buckle or unbuckle children from car seats. Please ensure your child is unbuckled before drop-off and securely buckled after pick-up.
- Do not pass other vehicles while in the car line.
- Refrain from using cell phones while the line is moving.

Late Arrival & Early Dismissal:

If you arrive after 9:10 AM, please park and send a message to the Coordinator or Director through Brightwheel. A staff member will meet you at the door and escort your child inside.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Pick-up time is from **1:00–1:10 PM**. We understand that occasional delays may happen; however, our staff must transition promptly to other responsibilities.

A late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after 1:10 PM. This fee will be billed to your account and must be paid before your child returns to school.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Health & Safety

Camp AFA Preschool is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff. We follow several preventative practices to help reduce the spread of illness, including:

- Monitoring children daily for signs of illness
- Frequent handwashing routines
- Regular cleaning and sanitizing of toys and classroom materials
- Ongoing staff training in infection control procedures

We are not licensed to care for sick children. If a child becomes ill during the school day, parents will be contacted via Brightwheel and are expected to pick up their child promptly.

Please notify us through Brightwheel if your child will be absent—especially if they have a contagious illness (e.g., chicken pox, pink eye, strep throat)—so we can take appropriate precautions and notify other families if needed.

Return to School Guidelines After Illness

Children may return to school when they meet the following conditions:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
- Diarrhea-free for 24 hours without the use of anti-diarrheal medication
- Vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours
- Cleared by a physician to return, if applicable

Head Lice Policy

Camp AFA Preschool follows a No Nit Policy to help prevent the spread of head lice.

If a child is found to have live lice or nits (lice eggs), they must be picked up promptly and treated at home. Children may return to school after treatment has been completed, and all nits have been removed.

A staff member will perform a head check upon return to confirm the child is nit-free before rejoining class.

A doctor's note is not required, though one may be requested at the Director's discretion in certain cases.

Medication Administration



Preschool Policy Handbook

Prescription medication may only be administered with a **signed Medication Authorization Form** and written orders from a licensed healthcare provider.

Orders must include:

- Child's name
- Name of medication
- Dosage and frequency
- Route of administration
- Storage instructions
- Start and end dates for administration

We are unable to administer over-the-counter medications.

[Medication Authorization Form](#)

Emergency Preparedness

The safety and well-being of every child and staff member is our top priority. Camp AFA Preschool follows established emergency procedures to ensure a prompt and organized response in any crisis.

- Monthly fire and severe weather drills are conducted to help children and staff stay prepared and confident.
- Evacuation and lockdown procedures are in place and practiced regularly.
- In a shelter-in-place situation (such as severe weather or a nearby safety concern), children will remain indoors in a secure location under staff supervision.
- If a full evacuation is required, families will be notified immediately with details on the designated reunification location and procedures.
- All emergency updates and instructions will be sent through Brightwheel.
- Please ensure your contact information is always current in Brightwheel so that you can be reached without delay.
- All staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and emergency procedures.

We ask parents to trust that in emergency situations, our staff's first responsibility is to keep children safe before communication can be sent.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Behavior Guidance & Discipline

At our preschool, we use a loving and consistent approach to help children develop self-control, responsibility, and respect for others. Our goal is to create a safe, nurturing environment where children can grow emotionally and socially.

Our behavior guidance strategies include:

- Positive redirection
- Gentle reminders and natural consequences
- Teacher awareness of each child's unique needs
- Low child-to-teacher ratios for individualized attention
- Use of humor when appropriate
- Open communication with parents for recurring behaviors
- Conferences for continued or serious concerns

Positive behavior is encouraged through verbal praise and, when appropriate, small rewards—always paired with encouragement to reinforce good choices.

Use of Time-Out

In classrooms, redirection is the primary method of managing behavior. On rare occasions, when other strategies are not effective, a brief **“time-out”** may be used as a teaching tool rather than a punishment. It gives the child an opportunity to pause, reflect, and learn.

Time-out is handled with the following steps:

1. The child is calmly and clearly told what behavior is expected.
Example: “We need to be kind to our friends and use gentle touches.”
2. The child sits while the teacher speaks to them in a respectful, calm manner.
3. The teacher and child discuss what happened. The child is asked to reflect on and express why they were asked to sit, ensuring understanding.
4. The teacher helps guide the child through apologizing (if needed) and supports their return to the group in a positive and encouraging way.

Biting Policy

While biting is uncommon, particularly after age 3, it can happen in group settings for several reasons—such as frustration, difficulty expressing emotions, or feeling overwhelmed.



Preschool Policy Handbook

When biting occurs, it is addressed immediately and thoughtfully. We work to help the child understand their feelings and find appropriate ways to express them.

Our response includes:

- Clearly stating that biting is not acceptable, using language the child understands
- Closely supervising and supporting the child to prevent future incidents
- Notifying parents and completing an incident report
- Protecting confidentiality by never disclosing the name of the child who bit

Each case is handled individually, and we work closely with parents and staff to address the behavior and support the child's growth.

Severe Behavioral Concerns

The safety of all children and staff is our top priority. While we are committed to helping each child succeed, the Director reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time if their behavior poses a serious risk to others.

In most situations, however, we will partner with families to address behavioral concerns through the following process:

1. Initial Meeting & Behavior Plan

A written plan will be developed by the teacher in collaboration with parents, including strategies for both home and school.

2. Progress Review (After 6 Class Sessions)

A second meeting will evaluate progress. Adjustments will be made if little or no improvement is seen.

3. Final Evaluation (After 4 More Class Sessions)

A third meeting will determine the child's continued enrollment and outline any further steps or strategies.

We value a strong home-school partnership and are committed to supporting each child's development with care, compassion, and structure.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Communication with Families

We value open, consistent communication and believe strong partnerships with families are key to each child's success. Brightwheel will be our primary platform for sharing essential information and staying connected throughout the school year.

Families can expect the following communication:

- Weekly class updates via Brightwheel
- Daily notes and updates as needed
- Occasional notes sent home in folders
- Monthly classroom calendars to keep families informed of upcoming events
- Parent-teacher conferences as needed or at request

We encourage families to check Brightwheel regularly and reach out to your child's teacher or the coordinator with any questions. Your partnership is hugely appreciated!

Parent Volunteers

We welcome and value parent involvement at Camp AFA Preschool! Volunteering is a meaningful way to engage with your child's learning environment and build connections within our preschool community.

Throughout the year, we offer opportunities for parents to serve, such as:

- Assisting with classroom activities, crafts, or celebrations
- Supporting seasonal events and special theme days
- Reading to the class or sharing a special skill or talent
- Donating snacks, supplies, or party items

If you're interested in volunteering, please reach out to your child's teacher or the Preschool Coordinator. Some roles may require a background check to ensure a safe environment for all children. We are so grateful for the time, energy, and heart our parent volunteers bring—your support truly makes a difference!



Preschool Policy Handbook

Holidays & Closures

Camp AFA Preschool will be closed on the following dates for holidays and scheduled breaks:

- **Labor Day** – September 7
- **Fall Break** – October 19–20
- **Veterans Day** – November 11
- **Thanksgiving Break** – November 23–26
- **Christmas Break** – December 17 – January 4
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** – January 18
- **Presidents Day/Winter Break** – February 15-16
- **Teacher Workday**- March 25
- **Easter Break** – March 29-April 1

Inclement Weather Closures:

In the event of inclement weather, Camp AFA Preschool may close. Families will be notified through Brightwheel messages as soon as a decision is made.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Photo/Media Consent

Throughout the school year, we love to capture moments of learning, play, and special events to share with our preschool families and celebrate our students' experiences. Photos and short video clips may be used for classroom projects, end-of-year presentations, secure parent communication through Brightwheel, and limited promotional materials such as church bulletins or our Camp AFA social media page.

By enrolling your child, you grant permission for your child's photo or video to be taken during school-related activities unless you opt out in writing. **No full names or personal information will be publicly shared** with any media.

If you do not wish for your child to be photographed or recorded, please indicate this on the Media Release Form provided at orientation or request one from the Preschool Coordinator at any time.

[Photo/Media Consent Form](#)



Preschool Policy Handbook

Contact & Communication

While Brightwheel is our primary communication platform, you are also welcome to contact us by email if needed:

- **Susan Helms, Director:** susan@albemarlefirst.org
- **Misty Bost, Early Childhood Coordinator:** mbost@albemarlefirst.org

We ask that all routine updates, attendance notes, and questions be sent through Brightwheel whenever possible. Thank you for helping us stay connected and informed as we partner together in your child's learning journey.

Leadership Roles & Who to Contact

We are here to support you and your child every step of the way! Here is a quick look at our leadership roles so you will know who to contact for specific needs:

Preschool Director – Susan Helms

Susan oversees the big picture of Camp AFA Preschool. She manages:

- Registration & onboarding
- Parent engagement & communication
- Marketing and promotions
- Budget and financial management
- Policy decisions
- Staff Scheduling

Early Childhood Coordinator – Misty Bost

Misty leads the daily operations of the preschool and MMO programs. She manages:

- Preschool and MMO programming
- Classroom environments and setup
- Staff supervision and classroom scheduling
- Curriculum planning

Together, Susan and Misty work closely to create a safe, nurturing, and Jesus-centered environment for your child to grow and thrive.



Preschool Policy Handbook

Parent Agreement

All parents and guardians are required to sign an acknowledgment form stating that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

[Sign Now](#)