

1st Explorers Parent Handbook

PROGRAM OVERVIEW 1st Explorers (1E) children participate in a balanced program of open play and structured activities. Every activity is Christ-centered, carefully designed to spark your child's imagination and encourage lifelong positive values. Program components may include but are not limited to recreation, health enhancement, arts, humanities, snacks, service learning, character development and learning centers.

HOURS, DAYS AND MONTHS OF OPERATION

Wee Explorers will follow a designated calendar as set by the 1st Explorers Director.
After School will follow the Jackson County Schools Smoky Mountain District Calendar.
Summer Explorers Camp will follow a designated calendar as set by the 1st Explorers Director.

POLICY ON HOMEWORK

We will provide assistance, remind and encourage, but not force children to do homework. We will provide time Monday through Thursday for homework to be completed during freetime. If children do not complete their work in that time period, we must move on to the scheduled activities. Remaining homework will need to be worked on during free time or at home. At request from the child, staff will assist with homework by explaining directions, giving examples and checking completed work. If your child needs more help with homework or needs one-on-one tutoring, we suggest you work directly with your child's school.

CHILD'S BELONGINGS

Children should be dressed for active indoor and outdoor play. A change of clothes is recommended. Items brought to the program by your child must be labeled and we expect children to be responsible for their personal belongings; they will be provided with an area where they can store their belongings. Please leave personal toys, money, video games and players, CDs, CD players, iPods, or other MP3 players, cell phones, laptops, tablets, smart watches, and anything not allowed by your child's school district at home. 1E cannot credit or compensate for lost, damaged or stolen items. If these items are found by a staff member the student will be asked to put them away. If they do not comply with the request the item will be confiscated until the end of the day.

- A note about cell phones and smart watches: Please do not call or text your child during the day. If you find it necessary to contact your child, please call the 1st Explorers Office at (828) 339-0130 or Church Office at (828) 586-2095. We will confiscate the item due to it being disruptive to the 1st Explorers environment. Once the item is confiscated, a parent/guardian will need to get the item back from the Director.
- Clothing: We ask that your child wear comfortable clothing that is appropriate for active play and that might get dirty. Please ensure they have shoes that are secure to their feet (i.e. no flip flops, sandals must have a back strap, Chaco type sandals are acceptable.)

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

1st Explorers' responsibility for your child begins when:

- Your child enters the First Baptist Church of Sylva building.
- Your child boards a 1st Explorers vehicle.

Please make sure a 1st Explorers Staff Member has acknowledged you and your child's presence before leaving them. Please notify us when your child will not be attending 1st Explorers.

DEPARTURE AND RELEASE PROCEDURES

These procedures ensure child safety. Photo ID may be required for the release of your child. The child will only be released to his/her parent and/or those adults that the parent(s) specifically designate on the enrollment form.

Amendments to the release section of the enrollment form must be submitted in writing by the parent or guardian that completed the form. If a parent is not allowed to pick up a child, 1E must have a copy of the court order signed by a judge. Without this documentation, we are obligated to release a child to either parent. 1E will only follow what the court order states.

- **After School / Summer Explorers Camp** - Students will be called from the back door to go home. We ask that parents/guardians remain in their car. We must be notified if someone other than those on the approved check out list will be picking your child up. If you pick your child up from the playground, please make sure a staff member has acknowledged you.

*To ensure the safety of those at First Baptist Church of Sylva, our building is secured throughout the day. In order to access our building, you will need to be let in via the buzzer that is on the Landis St. entrance and the

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back door entrance. The office is open from Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM with a break for lunch from 12:30 - 1:15 PM. For access outside of those hours, please call 828-339-0130.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among children and adults are encouraged to maximize everyone's enjoyment of the program. Program staff use positive guidance methods including reminders, logical consequences and redirection. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

- Consistent rules are clearly stated. Children are expected to work and play within known limits.
- Behavior expected of children is age-appropriate and according to development level.
- An atmosphere of trust is established in order for children to know that they will not be hurt nor will they be allowed to hurt others.
- Staff members strive to help children become acquainted with themselves and their feelings. This will help them learn to cope with their feelings and control them responsibly.

Child safety is the most important concern of the program. Therefore, children whose behavior is dangerous or repeatedly disruptive must be immediately picked up from the program by someone designated through the departure and release procedures. Repeatedly disruptive or dangerous behavior will be discussed with the child's parent and will result in loss of privileges or activities, suspension or termination from the program.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN

All children are entitled to a pleasant and safe environment while participating in this program. The core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, caring and faith will be used in 1st Explorers. We expect children to behave as follows:

- 1) Always try/participate in the activity for a little while
- 2) Always have listening ears on
- 3) You need to be in eyesight of your teacher at all times
- 4) Keep hands to yourself
- 5) Respect your teachers, classmates, and yourself
- 6) Always treat others like you want to be treated
- 7) Follow directions given by staff members.

Follow proper safety procedures at all times, including:

- Never opening the outside doors
- No fighting or using foul language
- No playing in the restrooms
- No playing on or around the furniture
- Using good table manners at snack time
- Respect for fellow students and staff
- Stay with your group and listen to your counselor at all times

1st Explorers cannot serve children who display unacceptable behavior. Children that exhibit any type of behavior which is thought to be unacceptable or unsafe by staff and the Director will be warned to correct their behavior and a telephone call will be made to their parent or guardian. There are no refunds for suspension or termination.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Foul language
- Disrespect for another child or counselor
- Fighting
- Refusing to take part in activities
- Ignoring or disobeying rules of safety
- Communicating threats or making threatening statements
- Public or inappropriate displays of affection
- Defacing property or vandalism
- Stealing

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- Bullying (defined as aggressive behavior that is unkind and seeks to cause emotional, physical or psychological injury)

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:

Following disciplinary intervention by a staff member, a student will talk through their misbehavior with a staff member using a think sheet that gives them the opportunity to reflect on their actions and make better decisions in the future.

Positive Behavior Encouragement:

Each member of the 1st Explorers Staff will have Praise Points that they will give out when they see students going above and beyond. Praise points will serve as a way to encourage positive behavior among students and encourage them to be on their best behavior and a note will be sent home weekly for students who have been on their best behavior. Weekly students will be able to go to the store and purchase items using their praise points.

Disciplinary Process:

1st Incident: Parent will be notified in writing.

2nd Incident: Child will receive a written warning and one day suspension.

3rd Incident: This will result in five days of suspension or termination of care

SNACKS (FOOD SERVICE PRACTICES)

After School: An afternoon snack and water is provided each day. If the child has a snack left over from the school day, please ensure that it does not contain any form of peanut products.

Summer Explorers Camp: Breakfast, snack, and lunch will be provided.

Wee Explorers: Snack is provided and parents must provide lunch.

MEDICATION POLICY

All medications must be accompanied by prescription or written permission from the child's parent and must be in the original container with your child's name and all labels intact.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the case of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and contact the child's parents/guardians. Responding emergency medical personnel will make any determinations as to whether or not the child should be transported to a hospital. We will provide them with the information from your child's records as to your choice of hospital and physician. In the event that this information is not specified, the child will be transported to the nearest available hospital.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

While children are on a First Baptist Church of Sylva bus, they are under the direct supervision of the driver and staff, and must obey the driver and staff at all times. The bus driver and staff have the authority to assign seats to students for safety or disciplinary reasons as outlined in our Discipline and Guidance Procedures section of this handbook. Failure to follow the driver's or staff's rules will be considered an act of disobedience and will result in disciplinary action. For the child's own protection, hands, head, and arms must be kept inside the bus at all times. Feet and bags must be kept clear of the aisle. No food, drinks or electronics are allowed on the bus. Conversations containing offensive language are not allowed and children should avoid any unnecessary, loud or boisterous talking.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Registration Fee: At the beginning of each school year a one-time \$35 registration fee will be charged for those enrolling in After School and Wee Explorers.

After School Ministry: Monthly payments are due by the 10th of every month. \$95 for one child, \$150 for two children, and \$200 for three children.

Wee Explorers: \$270/month due on the 10th of every month.

Summer Explorers Camp: \$650 for one child, \$1,000 for two children, \$1,300 for three children. Tuition will be due prior to the beginning of camp and a payment schedule will be given.

Late Pick-Up: Parents will be charged \$15 dollars for being later than 25 minutes.

Late Fee: On the 11th of each month, a \$30 per child late fee will be applied to all late accounts.

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

In cases of inclement weather, 1E's program will follow specific school district recommendation. If the school is closed or all after school extracurricular activities are canceled due to weather, 1E's After School Ministry is also closed. If the weather begins to worsen during the day, we will ask you to pick up your child as soon as possible.

1ST EXPLORERS INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Wee Explorers: If there is snow or ice on the roads, we will notify parents/guardians about Wee Explorers closures via phone call and social media no later than 6:30 AM.

After School: We will be closed when Jackson County Schools are closed due to inclement weather. We will not provide After School on days Jackson County Schools have early release for inclement weather. We will notify parents/guardians via phone call and social media.

SNOW DAY CARE

1st Explorers will give its best effort to provide care for school-age children when Jackson County Schools are closed due to snow. However, this care is not guaranteed for every snow day and is unlikely when there is actual snow. The director will make the decision based on weather conditions and staff availability. Parents/guardians will be notified via phone call and social media.