



**PARENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017**

RIDGECREST PRESCHOOL

A Ministry of Ridgecrest Baptist Church

7469 Old Canton Road

Madison, MS 39110

Phone: (601) 853-9100

www.ridgecrestpreschool.net

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Ridgecrest Preschool is to provide opportunities for each child to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually as they come to understand their own real and growing personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Ridgecrest Preschool provides a secure and loving Christian setting where children can begin to understand God's desire for them to become more like Christ. We offer a developmentally-appropriate approach to learning which respects each child's varying abilities. Our theme-based, teacher-directed activities offer many hands-on experiences that allow children to gain an appreciation of the joy of learning while making memories, building relationships, and gaining knowledge for kindergarten readiness.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY. GROWING THROUGH SPIRIT.

As a year-round preschool offering separate enrollment for the school year and summer semester, we offer a unique opportunity for families in our community.

As a ministry of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, our desire is to create an environment that lays the foundation for all children to be become more like Christ. Our theme verse, Luke 2:52, states "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

To that end, our focus will be on the following areas of development:

Wisdom (Cognitive/Mental Development) – Children are given opportunities to help them to develop their language, communication, and creativity as well as learn to make choices and solve problems.

Stature (Gross/Fine Motor Development) – Children participate in individual and group play that will enhance their motor skills as they learn the value of keeping their bodies healthy and safe.

Favor with God (Spiritual Development) – Children are guided in growing in their biblical knowledge through Bible stories, worship through music, and prayer as they grow in their desire to apply principles of God's Word to their own lives.

Favor with Man (Social/Emotional Development) – Children are taught to respond to others with Christ-like behavior, follow direction from adults, and to take turns with others. The staff also works with the children to help them

develop a positive sense of self and to understand that they are made in the image of God.

OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Ridgecrest Baptist Church has adopted the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 which can be read in its entirety at <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>.

RIDGECREST PRESCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Ridgecrest Preschool Director	Sue Hall director@ridgecrestpreschool.net
Ridgecrest Preschool Assistant	Andrea Regan ridgecrestpreschool@ridgecrest.net
Ridgecrest Preschool Financial	Fred McEwen fmcewen@rcbc.org
Staff Liaison to Ridgecrest Preschool	Stacie Albritton salbritton@rcbc.org
Stewardship Director	Tim Blocker tblocker@rcbc.org

Our Early Childhood Education Committee (ECEC), comprised of lay leaders of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, serves to work with the administrative staff regarding Ridgecrest Preschool.

LICENSING AND REGULATION

Ridgecrest Preschool is licensed and regulated by the MS Dept. of Health. Our license is renewed annually. State child care facility regulations and guidelines are available for your review at www.healthyMS.com.

Ridgecrest Baptist Kindergarten/Daycare MDH License Number: 45C4RF-0564

RIDGECREST PRESCHOOL POLICIES

GENERAL POLICIES

Line of Authority

The preschool director and the director's assistant are in charge of the preschool. In the absence of both the director and the assistant, a director designee is in charge.

Admission

We accept children without regard to race, sex, or religious beliefs. Please note that Christian education is an important part of Ridgecrest Preschool. To be considered for placement, an application must be completed for each child. There is no fee due at the time of application.

We accept children who are 15 months (by September 1; should be walking and drinking from a cup) through four years old. Each applicant is subject to the approval of the Early Childhood Education Committee of Ridgecrest Baptist Church.

Waiting List Priorities

If a space is not available at the time of application, a child will be placed on our waiting list at the parent's request. Parents of children on the waiting list must call the preschool office each calendar month to confirm interest in remaining on the waiting list. Failure to contact the preschool office monthly will result in the loss of current waiting list standing.

Our waiting list is purged annually, usually in February. Every applicant on the waiting list will be notified of the need to complete a new application on the specified date.

Enrollment

Once a space becomes available, the next applicant will be contacted and given the opportunity to accept or decline the opening within a specified time period. Once an opening has been accepted, a \$75.00 annual non-refundable enrollment fee will be required within a specified time in order to hold the opening.

Siblings of currently enrolled children and active members of Ridgecrest Baptist Church are given priority placement at the discretion of the director and/or ECEC.

Documentation Required for Your Child's Records

- Enrollment Packet
- Form 121 Record of Immunizations from your doctor or health department stating that your child is free of contagious disease and physically fit for group care. An updated copy must be provided with each new immunization. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep their child's immunizations updated.

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday
Preschool: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Early Room: 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
Lunch Bunch: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

2016-17 Calendar

We will follow the Madison County School District calendar. Holidays will include:

Labor Day
Fall Holiday
Thanksgiving Break
Christmas Break
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Teacher Training
Spring Break
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Memorial Day Holiday
Independence Day (summer semester)
Teacher Training (week after summer semester ends)

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We feel it is of great importance that lines of communication are kept open between staff and parents. We want you to know how your child spends each day. Daily reports will be filled out and sent home with your child each day.

As we partner with you in the care of your child, we ask that you share with your child's teacher any change or disruption in your child's normal schedule or home environment that might affect your child during his time at the preschool such as amount of sleep, illness, emotional upset, etc. Knowing this will help us to better serve your child's individual needs. In turn, we will keep you informed of any behavioral concerns that may occur with your child at the preschool.

Parent Visits/Classroom Observation

Parents of enrolled children are welcome to visit the preschool anytime during regular open hours. These visits do not have to be announced or scheduled. However, visiting during naptime between 12:30 and 1:30 is discouraged as it may be disruptive to resting toddlers.

Parents are encouraged to observe their children as they learn and interact socially with others. If a situation is observed that warrants disciplinary action, please notify the staff in the classroom or the office. It is requested that parents yield the authority of the classroom to our staff and not address other children regarding their behavior. Any concerns should be shared discreetly with our staff in order to maintain confidentiality for each individual.

While observing your child, please do not distract staff from their duties except in the case of an emergency.

Class Treats

Some teachers offer treats as a reward for good behavior, potty training incentive, etc.

Room Parent

Room parents will be assigned to help the teacher with the planning of class treats, class parties, and special snacks. Please check with the teacher when planning for parties so that arrangements can be made to accommodate any children with food allergies.

For children enrolled in a three-year-old class or younger, we suggest items that are no larger than ½ inch in size (as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics) such as plain M&Ms, fruit snacks, smarties, nerds, or mini gummy bears. Items to be avoided include, but are not limited to, hard candy, gum, popcorn, and thick pretzel rods. Stickers and other non-edible, age-appropriate items are encouraged.

Notifications

We use many methods to communicate with parents including notices through email, text notifications, notices posted with the sign in/out sheets as well as face-to-face conversations. While we prefer to communicate with all parents, families are asked to provide an email address that is checked during the day for at least one parent per family to receive email notifications. Text notifications are another option and are used to provide information including weather-related closures, holidays, and upcoming events.

Photography

It is policy that photographing a child without parental consent is prohibited. A parental consent form is provided at the time of enrollment enabling parents to grant permission for us to photograph fun times at the preschool. These photographs may be used in ways such as class projects or shared online through our website or social media.

Resolving Parental Concerns

We encourage the following of the teaching of Matthew 18:15-20 as a means of conflict resolution, promoting individuals meeting together to resolve issues in a timely manner rather than allowing them to fester or be discussed among others.

One of the most important aspects of teaching young children is communication among parents and staff. Our staff encourages parents to share questions or concerns about their child at any time with our director or the director's assistant. We request, however, that a phone call or conference be scheduled to address serious concerns or complaints. Neither the classroom environment nor the hallway lends itself to discussion of sensitive matters. Efforts will be made to schedule needed conferences within a 24-hour period. Conferences may be scheduled by calling the preschool office.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Tuition Rates

Tuition rates are subject to review and change each year. Current tuition rates are as follows:

Tuition

Toddlers – 2 Days Per Week (Tuesday & Thursday) \$160.00 per month

Toddlers – 3 Days Per Week (Monday, Wednesday, & Friday)..... \$180.00 per month

Parents desiring their toddler to attend 5 days per week may enroll their child in both a 2 day and 3 day class.

Twos – 2 Days Per Week (Tuesday & Thursday)..... \$160.00 per month

Twos – 3 Days Per Week (Monday, Wednesday, & Friday) \$180.00 per month

Parents desiring their two year old to attend 5 days per week may enroll their child in both a 2 day and 3 day class.

Threes – 2 Days Per Week (Tuesday & Thursday) \$160.00 per month

Threes – 3 Days Per Week (Monday, Wednesday, & Friday)..... \$180.00 per month

Threes – 5 Days Per Week (Monday through Friday) \$220.00 per month

Fours – 5 Days Per Week (Monday through Friday) \$220.00 per month

Early Room Fees:

\$4.00 per day billed and prepaid (requires semester commitment)

\$5.00 per day drop-in (available to enrolled children, if space is available)

Lunch Bunch Fees:

\$8.00 per day billed and prepaid (requires semester commitment)

\$10.00 per day drop-in (available to enrolled children, if space is available)

Payments

Preschool tuition is to be paid on the first day of each month. We are able to accept cash or checks made payable to Ridgecrest Preschool. We are not able to accept credit cards.

As your child's legal guardian, it is your responsibility to work out payment arrangements with an estranged spouse, relative, or other entity.

Enrollment Fee

An annual enrollment fee of \$75.00 is due once each year at enrollment time for each child.

Supply Fees

Fall and summer supply fees are assessed per child and may vary per year. Fall fees will be announced in January of each year and are due by the end of July prior to the beginning of fall classes each year. Summer fees will be announced during the spring semester and will be due by the end of May each year.

Class Supply Fees:

2 Day Classes Supply Fee	\$ 110.00 per year
3 Day Classes Supply Fee	\$ 130.00 per year
5 Day Classes Supply Fee	\$ 150.00 per year

A separate supply fee will be charged in the spring for children attending the summer semester.

Late Pickup Fee

A late pickup fee of \$25 per child will be charged for the first fifteen minutes or part thereof that you are late picking up your child. After the first fifteen minutes, a \$2 per minute charge applies. Payment of this fee is expected when you arrive to pick up your child. The director will take into consideration any emergency causing you to be late.

Late Payment Fees and Delinquent Tuition

Tuition is considered delinquent if not paid in full by 12:00 p.m. on the first day of the month. A late fee of 18% of your balance will be charged. If you are unable to pay tuition at the time it is due, please call the preschool financial office. Special payment arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis.

If your account becomes behind in payment by two weeks, we will ask that you not drop your child off for preschool. At that time, your child's place at Ridgecrest Preschool will be surrendered, and you will continue to be billed for tuition which will serve as the beginning of your required two weeks' drop notice. Please see FINANCIAL POLICIES - Withdrawal. If your account is sent to collections, an additional 35% of your account balance will be added to the total balance due.

Repeated late payment may be cause for your child to be dropped from enrollment without prior notice.

Your account must be current to place an additional family member on the waiting list for acceptance in the preschool.

Your account must be current for your child to participate in graduation (for children in four-year-old classes).

Returned Checks

Upon receiving two checks returned for insufficient payment, we will require cash payment.

Withdrawal

If you choose to withdraw your child, you must submit a written two-week notice documenting your child's last day to our preschool office. Your account will be charged for two weeks regardless of attendance.

We reserve the right to remove a child from our preschool. Written notice will be given to the parent or guardian.

Absences

Expenses continue whether the child is present or absent. Therefore, there will be no reduction of tuition for days missed.

Closures Due to Inclement Weather

There is no discount or refund on tuition due to inclement weather closings as we are obligated to pay our teachers for these days.

Holidays

There will be no reduction for holidays.

Monthly and Annual Statements

Monthly statements are emailed to each family so that families may monitor their account. If an email address is not on file with our preschool financial office, monthly statements will be hand delivered through our preschool office or mailed to the address on file.

Questions regarding your statement should be addressed to our preschool financial office by phone or email. Please do not discuss your account with our director, director's assistant, or other staff as they are not privy to that information. Records of financial payments will be kept and annual statements sent at the end of the year.

AUTHORIZED PERSONS

Emergency Contact Information/Security Release Form

Each child must have on file a list of names and phone numbers of emergency contacts. The emergency contacts are people in the area who are authorized by the parent(s) to pick up and/or care for the child in case of illness or emergency when the parent cannot be reached. Please be sure the people whose names you give are aware that they have been listed for this purpose and that staff members will ask for picture identification of any person with whom they are not familiar. In the case of legal issues, the enrolling parent must indicate who has legal custody and who may pick up the child on the enrollment form. A copy of the court order granting custody must be on file at the preschool. We assume no liability if not properly advised. If you won't be at the number you have listed to contact you during your child's day at the preschool, leave a note with office staff with the number at which you can be reached. Please update this information as necessary so that we may contact the appropriate parties in cases of illness or emergency.

Key Tags

Key tags are issued to help identify those individuals designated on your child's security release form. Three key tags are provided at no charge. Additional key tags are available for \$1.00 each. Please be prepared to show your key tag at pickup. For the safety of your child, you or the person picking up your child may also be required to show picture identification.

Your child will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than a person designated on his/her security release, unless we have been notified and the person has a valid driver's license. This rule is for your child's protection and will help to prevent any misunderstanding.

DAILY ROUTINES

Arrival and Departure

Please arrive on time each morning. As required by the MS Dept. of Health, parents and guardians are required to sign their child in and out each day. Sign in and out sheets are available in the carpool line and are maintained in the office at all other times. Please sign your child in and out each day providing your full signature and indicating the time of arrival and departure.

Please also see AUTHORIZED PERSONS – Key Tags for more details regarding departure.

Ridgecrest Preschool closes at 2:00 p.m. each day. Preschool children should be picked up by 12:00 p.m., and children enrolled in Lunch Bunch should be picked up by 2:00 p.m. Please be prompt in picking up your child. Please see FINANCIAL POLICIES – Late Pickup Fee regarding late fees.

If a child has not been picked up by 2:30 p.m. and we have not been able to reach any family members, the Madison Police Department will be notified.

Carpool

Morning carpool will begin at 8:30 a.m. and is staffed until 8:45 a.m. For the first two weeks of the school year, please feel free to park and walk your child into the building.

All children enrolled in Early Room must be walked into the building beginning at 8:00 a.m.

If you have a toddler and an older child, you may want to drop off your older child using the carpool line and then park in the side parking lot so that you may walk in with your toddler.

For the safety of the teachers and children, please refrain from using your cell phone while in the carpool line. Please put your car in park while your child is being loaded and unloaded.

Carpool pickup will begin at 11:45 a.m. for the Preschool and at 1:45 p.m. for Lunch Bunch.

Children under the age of four must be transported in a child safety seat approved by the state of Mississippi. All children are to be placed in the back seat. Please ensure that your child is buckled properly. Ridgecrest Preschool teachers cannot load children into the front seat of a vehicle or into a car seat that does not meet the Mississippi approved child restraint requirements. If Mississippi requirements are not met, parents will be asked to pull to the side parking lot.

Children will not be released to anyone except individuals listed on his or her security release. You must contact the Ridgecrest Preschool office in advance if anyone else will be picking up your child.

Early Room

Early Room is offered for toddlers through four-year-olds from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at an additional cost. Please see FINANCIAL POLICIES – Tuition Rates – Early Room Fees.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch is offered for toddlers through four-year-olds from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday following preschool at an additional cost. Please see FINANCIAL POLICIES – Tuition Rates – Lunch Bunch Fees. Parents may sign up their children for Lunch Bunch for specific days for a semester or may choose to drop in as space is available. Children will be able to eat lunch, rest, and play with their friends. Three-year-olds and four-year-olds will have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities provided by outside vendors at an additional cost to parents.

Lunch

Children staying for Lunch Bunch will bring a healthy lunch from home. **No fast food will be allowed.** (Example: McDonald's, etc.) Please label your child's lunch box with your child's name, the date, and the type of food. Parents will be notified in writing if a child's sack lunch does not meet the nutritional requirements set by the MS Dept. of Health. In order for your child to participate in Lunch Bunch, his/her lunch will need to include:

Meat or Meat Alternative

1 Vegetable and 1 Fruit OR 2 Vegetables OR 2 Fruits

Bread

Milk (which will be provided)

Water (which will be provided)

For example, if your child brings a Lunchable for lunch, you must be sure to add any of the above food items that may be left out so that the lunch will be complete.

As a preschool licensed by the State of Mississippi, we are required to oversee the good nutrition of our students. The foods listed below are not the only foods allowed but rather suggestions for healthy choices.

Healthy Food Suggestions:

Fruit:

Apples
Apricots
Avocado
Bananas
Berries
Canned Fruits
Cantaloupe
Cherries
Grapes (Cut Up)
Honeydew Melon
Grapefruit
Nectarine
Orange
Peaches or Pears
Plums or Watermelon

Vegetables:

Broccoli Florets
Cabbage Wedges
Carrot Strips
Cauliflower Florets
Celery Strips
Cucumber Slices
Green Pepper Strips
Lettuce Wedges
Zucchini Slices or Strips

Other:

Eggs or Yogurt
Cheese (All Kinds)
Crackers or Cereal
Bread, Muffins, or Waffles

We ask that you do not send items to be heated in the microwave. Please preheat and put food in a thermos. Our classrooms cannot be left unattended to heat food.

Please send your child's lunch in a plastic or cloth lunch box. Do not send glass containers. Thermos bottles SHOULD NOT contain carbonated beverages.

Nap Time

Nap time is from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. for toddlers enrolled in Lunch Bunch. The toddlers are not required to sleep but must rest and remain quiet for other classmates to sleep for a minimum of one hour per day as required by the MS Dept. of Health. It takes a couple of weeks to establish a nap routine, but most children do nap in a group setting.

Each toddler must have a 2 inch thick sleep mat labeled with his or her name. Cloth mats are permissible on top of the plastic mats. Parents of toddlers are encouraged to send a special blanket to help comfort their child during rest time.

Cloth mats and blankets will need to be brought each day the child will stay for Lunch Bunch and should be laundered weekly.

Extra-curricular Offerings

We partner with different companies who offer their services such as dance, soccer, karate, or computer skills to your children while in our care during Lunch Bunch at a separate cost. These offerings will be made available at our open house held before the start of each school year.

These offerings are not required but rather should be a decision made by each family based on individual interest. These opportunities are provided as a convenience to parents in an effort to protect evening family time.

Please note that any supplies or tuition for these activities are the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Please bring your child dressed appropriately for any extra-curricular activities as we do not have staff available to assist with the changing of clothes. Children should be able to remove all clothing by themselves to use the restroom.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing that he or she can manage easily. All children must wear shoes. Shoes must have a back or ankle strap that is worn across the heel at all times. Please note that closed heel, closed toe shoes are recommended for all children. Please plainly label all clothing items, bags, backpacks, coats, outer garments, and other items with your child's name. Please note that we are not responsible for personal items brought into the preschool.

Parents must provide a complete set of clean clothes (including socks and two pair of underwear) for each child to use in case of potty training or other accidents. Please replace your child's accident clothes seasonally. In the event of an accident, we will send the soiled clothes home in a plastic bag. Parents must bring a new complete set of clean clothes to keep at the preschool the following day. Please note that we are prohibited by the MS Dept. of Health from rinsing clothing items soiled with urine or feces. Thank you for your understanding.

Daily Schedule

Each classroom's daily schedule is posted by the door. Copies are available upon request.

Discipline

Teaching, directing, and redirecting is our form of discipline. It is our goal that Christian love is at the heart of this teaching. It is important that children learn self-control and good citizenship from the earliest age. Teachers encourage positive behavior by using these and other methods:

- Praising positive behavior
- Giving children choices when possible
- Using logical consequences when appropriate
- Redirecting the child to a different activity
- Removing the child from the group or setting, explaining the proper behavior, and returning the child to the setting to try again. Time out is used with three-year-old children and older. The standard guideline for time out is one minute per year of age.

Negative “attention seeking” behavior is ignored if at all possible. Discipline shall be fair, reasonable, consistent, and related to the individual behavior.

Severe Behavior

At times, some children exhibit severe behaviors that cannot be managed within the classroom setting. Severe behavior is defined as:

- Danger to self or others (examples include but are not limited to: head banging, excessive biting that breaks the skin, hitting, hair pulling, using objects to inflict bodily harm, etc.) and/or
- Disruptive behavior that creates chronic interference to classroom activities (examples include but are not limited to: tantrums, screaming, foul language, severe or chronic non-compliance or defiance.)

As a matter of confidentiality, we are prohibited from identifying children involved in these situations.

Biting

In these situations, parents may be contacted. In some cases, a meeting with parents and the director to discuss the situation and appropriate measures may be necessary. If corrective measures do not result in acceptable change in behavior, we reserve the right to temporarily or permanently remove a child from the preschool at the director's discretion. Every effort will be made to reach a satisfactory solution before discontinuing enrollment becomes an option.

Potty Training/Accidents

We formally begin potty training once children are promoted to our two-year-old classes. If your child is ready to begin potty training before promoting to a two-year-old class, please notify our staff. Once potty training begins, children should wear disposable training pants (such as pull-ups) and clothes that can be managed easily by the child. When a child has gone two weeks without a potty accident, he or she will be allowed to wear underwear while at the preschool.

Parents are expected to assist our staff with training by reinforcing skills at home. In order to be placed in a three-year-old classroom, a child must be fully potty trained. Please see DAILY ROUTINES – Clothing and Personal Belongings.

Hygiene

Children will be encouraged to learn good hygiene habits. Children will be guided by teachers to wash hands with soap and water before and after meals and snacks, after using the toilet or having diapers changed, after playing on the playground as well as other times during the day.

Outdoor Play

Fresh air, sunshine, and exercise are good for children. Weather permitting, our children play outside each day as required by the MS Dept. of Health. On extremely hot or cold days, we will choose the best time to go out and spend a short time outside. Please send your child with appropriate outerwear. Children healthy enough to attend preschool will be considered healthy enough to participate in outdoor activities unless a doctor's excuse is provided.

Water Play

During the summer months, our children may have water play activities. On these days, please send your child to school wearing his or her swimsuit unless otherwise requested. Children should also bring a towel, complete change of clothes (including underwear and socks) and a bag to hold wet items. Please see HEALTH – Safe Sun Practices.

Snack

Preschool children will be served one morning snack.

Parents of children with food allergies should provide a doctor's note advising of the allergy(ies). It may be necessary for the parent of a child with allergies to provide special food for their child. Please communicate any known food allergies in writing to the office and your child's teachers.

Children may not bring outside food with the exception of children with food allergies and as noted in SPECIAL EVENTS – Field Trips, Class Parties, and Birthday Celebrations.

Toys/Animals

Toys and equipment are provided. Therefore, children are discouraged from bringing their own toys. If your child has a pet or something he or she would like to share with the class, please talk with your child's teacher and secure permission before allowing your child to bring anything to his or her class. Pets should not be brought into the buildings or playgrounds at arrival and departure times.

HEALTH ISSUES

Immunization Requirements

Please see GENERAL POLICIES - Documentation Required for Your Child's Records.

Smoking and Prohibited Substances Policy

The use of tobacco products in any form (including smoking), alcohol, illegal drugs or the illegal use of prescription drugs is prohibited within the physical confines or the campus of a child care facility.

Prevention

Because young children are vulnerable to infectious disease, we encourage you as the parent to be aware of our health policies as stated. Prevention of illnesses or contagious disease is critical. We encourage you to:

1. Assess your child's health each morning. Please do not bring a sick child to the preschool.
2. Provide disposable diapers.
3. Provide disposable wipes.
4. Low-grade fevers may be associated with an infection or illness, and not "just teething".
5. Maintain emergency contacts with front office.
6. Dress your child appropriately – according to weather, etc.
7. Remember you may be asked to pick up your child due to illness.

Sick Child Policy

Because sick children require special attention, we are unable to give them the care they need. We do not have the facility to separate them from healthy children. Be aware that on short notice you may have to pick up your child due to illness. We appreciate your cooperation by finding alternative care for them during times of illness.

One of the most difficult decisions for our preschool staff is determining when to send a child home from daily activities due to illness. A primary goal is to provide a healthy environment by controlling the spread of disease in order to provide the best care, while being sensitive to family needs.

The following conditions require exclusion from child care:

<u>Fever</u>	Defined as 100°F or higher taken under the arm or 101°F taken orally.
<u>Diarrhea</u>	Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools. According to CDC recommendations, a child who is not toilet trained and has diarrhea should be excluded from child care settings regardless of the cause.
<u>Vomiting</u>	Two or more times in a 24-hour period
<u>Rash</u>	Body rash with a fever
<u>Sore throat</u>	Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
<u>Severe coughing</u>	The child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
<u>Eye discharge</u>	Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye
<u>Jaundice</u>	Yellow eyes and skin
<u>Irritability</u>	Continuous irritability and crying

Taken from Appendix I Communicable Diseases/Conditions and Return to Child Care Guidelines – Exclusion Criteria of Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities, MS Dept. of Health (Eff. 11/10/14).

A child with an identified case of lice or nits (eggs) will be sent home and must be properly treated. Proof of treatment (the empty box) will be required, and the child may return to the preschool once he is nit-free. When a case of head lice is identified, at a minimum, all children in that child's classroom will be checked for lice or nits. In addition, a note will be posted advising of the identified case.

When caring for children in a group setting, we must take these precautions in order to protect the health and well-being of all children. Please notify our office immediately if your child contracts a contagious disease such as chicken pox, diarrheal diseases, E. coli, fifth disease, hand-foot-and-mouth disease, head lice, hepatitis A, measles, meningitis, ringworm, tuberculosis, whooping cough, etc. We have a responsibility to share this information with teachers and other parents in order to notify them of their child's exposure. In these situations, additional sanitizing is usually required. Your child may return when they are no longer contagious. Serious illnesses may require a doctor's note releasing your child to return to the preschool.

Upon returning to the preschool following illness, children should be symptom-free for 24 hours without preventative medication (Tylenol, Imodium A-D, etc.).

Also see DAILY ROUTINES – Outdoor Play.

Medications

Please make arrangements with your child's physician to prescribe medications that can be given twice daily so that you may administer them at home. If you have a special concern, please consult with the director.

Tylenol and Benadryl may be given with your permission and specific instructions as to dosage amounts to offer temporary relief.

Safe Sun Practices

Safe sun practices will be used during outside activities scheduled between 10:00 a.m. and 2 p.m. during the period from April 1st to September 15th. All playgrounds are partially shaded. Children are given water breaks during outside activities. Parents are requested to provide sunscreen plainly labeled with their child's name to be used for their child while at the preschool.

Injuries

Our staff maintains basic first aid and CPR certification. First Aid procedures are followed when caring for an injured child. Parents are notified by phone for serious injuries and in writing for minor injuries. Written accident reports will be completed by the preschool staff when first aid is required. One copy of the report will be placed in the child's backpack for the parent and one copy in the child's file.

Emergency Medical Care

If a child has a serious medical problem which would require transportation to a hospital, the parents will be notified immediately after 911 has been called. The child will be transported to the nearest hospital with an emergency room. At enrollment, parents are requested to sign a release for doctors to be contacted and authorizing transport for your child in the event of a serious medical problem.

Keeping Records Current and Confidential

Parents are asked to provide an updated parent information form each year. In addition, we request that parents advise our office staff of changes of address, phone number, email, emergency information, or any family information that may affect the child's well-being while in our care. These records are maintained in our office.

SAFETY

Weapons

Firearms or other dangerous weapons are not allowed in a child care facility as regulated by the MS Dept. of Health.

Insurance

If your child is injured while in our care, you are asked to file with your health insurance company first and the balance will be filed with our insurance. Automobile insurance provided by Ridgecrest Baptist Church and Ridgecrest Preschool adequately covers the transportation of all children.

Transportation

Ridgecrest Baptist Church vans and buses, driven by properly licensed drivers, are used to transport children to and from field trips. All vehicles have current inspection stickers and regular maintenance is performed. Please also see SPECIAL EVENTS – Field Trips.

Physical Facility

To assist in ensuring the safety of the children, do not enter or exit the building through doors labeled as emergency exits. Please use the entrance by the preschool office.

Fire Drills

Emergency fire drills are held monthly, as required by the MS Dept. of Health, to help your child become familiar with evacuation procedures. Our facility is equipped with a fire alarm system and ceiling sprinkler system. Fire extinguishers are placed throughout the building. Our facility is also conveniently located across the street from a fire station.

Tornado Drills

Emergency tornado drills are held monthly, as required by the MS Dept. of Health, to help your child become familiar with severe weather and disaster response procedures.

Emergency Evacuation

In case of an emergency that requires evacuation of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Ridgecrest Preschool will be relocated to First Baptist Madison or First Baptist Ridgeland. We will contact Hinds County Emergency Operations Center who will provide this information to local media outlets such as radio and television stations. In the event of an evacuation of the city of Madison, we will follow the advice of the authorities and the location of the children will be announced through local media outlets.

Closings Due to Inclement Weather

In the event of severe weather conditions in Madison County including, but not limited to, snow, ice, tornadoes or any weather causing dangerous conditions as described by public officials, the preschool will be closed. If the Madison County School District schools are closed or delay opening due to inclement weather, we will follow their schedule. If the schools close during the day for inclement weather, the preschool will close within two hours of the schools' closing. This policy is in place to allow your children and our staff to get home safely. Notifications of such closures will be provided as noted in PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT-Notifications. Parents will not be contacted by telephone so that our staff may focus on the care and safety of the children. Please also see FINANCIAL POLICIES-Closures Due to Inclement Weather.

Parking Lot Practices

Please help us keep your children safe. Our entrances and exits are designed for one-way traffic only. Please watch for children at all times and maintain a speed of not more than 10 mph.

Reporting of Child Abuse

Suspected child abuse will be reported according to the laws of the State of Mississippi. A copy of Mississippi's child abuse and neglect reporting statutes (Miss. Code Ann. §§43-21-353 and 43-21-355) is available in the preschool office upon request.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Field Trips

Children in four-year-old classes are eligible to attend field trips. You will be provided specific information about each field trip during the year. A written permission slip for each field trip is required for your child to be able to participate in these activities. Parents are welcome to attend most field trips but it will be necessary for parents to pay any associated costs with their attendance. Siblings may not attend any field trips even if transported in private vehicles. Please also see SAFETY – Transportation.

Class Parties

Class parties will be held on the following occasions during the year for toddler through four-year-old classes: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and End of the School Year. At open house, teachers provide an opportunity for parents to sign up to bring party items – sweet item, salty item, drink, paper goods, and party favor. Class parties are not intended to take the place of lunch. Food items at each party should be limited to one sweet item (fruit, cookies, cupcakes, etc.), one salty item (veggies with dip, chips, thin pretzels, etc.), and a drink (juice, water - no soft drinks). Volunteering to bring party items is not a requirement. We do not celebrate Halloween or focus on the secular aspects of religious holidays such as Christmas and Easter.

Birthday Celebrations

We recognize that a birthday is a very special day in the life of a child. Parents may send a simple birthday treat to share with everyone in the class for their child's birthday. These treats should be individual portions that are ready to serve or give such as cupcakes, donuts, cookies, muffins, or other non-edible favors. Please coordinate with your child's teacher in advance. The teacher will distribute the treats when it is most appropriate for the classroom schedule.

Invitations to birthday parties may be sent for distribution as long as they are addressed to include all girls, all boys, or the entire class.

Performances/Programs

During the year, we have programs that parents and family members are invited to attend. These programs include Parent Night/Meet the Teacher Night, a Christmas performance held in December including toddlers to four-year-olds, a special year-end program, and four-year-old graduation which is usually held in May. These are special times that are intended to create special memories for your child and your family.

Due to the large number of parents and family members in attendance, we request that courtesy and grace be extended during these times. Seating is available on a first come, first serve basis. If you choose to reserve seating for family members, please keep in mind the following:

- Performances take place in the church sanctuary which is used for multiple events. Please do not place signs on the church pews before the date of the event. Please do not affix any item to furniture.
- One member of your party should remain present in order to reserve seating.
- Please be considerate of others.

CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

A license to operate a child care facility has been required by law in Mississippi since 1972. In the 1990's regular session of the legislature, the law was revised to provide regulations of child care up to age 13 for any part of a 24-hour day.

New regulations require that child care facilities provide parents with information concerning their policies and procedures, which should include this summary of the licensing standard. These standards include the following:

1. Purpose of child care licensure, legal authority and definitions
2. Types of licenses, display and licensing requirements
3. Facility policy and procedure
 - a. administration and operating information
 - b. arrival and departure procedures for children
 - c. program and activities
 - d. health and emergency procedures
 - e. summary and licensing regulations
4. Personnel requirements
5. Records and reports
6. Staffing ratio (number of caregivers to children), grouping
7. Program activities (daily schedule), equipment, toys, and materials
8. Building and ground requirements
9. Health, hygiene, and safety
 - a. staff and child health and hygiene
 - b. cleaning of toys and equipment
 - c. animals and pets
 - d. fire/disaster drills
10. Nutrition and meals
11. Discipline and guidance (corporal punishment is prohibited)
12. Transportation
13. Infant/toddler care
14. Rest periods
15. Swimming and water activities
16. Children with special needs
17. Night care, school age care, summer day camps and hourly child care
18. Hearings, emergency suspensions, legal actions and penalties
19. Appendices
 - Appendix A – Youth Court Act (child abuse and neglect)
 - Appendix B – List of Reportable Diseases
 - Appendix C – Minimal Standards for Nutritional Care
 - Appendix D – Playground Area and Equipment
 - Appendix E – Dishwashing Procedures
 - Appendix F – Hand Washing Procedure
 - Appendix G – Diaper Changing Procedure
 - Appendix H – Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures
 - Appendix I – Communicable Diseases/Conditions and Return to Child Care Guidelines
 - Appendix J – Rules and Procedures for State Level Administrative Hearings

The child care center must have a copy of the regulations available for parents to review upon request. Contact the Mississippi State Department of Health if you have any questions, problems, or complaints by calling (601) 960-7613. Complaints must reflect a clear violation of the regulations.