



Foundations Academy of Port St. Lucie Preschool Handbook 2025-2026

Christine Dvorak, Preschool Director

Operating Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

2250 SE Walton Road, Port Saint Lucie, Florida 34952
(772) 301-1616



Accreditation Certificate # A51405/63829517

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2025-2026 School Calendar

School Closed (Teacher Work Day)	August 8, 2025
Open House 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	August 8, 2025
First Day of School 8:30 a.m.	August 11, 2025
Labor Day Holiday/School & Office Closed	September 1, 2025
Thanksgiving Break/School & Office Closed	November 27-28, 2025
Christmas Break/School & Office Closed	December 22-26, 2025
New Year's Day Holiday/School & Office Closed	January 1, 2026
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday/School & Office Closed	January 19, 2026
President's Day Holiday/School & Office Closed	February 16, 2026
Good Friday Holiday/School & Office Closed	April 3, 2026
VPK Graduation	May 20, 2026
Kindergarten Graduation	May 22, 2026
Last Day of School (VPK & Elementary)	May 22, 2026
Memorial Day Holiday/School & Office Closed	May 25, 2026

Office Staff: Christine Dvorak, Preschool Director (Enrollment, ELC)
Debra LaFountain, Elementary Principal (Step Up, ESE, IEP)
Valerie Koratich, Assistant Director/Office Manager (Enrollment, Billing, ELC)
Doreen DeCouto, Receptionist (Attendance, Student Files)
Maddi Scalafani, Technology (BrightWheel)

American Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America,
and to the Republic for which it stands,
one nation under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

Bible Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word.
I will make it a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart
that I might not sin against God.

About Foundations Academy

Statement of Vision and Purpose

The administration and teachers of Foundations Academy realize that it is their solemn responsibility before God to mold the life and character of each of their students, in order to build a solid foundation for each child's future and to make him/her a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Foundations Academy views itself as working in partnership with the family. Our vision for children can only succeed in partnership with parents. Therefore, we work collaboratively with parents in every aspect of the student's development.

Mission Statement

Foundations Academy partners with parents in fulfilling their divine responsibility to train the student in the knowledge of God and the Christian life while providing an excellent academic education. It is also the goal of the school to provide an environment in which each child can develop academically, spiritually, socially, and physically.

Core Values

Foundations Academy operates on several core values that motivate our approach to education.

1. **Students Academic Growth** Consistent academic growth is the essential standard at Foundations Academy to gauge student success. Our curriculum is grounded in the basics while being highly engaging and focused on the individual learner.
2. **Whole Person Philosophy** Children are dynamic and have been created by God to explore the world around them. We are committed to fostering education that addresses the Whole Person in every child; Academically, Spiritually, Socially and Physically.
3. **Full Support in the Classroom** Positive classroom environment is an essential part of learning. Student learning is our focus, and as such, our teachers and staff are trained to manage classrooms well. We work with families and students to set a standard of excellence in behavior in the classroom along with support tools for students and teachers.
4. **Support for our Teachers** We love our teachers! With support from the school board and administration, teachers can stay focused on teaching. They are given the creative freedom to practice the art of teaching. Teachers are able to have positive connections with students and success in teaching at Foundations Academy.
5. **Work with Parents as a Team** No one knows a child as well as his parents. Together with the parents, the teacher creates an Individual Success Plan appropriate for each child. Community is part of who we are. As such, we believe family involvement in the education process is vital for the success of all students. Consequently, we are committed to open communication between parents, teachers, and staff.
6. **A Safe Learning Environment** Student safety is our highest property. To thrive, students must be safe physically, mentally, and socially. Therefore, we maintain safety measures in our hiring process and our daily operations. We do not tolerate bullying in any form. Our trained staff will always make sure that safety and health is our top priority.

Philosophy of Education

Foundations Academy's purpose and philosophy are based on a Christian worldview holding that God is the Creator and Sustainer of all life. God is the ultimate reality and the source and essence of all goodness and truth. God reveals Himself through nature, history, and the Scriptures, but supremely through His Son, Jesus Christ. The highest good is realized as human beings walk in fellowship with Him.

The ultimate objective of Christian Education must be to help the student realize his full potential as a human being as he comes to understand God's will for his life. Each student must be encouraged to become a whole, complete, mature, and fully equipped person in Christ (2 Tim. 3:16,17). This begins by leading the child to know Christ, nurturing his intellectual growth and development through academic studies, providing opportunities for social activities and for physical growth and development.

As the ultimate reality and truth, God's character is the standard by which value judgments are made. He has revealed Himself and His will most clearly through His Son and His Word. Therefore, the Bible is the standard for every subject or activity. This means that biblical viewpoints must permeate the entire school program, including curriculum, co-curricular activities, athletics, business, and interpersonal relationships of all those associated with the school.

The authority for such an education comes from God's commands that children be taught to love God and to love their neighbor as they love themselves. We believe that the consistent implementation of this philosophy will provide for the optimal spiritual, academic, social, and physical development of each child.

Academic Freedom

Inasmuch as Foundations Academy is an educational institution, established by the Board of Directors, loyalty to and support of the institution and its programs is expected. In regards to academic freedom, the sacred right of freedom of expression is recognized as a requisite for effective and intelligent dissemination of ideas. Nevertheless, there can be no such thing as a limited freedom of expression in word and act in any school. In addition to universally expected social limitations, such as truthfulness, decency, integrity, and loyalty, there are appropriate limitations with society, and the governing board has the right to expect its institutions to be distinctly devoted to Christian principles.

These limitations do not extend to the suppression of any academic disciplines, or recognized areas of those disciplines. They do require, however, that all ideas and views be presented in a Christian context. All faculty members who speak or write publicly, or in situations growing out of their official capacity on behalf of the school, are expected to contribute to the objectives of the school by conforming to them, and then, by advocating nothing contrary to the Bible, the Word of God written, the stated purposes of the institution they serve and/or the two basic principles embodied in the constitution of the United States of America.

All are expected to show a respectful and sympathetic attitude towards the doctrines of the church and towards divinely established authority, including government. Any grave offense against these doctrines, or principles, must be considered just cause for dismissal from the school, according to the procedures for handling dismissals.

Ecclesiastical Affiliation

Foundations Academy, Port Saint Lucie is an interdenominational Christian educational institution. It is located in Port Saint Lucie, Florida and operated by its Board of Directors.

Statement of Faith

Foundations Academy subscribes to the tenets of historic Christianity as expressed in the Lausanne Covenant, the official doctrine declaration of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism.

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:15-17)
- We believe that there is one God, eternally, existent, in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, and His sinless life, and His miracles, and His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, and His bodily resurrection, and His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return and power and glory. (Luke 1:35, John. 1:1)
- We believe that God created human beings in His likeness, and in His image, and has given them the authority and responsibility to manage the earth (Genesis 1:26–30). As such, every human being has inherent worth and dignity. We also believe that sexuality and gender roles have been established by God, and that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one biological man and one biological woman. (Genesis 2:24). So originally good, our first parents willingly fell into sin, and ushering evil and death, both physical and spiritual, into the world. (Romans 5:12-19).
- We believe in the sanctity of marriage, defined as a union of one man and one woman for life, and the sanctity of human life, both before, and after birth. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is adjoining one biological man and one biological woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22–23.)
- We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential, and includes healing of the whole person. (Matthew 8:16, 17, James 5:14–16.)
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose dwelling enables the Christian to live a godly life, and empowers them for witness and service.
- We believe the church has a mission to make Christ known to every person on earth, and to make disciples of every people group. (Matthew 28:19,20)
- We believe the church is the body of Christ, and consists of the people who throughout time have accepted God's offer of salvation through the sacrificial death of His Son, Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 1:22, 23, Matthew 18:19, 20).
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the saved unto the resurrection of eternal life, and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation and eternal punishment. (Revelation 20:11-15)

Parental Support

The staff desires a harmonious relationship with parents. If parents have a question about a school policy or an event that involves their child they are to notify their child's teacher or an administrator. An effort will be made to resolve any differences and maintain excellent communication between parents and ministry staff.

Parents are prohibited from approaching, or speaking directly to any student, other than their own, regarding conflicts, occurring on or off campus. Please direct concerns of this nature to the administration.

Parental support is an essential part of the education process. If, in the sole discretion of the administration, a parent has failed to support the administrator or ministry staff, or the standards articulated in the ministries statement of faith, the administration reserves the right to deny the student continued enrollment in the school. At Foundations Academy, we partner with you, the parents, for our students' spiritual and academic education. Therefore, it is critically important that parents trust and pledge to cooperate with administration in all areas. Foundations Academy administration pledges to communicate with parents and to follow the guidance in the student handbook.

As part of the Admissions process, parents must agree to the following pledge admissions process, parents must agree to the following pledge:

“ We, as parents, pledge to cooperate with the administration at all times. Although Foundations Academy's doors are always open to parents, with the parents understanding that there may be times when we must agree to disagree, and that we will cooperate with decisions of the administration as long as our students are enrolled. We pledge to be honest and forthright in all dealings with Foundations Academy.(to include absence and tardy excuses), and to remit any balances due (to include tardy, extended care charges and/or late fees). We pledge to uphold the school and administration in prayer, and together, we will do all we can to make the students experience a positive, Christian experience.”

Admissions

Admission Procedure

Following a tour of the facility, parents may choose to admit their child based on availability. An opening will be extended by administration, and will be considered accepted only after registration fee has been paid. All children are admitted on a 30-day probationary basis, during which time the Director reserves the right to dismiss the child without notice. Foundations Academy Preschool does not discriminate against children, families, or staff on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic background or gender. Foundations Academy does reserve the right to refuse admittance to children whose behavior is detrimental to the Christian environment.

Forms to Submit

Florida law requires all new students entering all grade levels one year old through 12th grade to present certification of the following:

- Original birth certificate (We will make a copy)
- Copy of Social Security number on file.
- Original, current Florida immunization form #DH680
- Original, current Physical Form #DH3040
- All physical examination forms must be completed by a Florida physician within 12 months prior to entering a Florida school.

Criteria for 1 Year-Old Class

- Children do not need to be walking to enter the 1 year-old class.
- Personal items for your child are needed daily, i.e., diapers, wipes, prepared bottles/cups, snacks and lunch, extra clothes, and a blanket for nap times.
- If your child arrives at Foundations Academy between 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m., he is allowed to eat breakfast in the early morning program.

Criteria for 2 Year-Old Class

- Child does not have to be potty trained to enter the 2 year-old class but he should be entering the process.
- Child must be able to feed himself and must be able to sit in a chair for 20 minutes, especially during lunch and story time
- Child does not have to nap, but needs to be able to be quiet during this time. A small receiving blanket is allowed with a small pillow but no stuffed animals.
- If your child arrives at Foundations Academy between 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m., he is allowed to eat breakfast in the early morning program.

Criteria for 3 Year-Old Class

- Child does not have to be completely confident with independent restroom use. If he is still training, pull-ups may be used.
- Child must be able to communicate his needs to the teacher.
- Child must be able to follow simple directions.
- Children must be able to eat independently.
- Child does not have to nap, but he needs to be able to be quiet during this time. A small receiving blanket and small pillow are allowed. No bottles, pacifiers or stuffed animals are permitted.
- Children should be able to refrain from aggressive behavior, such as biting or hitting other people.
- Parents must bring a change of clothes daily.
- If your child arrives at Foundations Academy between 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m., he is allowed to eat breakfast in the early morning program.

Criteria for 4 Year-Old Bridge Class

- Child must be mostly confident with independent restroom use, including wiping himself and washing hands properly. Children must not wait until the last minute to go to the bathroom.
 - Child must be able to separate from parent and parent from child with minimal difficulty.
 - Child must be able to communicate his needs to the teacher.
 - Child must be able to follow simple directions.
-
- Children must be able to eat independently.
 - Child does not have to nap, but he needs to be able to be quiet during this time. A small receiving blanket and small pillow are allowed. No bottles, pacifiers or stuffed animals are permitted.
 - Children should be able to refrain from aggressive behavior, such as biting or hitting other people.
 - Parents must bring a change of clothes daily.
 - If your child arrives at Foundations Academy between 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m., he is allowed to eat breakfast in the early morning program.

Criteria for VPK

- Child must be able to separate from parent and parent from child with minimal difficulty.
- Child must be completely confident with independent restroom use, including wiping himself and washing hands properly. Children must not wait until the last minute to go to the bathroom.
- Child must be able to communicate his needs to the teacher such as, “I need to use the bathroom” or “I need to get a drink” etc.
- Children should be able to put shoes on properly, put on and remove a sweater or jacket without help, as well as button, snap, and zip clothing with minimal help.
- Child must be able to understand and follow simple directions and the child must be able to eat independently.
- Child must be able to refrain from aggressive behavior such as biting, spitting, or hitting other children. The school has a strict policy against any kind of this behavior.
- Child must be able to sit quietly for a reasonable amount of time. For example, the length of a story.
- Children should be able to sing or say the ABC song, recognize all the colors and shapes, and count up to 10.
- Children must be able to repeat short sentences given by an adult. We use this to test short-term memory.
- Parents must bring a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag with the child's name on it. We understand that accidents happen. However, if a child does not have a change of clothes, a parent will be contacted to bring a change of clothes. We do not have extra clothes for your child.
- If your child arrives at Foundations Academy between 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m., he is allowed to eat breakfast in the early morning program.

VPK (Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten)**Attendance Policy for VPK**

Daily attendance in the VPK program is necessary for optimal learning. Your child is allowed to be absent three days per month. Each child is allowed to miss 20% of the VPK program. Any absence over 20% will result in your child not receiving the funding for the program. If excessive absences occur, your child may be terminated from the VPK program ultimately losing VPK funding. Arrangements may be made for your child to continue in the classroom under private pay basis. Note: 20% of the 540 hour program equals 108 hours (a total of 36 days for the school year of August - May).

Progress Reports/FAST Assessments

A progress report for each VPK child will be completed three (3) times a year. Parents must participate in a parent-teacher conference twice a year to discuss child development for our VPK program. Our VPK instructors administer a “VPK assessment” through the Florida Department of Education three times a year.

Tardiness for VPK

Arrival for the VPK program is 8:15 a.m. Instructional day starts at 8:30 a.m. All children are expected to be in place and ready to start the day. Arrivals after 8:30 a.m. are disruptive to the classroom instruction in process and are difficult for the child arriving late, as well. We understand that it is occasionally unavoidable to be running late, however after 8:40 a.m. there's no admission without a doctor's note or previous authorization from administration. If a child arrives after 8:30 a.m. he is considered late. Note: Elementary students are held to a different attendance policy. If you have both an elementary and VPK student, the VPK student has to adhere to the 8:40a grace period time.

Early Learning Coalition (ELC) Requirements**Attendance and Absence Follow-Up Verification**

Daily signatures are required for attendance purposes by using our BrightWheel app. If your child is funded through ELC, two (2) signatures are required daily; one at check in and one at check out, in order for the continuation of your student's participation in the program. This process is extremely important for the school to receive payment. If the school is not paid due to a signature not being accepted, the parent will be charged the full day rate. Each student must have a parent or guardian walk him into the building to sign in and sign-out every day.

Attendance Record Monitored

Attendance records will be monitored by the administration and available to parents upon request. The Early Learning Coalition will be notified in writing if a child enrolled in their school readiness program is absent for five consecutive days. Teachers will be notified when there is a concern of cumulative absences nearing the maximum allowance.

ELC Absences

ELC funded students are allowed three (3) unexcused absences per month. A signed note is required by a doctor or a written note from the parent upon return to the center for any absence. If your student is absent over the three (3) allowed days, you will be charged the full daily rate for your student's class rate. ELC

accepts notes from parents if the student was ill, a scheduled medical appointment, court ordered visitation days (with a copy of the court documents) and/or a death in the family. All other absences will be considered unexcused and the class daily rate will need to be paid by the parent if over the three (3) allowed days.

VPK ELC Child Certificate of Eligibility and Parental Choice Form

The State of Florida Voluntary PreKindergarten Education Program Child Certificate of Eligibility needs to be submitted to Foundations Academy prior to or upon enrollment in our VPK program. This certificate is issued by the Early Learning Coalition.

The VPK Parental Choice form is a form issued by the Early Learning Coalition which must be signed on the last day of the current month or the first three days of the next month. The ELC will not pay for your child if this form is not signed.

General Information

Absences

Return Policy

Your child may return to school when he is fever free for 24 hours and is without symptoms, such as diarrhea and vomiting, or is on medication, stating the child is no longer contagious and can return to school. If your child is well enough to attend school, he must be well enough to participate in all activities, including outside playtime. Upon returning to school after being absent, the child must have an excuse note either from a doctor or the parent explaining the reason for the absence. An absent form is available to complete at the front desk.

Absent Credit

If your child is ill, we will give a 50% credit for prolonged illnesses of six days or more, which is confirmed by a doctor. Please bring a signed doctor's note stating the length of time he recommends for your child to be absent from school and when they will no longer be contagious and/or healed from a procedure. **No note = no credit.**

Verifying Your Child's Attendance and Absences

Daily signatures- Parents are required to check-in with signature every day using the BrightWheel app on your phone. This must be signed for ELC to make a payment for your child if your child is funded through that program. The BrightWheel app is used with your phone by opening the application and scanning the QR code located at the reception desk, a four digit number or special code is then input into your phone and your signature is drawn with your finger. After the health questions have been answered and you submit, your child will be checked in. The same scanning process is used for check-out. This process is extremely important for you to remain in the program and the school to receive payment. If the school is not paid due to a signature not being accepted, the parent will be charged the full-day rate. Each student must have a parent or guardian walk him into the building and sign him in and out every day.

Arrivals and Dismissals

For Preschool drop-off and pick-up, please park in the church parking lot. Please do not park in the fire lane. Be sure to have your ID and your phone with you at all times for check-in. Only authorized parents and family members or friends over the age of 18 and listed on the student's Emergency Contact List on the Application will be allowed to drop-off and pick-up your student. You must bring your child into the building and sign him in daily. Children are allowed to eat breakfast from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.

Students are not allowed entrance into class after the 8:40 a.m. grace period. If your student has a doctor's appointment scheduled, he may return to the school prior to 11:00 a.m. with a doctor's note for that day.

Arrivals

VPK parents must arrive on time due to the short three hour program that is offered in the morning at 8:30 a.m. Students are not allowed to attend class after the 8:40 a.m. grace period without a doctor's note for that day's appointment. If you have both an elementary and VPK student, the VPK student has to adhere to the 8:40a grace period time.

Dismissals

A copy of driver's licenses will be taken and kept in the student's file verifying all people who are authorized to pick up. You may delete or add additional people using a written request given to the office, or updating the student's application on file.

Attendance

Tuition is based on weekly attendance and not by the day. If your child attends only one or two days during the week, the entire week's tuition is still required. If a child is absent for two weeks without notice, his position will automatically be terminated.

- The Preschool closes on the following days: Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve through Christmas, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Good Friday and Memorial Day. Full tuition is due, even if the holiday occurs during the week. Specific dates are noted on the current school year calendar.
- **Students need to be in the classroom no later than 8:30 a.m.** The only exception that a child would be admitted after that is if he has a doctor's appointment and a doctor's note stating that he was at the appointment during that time. After 8:40a, your child will not be admitted to class without a doctor's note. You will need to keep your child with you if you are not able to have him back to school prior to 11:00 a.m. from a doctor's or therapy appointment.
- Children under the Riyla Wilson act 39.604 who are absent from the program on their regularly scheduled day must be reported absent by parent or guardian by the end of that day. If the parent or caregiver fails to report the absence, the absence is considered unexcused. All unexcused absences or seven consecutive excused absences will be reported via email to the Department of Children and Family (DCF), and/or to the caseworker in charge of the case.

Authorized Pick-Up

Only the people listed on the child's application and indicated in our management system, Brightwheel, may pick up your child. There **MUST** be at least two (2) local additional emergency pick-up contacts on the application and in BrightWheel. If you plan to have someone else pick up your child, please give the office written notice and update the information in the BrightWheel application. Please have that person prepared to show identification. Adults only, 18 years or older, can drop off and pick up your child. Siblings are not allowed to pick up or drop off your children if they are under 18 years old. Please notify the teacher if the child is to be picked up early.

- Foundations Academy Preschool cannot withhold a child from parent or legal guardian, unless written notification is present from the court on behalf of the custodial parent or guardian. See administration for more details.
- **Pick up for VPK a.m.- if a child is not picked up by 11:45 a.m. you will be assessed a late fee of \$5 a minute**
- Pick up for Preschool (1 - 3 years of age and VPK wrap around), we understand things may come up unexpectedly, and may cause you to be late picking up your child, our program does not allow late pick ups. **If at any time your child is picked up late, you will be assessed a fee of \$5.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m.**

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is certainly a very special day, and we will recognize it as such. You are welcome, but certainly not required, to send in special store bought treats (i.e., mini cupcakes) to make it a celebration. Please talk to your child's teacher in advance. We only allow store bought treats so that we can check the ingredients list if necessary. If a class has any students with severe allergies, treats may not be permitted.

Biting Policy

Foundations Academy Preschool has no tolerance for biting. The policy for habitual biting is as follows:

1. The first time a child bites another child, the parent will be contacted by the teacher and/or an incident report will be made in the BrightWheel application for the parent to sign upon pick-up.
2. If a child bites another child, a second time, within 30 days of the first bite, the parent will be called immediately, and the child will need to go home for the rest of the day. An incident report signed by the parent upon pick-up, will be placed in his file. At that time, we will schedule a conference with a Preschool Director, teacher and parent to explore strategies to deal with the problem.
3. If a child bites another child within 30 days of the second bite, the child will be suspended for two days with a conference to discuss continued placement.

BrightWheel

Check-In and Check-Out

The BrightWheel app is used with your phone.

- Open the application
- Scan the QR code located at the reception desk
- Enter your four digit number or special code
- Answer the three (3) health check questions by clicking each box

- Finger sign your name in the indicated area
- Click and submit
- Your child will be checked in!
- Repeat the above process for check-out.

Incident Reports

Incident reports will be reported in the BrightWheel app. The report will be printed off so the parent, staff member, and administration can sign it. The report will be filed in the student's file. After three (3) incidents where the student is not safe to himself or others, the parents will be called and the student will need to be picked up within the hour. Due to the severity of unsafe actions, the student may be asked to stay home for one additional school day.

Messages

Messages can be exchanged between the teacher/assistant and administration. In an effort to keep communication lines open, sometimes the teachers use this feature to post pictures of your student participating in activities.

Change of Address/Phone

It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the office has correct and current information regarding you and your child. Please notify the office immediately if any changes have occurred. You may also update your student's information in the BrightWheel system under your child's profile. A change of address form can be dropped off in the school office at any time. Up-to-date information will help us handle emergencies effectively. Please notify the Preschool office and your child's teacher immediately if any changes occur.

Communication

From time to time a personal crisis may occur in the life of your child; although it may not be related to school, this crisis adversely affects the attitude or work habits of your child while in school. It is not our purpose to invade anyone's privacy, but should such an event take place, a brief note or a phone call could help make us aware of the situation and allow us to respond to the special needs of your child during this time.

Discipline and Christian Character

Foundations Academy Preschool is a private organization. The children will be provided a non-denominational "good moral character building" Bible-based learning experience. This will include Bible stories, Bible memory work, and teaching children the importance of asking a blessing before meal time. Our intent is to incorporate a healthy respect for God and His Word. Foundations Academy has the policy to provide a positive environment and uses positive discipline that focuses on age-appropriate behavior for children. During the process of activities, children experience frustrations, understand the concept of sharing, work together with others, follow directions and rules, and express themselves to other children/staff and others.

The following disciplinary actions will be implemented for appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

- All appropriate behavior is rewarded. Rewards can come in the form of verbal praise, positive reinforcement in character development.
- Our staff will be responsible to follow the procedures mentioned below when an inappropriate behavior occurs.
- First step Verbal Correction - The staff will talk to the child on his language level, and explain that what he has done is not acceptable and what he can do to behave better. The staff will give the child the opportunity to continue with current activity.
- Second step Time to Think - The amount of time is determined by one minute for each year of the child's age. If the behavior continues, the staff will talk to the child again, and will direct the child to a quiet area of the classroom for "time to think " about what he did. He may return to the group upon indicating a desire to play with the other children, and willingness to follow the classroom rules and directions.
- Third step Take a Break - A child will be removed from the classroom and be supervised in a safe area if the child is unable to regain control. Depending on the situation, the staff will call the parents or legal guardian or an authorized person to pick up the child immediately. The staff will complete an incident report and give it to the parents or legal guardian indicating the child's behavior. This report needs to be signed by the parent or legal guardian. The incident report will give the opportunity to the parent or legal guardian to talk with the child and help him improve his behavior the next time.
- Fourth step Parent or Legal Guardian Conference - When two or more incidents occur frequently, the staff or Director of Foundations Academy will request a conference with the parents or legal guardian to discuss the incident and to establish and develop a behavior plan to help the child. If the child's behavior does not improve, Foundations Academy reserves the right to dismiss a child. The Preschool may provide parents or legal guardians with resources in the community that will help with the needs of their child.

Foundations Academy reserves the right to dismiss a child for the following actions:

- Uncontrollable behavior, such as violence, destructive behavior, such as breaking (additional charges will be added to the student's bill after assessment of severity of damaged property) and throwing equipment at others, inappropriate language, hitting, biting, pushing, poking, spitting, scratching, etc. are not acceptable. If the staff tries everything possible, yet has no control over the child or his behavior, the parent must pick up the child immediately. Foundations Academy reserves the right to dismiss the child.
- Violent pretend play, i.e., fist fights, wrestling, karate, guns, sword, or any other form of physical violence, which could be copied from a cartoon, or any other media is not acceptable behavior
- We do not allow a parent or legal guardian to discuss any issue with another parent about their child's behavior or discuss any situation with another child. Only the Academy staff will handle the situation. If the parent or legal guardian's personal behavior is disrespectful, inappropriate, or out of control, we will ask a parent or legal guardian to leave the Preschool immediately, and the child may be dismissed.

- Parents and legal guardians: we ask that you show respect towards our staff just like we expect our staff to show respect towards you. We ask that you do not raise your voice, scream, or speak profanity to any of our staff, or any child. If you have a complaint, we encourage you to communicate with the Director of the Preschool personally, by calling, or via email. The Director will gladly take care of the situation promptly.
- We expect any authorized person who picks up the child to comply with these regulations mentioned above, as they will also apply to them.

Discipline Policy

We are required by the Department of Children and Families to provide a written discipline policy. Our program will ensure that age-appropriate constructive disciplinary practices are used for your child. This care will allow the child time to look over his or her behavior. To ensure a safe and successful program, discipline is a must. We welcome the ideas of parents, so feel free to share them with us.

- Children will be corrected and asked to change their behavior. The use of calming corners, breathing breaks and redirecting are preferred methods to correct a student's behavior. Talk with the student to affirm and clarify why the preferred methods were used. If necessary, please contact the administration for assistance.
- Parents will be contacted if the behavior is not corrected.
- Modeling Christian values and positive behaviors.
- Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.
- Children may not be denied active play because of misbehavior.
- In Brightwheel an incident report, if injury occurred to the student or another student, or a note, if no injury occurred, will be sent to the parents to notify them of their student's actions. After three (3) incidents where the student is not safe to himself or others, the parents will be called and the student will need to be picked up within the hour.

Dress Code

- Athletic shoes and socks are required at all times. Slip-ons, sandals, platform shoes, heels, or shoes with open toe and/or backs are not allowed (i.e. crocs).
- Shoes must fit properly. If they are too big or too small they are considered a safety issue.
- Jewelry and accessory items with offensive symbols are unacceptable for both boys and girls. No dangling earrings for girls for safety reasons. Fake tattoos, extreme hair colors or cuts are not permitted. Any and all hair accessories must be secured for the safety of the children (beads, bows, ribbons, rubber bands, etc.).
- In case of dress code violations, the parent/guardian will be called to bring a change of clothes.

Emergency School Closing

In the event of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane or severe storm, Foundations Academy Preschool may be closed. There are several ways in which parents may be informed of any school closings including: signs posted on the door, notifications on TV or radio, Foundations Academy's website, Foundations Academy's Facebook page as well as broadcasting messages sent via text message in BrightWheel app. Do not assume that the school is closed because of other school closures in the area. If Foundations Academy is open and your child is not in attendance, he will be charged.

Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately, there are reasons we must ask that a child be removed from our program either in the short term or permanently. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with preschool children to prevent this policy from being enforced.

- When a child is having a problem in the classroom:
- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess the classroom environment, age-appropriate activities, and supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Children will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained confidential.
- Parent/guardian will be notified

Fire and Disaster Drills

Fire drills are conducted in accordance with Florida Department of Children and Families rules and regulations. We will be conducting a minimum of 12 fire drills per year with not more than one drill every 30 days. Fire drills will be practiced at various times of the day, including rest time, to prepare the children for emergency situations. Due to the seriousness of our practice drills, we ask that you kindly do not sign your children in or out during fire drills.

Hallway Rules

- Children must walk single file when walking in the hallways
- No talking, running, or pushing
- All classroom rules apply
- Walk in the center of the hallway, 2 feet from the wall (no hands or shoes may touch the wall)

Health Policy

We are a "well-child facility" and have no provisions or facilities to care for sick children. For the protection of all of our children, the following will be strictly enforced. If symptoms develop at school, your child will be monitored for a time by a staff member. If symptoms continue, you will be messaged in BrightWheel and followed by a call if no response to the message and asked to pick up your child immediately (within an hour of the notification). **If a child is sent home one day with a fever (over 100.4), diarrhea (2 within 24 hours), and/or vomiting, he will not be permitted to attend school the next day. The child must be fever, diarrhea and vomit free without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning.**

If your child has an illness that is contagious, including but not limited to strep throat, pink eye, flu/covid, chickenpox, impetigo, scabies, pinworm, hand/foot/mouth, or hepatitis, they need to be picked up immediately and stay home until all symptoms are cleared. When all symptoms are cleared, a signed doctor's note stating the illness is no longer contagious, is required upon return to class.

When your child is scheduled for a surgical procedure, please provide a signed note from the doctor showing the date of surgery and anticipated date to return back to class. If the child is returning before the anticipated date of return, a signed doctor's note, authorizing that your child is cleared to return, MUST be

turned in on the morning of the child's entrance or the student will not be allowed to attend. If pain medicine is required from the doctor, a signed doctor's note is required to administer the medication.

A note is required whenever your student is absent. If your child visited the doctor, please provide that signed note when your child returns to school. If you do not have a doctor's note, please complete a "Tardy/Absent" note that is at the front desk.

Please do not bring your child to school if he has any of the following symptoms or if your child develops any of the following symptoms during school, the parent will be called and the child will need to be picked up within the hour.

- Fever - Temperature shows a sudden spike of 100° or higher. Children must be fever free without fever-reducing medications for 24 hours before returning. You will be called to pick up your child within the hour if a fever is 100.4° or higher.
- Respiratory - Wheezing, difficulty breathing or strong, constant cough or chest congestion. If any difficult breathing is imminent, parents will be called and the child will need to be picked up within the hour.
- Diarrhea - Is defined as an increase in the number of stools or the presence of looser stools than is normal for the individual, i.e. more than three bowel movements each day. After the third diarrhea, parents will be asked to pick up the child within the hour. If diarrhea is accompanied by a fever, children should stay home. Must have a doctor's note if related to medicine.
- Vomiting - Signs of illness or continuing to vomit.
- Rash - Undiagnosed rash other than a mild diaper rash or heat rash. Rash relating to medicine should be brought to the teacher's attention. If your child is diagnosed with hand-foot-and-mouth they are not allowed to return to school with open pustules.
- Sore throat - Sore throat that needs culturing because other signs are present.
- Nasal discharge or green in nature.
- Chickenpox/hand-foot-and-mouth - All lesions are dry and crusted and cleared by a doctor.
- Impetigo - (blisters covered with honey colored crust) At least 24 hours after the start of medication. If there's no improvement in 48 hours, the child should be reassessed by a physician.
- Lice - A child identified as having head lice will not be permitted to return until the following day provided that treatment has occurred and has been verified through a product box, box top, empty bottle, or signed statement, by custodial parent or legal guardian, that treatment has occurred. Child will be checked upon return to ensure there are no active lice. If active lice are detected, the student will be required to stay home until no active lice are detected.
- Conjunctivitis - (pink dye/redness of the eye with burning and thick discharge) students with eye drainage are allowed to return 24 hours after they start medication with a doctor's note.
- Scabies - Following medical treatment, the child must be examined, and cleared by a physician before the child can be readmitted.
- Pinworms - Are highly contagious and a child must stay home at least 24 hours with no sign of pinworms after treatment and cleared by a physician.
- Hepatitis - A physician statement is required for a child to be able to return to school.
- Strep throat - A child may not return to school sooner than 48 hours after the start of oral medication or 24 hours after injection.

- Lethargic - Child needs to be awake and alert upon entering the center. If a child becomes lethargic during the school day, parents will be notified and the child will need to be picked up.

Health Records

Our licensing agency and the State of Florida requires the filing of complete and current immunization records (Immunizations #680) or an exemption form #681 (some children in care may not have current immunization), a health exam certificate (physical form #3040) and birth certificate for your child. These forms are required before attending Foundations Academy Preschool. It is the parent's responsibility to keep these records up-to-date and current at all times. Please provide updated copies. Your student's attendance could be interrupted if updated copies are not provided.

Hours of Operation

Our Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Our VPK program session runs from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Students must be in the building by 8:15 in order to be ready for class at 8:30 a.m. There will be no admission after 8:40 a.m. for that day without a doctor's note or a prior authorization from administration. Pick-up is promptly at 11:30 a.m., to avoid a late pick up fee that will be charged if a student is not picked up before the grace period of 11:45 a.m. (\$5.00 per minute will be charged to the child's billing).

The Preschool (Infant - Bridge class) is open throughout the summer months. Summer Camp could be offered to students who have completed VPK through 5th grade. More information will be available prior to the summer program starting. The administrator can be reached in the office at 772-301-1616.

Lunch and Snacks

Foundations Academy is a "Nut-Free" facility. Some students are extremely allergic to nuts. Please do not bring anything that has nuts (i.e., peanut butter, almond butter, cashews, etc.) If using an alternate "peanut butter", please send a note with the food to let the teacher know.

Lunches

Lunches must be brought from home—Foundations Academy does not provide lunch for the children. When packing lunch, please be sure to have an ice pack to keep items cold. If your child is eating food that needs to be warmed, it is preferred that the food be brought in a thermos but do have a microwave available for 15 second warm-ups or less to heat.

Snacks

Please also send in healthy snacks for your child. There are two snack periods during the 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. school day. Please provide snacks that do not need to be heated up.

Medications for Student Welfare

- A "Permission to Administer Medicine" form must be completed, indicating the type of doctor prescribed medicine to be given to your child, exact dosage, and times your child requires the medication. This form can be picked up at the school office.

- Please write your child's name on a Ziploc bag, and place the medication, along with a medicine spoon, inside.
- Personally hand the medicine to the administration, either the Director or Assistant Director. Do not give the medicine to the teacher or leave it in the child's backpack or diaper bag.
- Over the counter, non-prescription medication must be labeled with the proper dosage. If your child is younger than the recommended age for the least dose, we must have a doctor's note stating the proper dosage for your child.
- We will not give aspirin, Motrin or Acetaminophen to mask temperature. We will give medicine for pain with a doctor's note.
- Do not allow your child to keep any medication with him, including cough drops.
- Your child's prescription medication must be in the original container with the name of the doctor, name of the child, and dosage information clearly on the label. A "Permission to Administer Medicine" form needs to be filled out and given to the administrator before prescription medication is able to be administered.

Open Door Policy

Foundations Academy Preschool is open and available for a visit anytime during business hours. All parents or visitors must "sign-in" at the reception desk and be assigned a visitor badge. The badge must be returned as you "sign-out" and leave the building.

Parent Support

The staff desires a harmonious relationship with parents. If parents have a question about a school policy or an event that involves their child, they are to notify their child's teacher or an administrator. An effort will be made to resolve any differences and maintain excellent communication between parents and ministry staff. Parental support is an essential part of the educational process. If, in the sole discretion of the administration, a parent has failed to support the Administrator or ministry staff or the standards articulated in the ministry's Statement of Faith, the administration reserves the right to deny continued enrollment in the school.

Playground Rules

- Children are to go down the slide, feet first, on their bottoms.
- No pushing other children on the swings or playing in front or back of the swings
- All classroom rules apply, except raising their hands
- The children are not allowed to open or close the storage boxes and may not sit or play around the storage boxes.

Potty Training

We have found that waiting until 2 ½ and going right to underwear is the best route. A child can be trained younger, but tends to have more accidents and regressions. If you decide to begin toilet training with your child, please inform the teacher. The teachers can be very helpful in this area. They will work with you and your child to help this process go as smoothly as possible. It is so important to follow the same routine at home as they do in the classroom. Some things to consider when toilet training:

- During this time please try to dress your child in easy to remove clothing. Buttons, buckles, or belts can become very frustrating to a child.
- Your child needs to be able to pull his own shorts and underwear up and down.
- Several sets of clothing need to be available in your child's backpack, including shoes and socks.

Termination Policy

In the event that our facility is to be shut down, we will inform all families 30 days prior to the facility's closing. Upon the decision to close the Preschool, Foundations Academy will do the following:

- Notify parents in writing.
- Transfer student records to the parent or legal guardian
- Maintain incident reports for a minimum of 180 days
- Maintain all state documents (i.e. fire drill records, inspection reports, attendance, etc.) for a minimum of 365 days.
- Forward records to the FLOCS office if they cannot be maintained by Foundations Academy

Therapists (RBT, OT, PT, Private Providers)

We welcome the chance to meet with private therapists and other private providers as we form a partnership to better serve our students. The objective is for the private provider to give suggestions to our school staff about strategies that they believe work best with their clients. It is important that the school staff who work with the student daily develop the skills to provide appropriate educational services to the student.

1. All private providers must be cleared with a Level 2 background screening. A copy from the outside agency that the therapists are employed will be sufficient. Applications can be obtained at your child's school.
2. At least 24 hours prior to visiting, the private provider should contact the student's teacher to discuss whether the time she/he would like to visit will work for the teacher.
3. At the agreed upon time, the private provider will sign-in at the front office, receive a name badge and proceed to the classroom.
4. The private provider will observe the class and student from an area designated by the teacher. The teacher may ask the private provider to demonstrate/model effective strategies that have been successful.
5. The teacher may not have time to consult with the private provider if she/he is busy instructing the class. A meeting may need to be scheduled at another time if the private provider would like to discuss the observation and strategies that he/she feels might be helpful.
6. RBT's are required to be in attendance when the student is in attendance.

Please understand that we want to work collaboratively with private providers and coordinate the services the children require. Suggestions made by the private providers will be considered by the school and teacher when making instructional decisions for the student.

Procedures for Collaboration of External Specialists

(External Specialists include Occupational Therapists (OT), Physical Therapists (PT), Speech and Language Pathologists (SLP), Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT), Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA)

Summary of Procedures:

- Parents must inform the school administrator in writing of the request to bring in outside personnel.

- Private agency personnel must have clearance (Private badge/ID and Level 2 background check)
- School must have on file written permission from parents to share confidential information.
- Reiterate binding confidentiality agreement of HIPPA laws.
- School staff must approve schedules and times.
- School assigns someone to supervise individuals during their time on campus. Note: assigned individuals can be the teacher in the classroom.
- Observations and collaborative conversations are focused on benefiting the specific student and for the school personnel to consider.

Additional Clarifications:

1. School focus is on educational relevance.
2. Agencies focus on home responsibilities and home interventions/supports. School staff are welcome to collaborate with parents and parent home supports. Home therapists are welcome to offer input for interventions, reinforcements and suggestions of schedules to be considered by teachers and school staff to review.
3. The educational day must focus on educational provision of services and interventions.
4. School-based programs are defined by teachers and school staff. If the child is identified as a student who need support to function in a school setting, then emphasis should go to making sure therapies provided are in place to make the child successful.
5. Support and scheduled collaboration/conversations should be held before or after instructional time, at the convenience of the classroom teacher. Agencies should not dictate time, schedules, or interventions.

Foundations Academy of Port St. Lucie is dedicated to supporting and collaborating in meaningful and educationally relevant ways.

Tuition, Payments and Fees

Tuition payments are based on our annual rate, not on daily attendance. The only payment option available is through the BrightWheel app. Please do not give any form of money to the students, teacher, nor place it in the student's bookbag. All teachers are advised to NOT take payments. If money is sent in the bookbag, it will remain there and be returned to you.

- Return ACH withdraws or rejected credit card charges are charged a fee of \$30.
- If a return payment makes the tuition payment more than five days overdue, an additional \$25 late fee will be charged.

An account is delinquent when any payment is not made within 30 days of the time such payment is due. When any account is delinquent 30 days, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be advised by documented contact of said delinquency. Penalties for 30 days delinquency will be as follows:

30-Days

Once the account is delinquent 30 days, the parents will be notified by documented contact that the student cannot return to the classroom until a payment or suitable arrangement has been made. The parent will also be advised that they have 30 days to resolve the financial situation in order for the student to return to the classroom.

60-Days

At the 60 day point of the account being delinquent, (30 days delinquent from original due date and 30 days of student not in attendance), if compliance has not been met, the student will be withdrawn from Foundations Academy at the direction of the Board of Directors.

Visitors

Based on current laws, parents must be background searched prior to volunteering in the classroom. Parents wishing to visit their student's class must "sign in" at the preschool office and be assigned a visitor's badge. If you wish to talk with your child's teacher, please arrange a private conference by calling the Preschool office.

Withdrawals and Transfers

Withdrawal and transfer forms can be obtained through the Preschool office and must be turned in to the Preschool Director. Please see the Preschool Director regarding any withdrawal or transfer matters.

Handbook Revision Procedure

This handbook is revised annually by a committee consisting of administration, representatives from the School Board, and a faculty member. Revisions are approved by the School Board before implementation.

Upon receiving the Preschool Handbook, please sign and return to the office.

Acknowledgement

I have received and read the Foundations Academy Preschool Handbook. I understand that by signing this form I agree to abide by all the policies and procedures stated in the handbook.

Highly important areas that I have read and am familiar with:

Health Policy (page 15) Parent initials _____

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Office Use

Date Received Acknowledgement: _____

Received by: _____

2025-2026 Preschool Handbook Addendum A

Intentional left blank for updates during the 2025-26 school year.