



**Viewmont Baptist Church**  
**After School Ministry**

**Parent and Student Handbook**

**2016-2017**

**1246 2<sup>nd</sup>. Street NE  
Hickory, NC 28601**

# **Viewmont Baptist Church After School Ministry**

WELCOME to the families that join Viewmont Baptist Church's (VBC's) week-day After School Ministry, one of our many Children's Ministries. We offer a safe, secure learning environment designed to help children experience the love of God. Our goal is to live out the teachings of Jesus by blessing the lives of children and families.

This handbook outlines the ministry's purpose, policies, and other details that will ensure a successful experience for you and your child. Please know that you are an integral part of this ministry. Shared communication between the home and the church is very important to us and we are always ready to listen.

## **Mission Statement:**

Viewmont Baptist Church After School Ministry provides high quality after school care for elementary school age children. By building relationships and communication between the church, parents, and schools, this ministry is able to provide academic reinforcement and enrichment to promote educational growth for children. This ministry also extends the mission of our church by providing the opportunity for the VBC family to share Christ and build caring relationships with children.

## **Vision Statement:**

We provide after school child care for children in Kindergarten through fifth grade. Our church provides a safe, positive and fun environment for children, a place where they are cared for by dedicated, professional adults.

We also promote academic growth for every child in our ministry. We provide tutoring and educational enrichment using a variety of instructional strategies and coordinate each child's instruction with input from his/her classroom teachers. Parental, church and school partnerships are essential for the success of the children.

Because Christ's blessing is for everyone, our ministry encompasses a diverse group of children, varied in race, culture, and socio-economic background. The children work and play in community with the VBC family offering a variety of activities that promote the spiritual, social and cognitive growth of the children.

## **Our Ministry Plan**

The church bus collects children from the designated elementary schools when school is dismissed. When children arrive at the church a healthy snack and juice or water are provided. After refreshments, the children move into "Homework Groups" based on grade level. Children receive assistance with homework, and reading time. Other enrichment activities offered include

Bible stories, music, arts and crafts, games, manipulatives for building models, cultural studies, plays and skits, science and health activities, and writing projects. Children have time for free-choice and self-expression.

Our teachers and church volunteers strive to enrich the total well-being of each child. Christian values are emphasized. We want children to have fun, be actively engaged, enjoy learning, and build relationships with friends and caring adults.

As a part of our enhanced standards, we maintain a child/teacher ratio of 1:19. The program concludes at 6:00 PM. We are currently working toward a Religious Sponsored License for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year.

### **Pre-Enrollment and Registration**

During registration, parents and students will be offered a tour of our facilities. Most importantly, parents will learn about the program offered and the importance of communication between the church, parent, and school regarding the child's overall growth and development. The following documents must be signed by the parent:

- Application for enrollment, emergency information for Bus, permission for photography/videography, and homework contract
- Permission to walk outside of the fenced in area around the campus.
- Permission for the child to be transported by the church bus
- Acknowledgement by the parents that they have received and reviewed the discipline policy
- Medical permission papers as described in the medical section of this handbook.
- Permission to communicate with the child's teacher and school.
- Receipt of the parent handbook which includes the **North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules**

We do not discriminate due to race, creed, national origin, and will comply with ADA requirements. We welcome children that may have special needs and we strive to make reasonable accommodations within the environment of our program. We deny services only if meeting the needs of the child would cause an undue burden on the staff or if servicing the child would alter the nature of our program. Each special need is considered on an individual basis.

### **Hours of Operation**

VBC's After School Ministry operates Monday through Friday. The program day begins with the dismissal of children from the public schools. Children ride the church bus to our church arriving around 3:15 p.m. On early dismissal days, children will be picked up at the designated school dismissal time. *It is the parent's responsibility to notify the After School Ministry if a child will not be riding the bus.*

Parents may also drive their children to our church campus after 3:30 p.m. but must enter the building to notify the staff that the child has arrived and to sign an attendance roster. Our program concludes at 6:00 PM. There will be an additional charge of \$1.00 per minute after 6:00 PM.

We will follow the Hickory Public Schools calendar. We will not open on school holidays, teacher workdays or any day Hickory Public Schools are closed.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

- If Hickory Public Schools are closed, we are closed.
- If Hickory Public Schools has an Early Dismissal due to weather, we will be closed.
- If Hickory Public Schools have a delayed opening in the morning, but operate until the end of the school day, then we will be open and will operate as usual.
- If there is great potential for the roads to become hazardous after the program has begun, parents will be alerted to our adjusted closing time and will be expected to pick up their child by that time.

### **Tuition**

There is an annual registration fee to accompany registration forms of \$30 for the first child and \$15 for each additional child with a family maximum of \$60. This registration reserves your child's place in the program and allows us to plan for the various ages.

The weekly tuition is \$40 for 3 to 5 days per week of child care. For children attending only one or two days per week the rate is \$10 per day. In the event of an abbreviated school week of 2 days or less, i.e. Thanksgiving/Christmas, inclement weather days where school is not in session, etc., the rate will also be \$10 per day.

***Parents will be invoiced for the following month of childcare fees by the 25th of each month. During that month, parents may pay as they choose as long as the Tuition is paid in full by the 25th of the current month. Payments received after this date will be subject to a \$10 late fee.***

For example, Tuition for March will be invoiced by February 25th. Parents may pay the tuition throughout the month of March as long as it is paid in full by March 25<sup>th</sup>. In the event that payment nor arrangements have been made by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the next month (15 days past the due date), parents will be called for a conference to discuss reason for late payment and to make arrangements.

Parents will be assessed for additional bank charges incurred on any check returned by a financial institution. Please retain your weekly receipts. We are unable to provide cumulative totals for the year.

### **Conferences**

Because our goal is to build shared communication between the church, the home, and the school, conferences are very important. During the initial enrollment conference, we will discuss each child's needs; obtain your permission to communicate with the school, and overview our ministry with you. Our staff is available for conferences throughout the year at the parent's request. We ask that you please set a conference appointment if you need to confer with a teacher at length. Parents will receive a quarterly Newsletter regarding happenings in the ASM.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit during our program hours. There are many opportunities during the year for parents to help with projects and field trips. Your volunteered time is greatly appreciated.

### **Discipline Policies:**

**Our dress code** will match the elementary school policy. We recognize the importance of safe, comfortable clothing including shoes that protect the feet and allow for safe, active play. Our church is air conditioned: therefore, short shorts, midriff tops, and brief clothing will not be appropriate.

**Behavior Rules** and expectations exist not only for the protection and safety of our students, but for the social and emotional well-being of all who participate in the after school ministry. We desire to create a kind, loving, environment where the principals of Jesus' teaching are followed by all. We want children to enjoy the activities and play with friends, as well as gain academic strength, while being cared for by caring adults.

For a healthy environment to exist, these rules are to be followed:

#### **Rule 1: Respect yourself, others, and church property**

- Use polite words and body language
- Speak with a kind voice
- Keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself
- Use inside voices in the building.

#### **Rule 2: Be honest and truthful**

- Tell the truth
- Only touch things that belong to you unless you have the owner's permission

#### **Rule 3: Be responsible**

- Follow directions
- Work with the adult leaders
- Always do your best

#### **Rule 4: Be kind and caring**

- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Give compliments and encouragement to others
- Be respectful of other's feelings. Remember that not everyone sees jokes the same way.
- Choose your words carefully in conversation. Words that can be hurtful are best left unsaid.

**Fighting and threatening to do harm are NOT allowed under any circumstances.**

**Poor choices** in behavior affect the climate of the ministry. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed or redirected. Consequences may include supervised time out, denial of free choice activities, or loss of a privilege. The teacher may communicate with the parents, ask the parents to come to the church, and/or refer the situation to the program administrator. Severe or continual misbehavior may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the program. Discipline will be age appropriate. We do not use any form of corporal punishment.

**Discharge Policy of VBC After School Ministry** includes the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments of fees
- Not observing the policies as outlined in this handbook
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.

Discharge from the program will be subject to the After School Committee approval.

**Withdrawing Enrollment:** Requires a 2 week written notice to the Director. Failure to provide notice will result in charges for 1 additional week of care.

### **Treasures and Possessions:**

To help keep up with possessions, each child will have a basket for his/her coat and book bag. We discourage children from bringing personal items that could be lost or broken, cause a distraction, or cause a problem with sharing.

### **Birthdays:**

Children are invited to celebrate their birthday with us. Unfortunately, we cannot accept home baked goods to be shared with children. Any item sent from home to be shared should be sealed from the store or be from a certified bakery or deli. Please discuss this with your child's teacher beforehand as they can help you with ideas. Whether or not you choose to send a snack for your child's birthday, we will sing "Happy Birthday" to the child to help celebrate his/her special day.

### **Health:**

If, in the opinion of the teaching staff, there is the possibility that your child is sick, we will call you to come and pick up your child. The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more
- Inflammation of the eyes
- Vomiting
- More than one incidence of diarrhea
- Infectious disease
- Unknown rash
- Head lice

Policy also requires that certain forms be signed to address medical issues.

We require:

- A child care plan that provides information regarding medical needs, allergies, and contact information for the child's physician.
- A medical action plan, if required due to health issues
- Permission to administer medication, when needed
- Permission to obtain medical attention for the child in an emergency. Emergency information must be on file for each child including contact information, health care provider, and chronic illnesses.
- Immunization records approved by the public schools are accepted. A copy must be provided to the church.

**Sanitation** is very important. Frequent hand washing with soap and running water is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Children and adults must wash their hands before preparing or eating snacks, after toileting, and after outside play.

Carpets and floors are vacuumed daily or as needed by church employees. Tables are washed and disinfected as needed including before and after eating and messy play. Toys, equipment, and furniture shall be kept clean and in good repair. Furnishings will be cleaned as needed and sanitized at least once a month.

**Nutrition and dietary restrictions** are considered when planning menus. Each day when the children arrive, they receive a healthy snack and juice or water. \*Please note: Water is offered to each child every day. Equitant substitutes will be available for children with medically documented food allergies. When children bring their own snack, it should meet appropriate nutritional standards; no home baked goods may be shared. If parents choose to send a snack, we would prefer it to be healthy and nutritious. Examples would be raw vegetables and dip, carrot cake, apple cake or muffins, banana or raisin bread, or bagels and cream cheese.

### **Grievance Procedures:**

Open communication between parents, staff, and administration is an important factor in the successful partnership of the Viewmont Baptist Church After School Ministry. If you have concerns or requests about your child's care, we ask that you first share these with your child's Group Leader. You are also encouraged to discuss these concerns with the Program Coordinator if the issues cannot be resolved to your satisfaction. If you are still not satisfied, please follow the **grievance procedure outlined below**. Parents may appeal to the After School Committee Chairperson and the Pastor of Spiritual Formation.

A. *Initiation:* A parent may initiate a grievance proceeding when either the student or his/her parent or guardian believes that the violation, misapplication, or misinterpretation of VBC's After School policies or procedures has occurred with regard to a child.

B. *Procedure:* The procedure for initiation and conduct of a grievance shall be:

**STEP 1 - Program Coordinator Conference**

A parent or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall make a written request for a conference with the Program Coordinator to discuss and seek resolution. The following guidelines shall be observed in Step 1:

- A grievance shall be filed as soon as possible, but in no event longer than ten (10) days, after disclosure of the facts giving rise to the grievance. The Program Coordinator shall grant the conference within five (5) school days following receipt of the request.
- The request shall include a statement describing the grievance.
- The Program Coordinator will state his/her position on the questions in writing to the parent within five (5) school days following the conference.

**STEP 2 - Appeal to the chairperson of the After School Committee or The Children's Minister.**

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, the parent may appeal the Program Coordinator's decision in writing to the After School Committee Chairperson. The appeal must be made within five (5) days following receipt of the appeal. A written response shall be made to the parent or guardian, and the Program Coordinator from the Chairperson within ten (10) school days following the Chairperson's review.

Our goal is for the program to be licensed by Fall 2017 by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Child Development. Parents may find information about the licensed program at [nchildcare.net](http://nchildcare.net). If they believe Child Care Licensing Requirements are not being followed a parent may file a complaint with the Division of Child Development at 1-800-859-0829.

**Safety:**

Children may be involved in minor accidents (scraped knees, bruised, etc.).

An **accident form** will be completed specifying the nature of the injury, time and place of occurrence, first-aid steps taken, and the name of the staff involved. A copy will be made and placed in the child's file and one given to the parent.

**Emergency Procedures** including regular fire and disaster drills will be practiced following clearly labeled exit routes. Teachers will assemble and count everyone, then give aid and comfort as needed. Emergency equipment including flashlights, radios, first-aid supplies, food and water is stored and available if needed. Teachers have first-aid training, as well as CPR training.

Suspected **child abuse and neglect** will be reported to the Department of Social Service as noted in the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules included in this handbook and as is required by the State of NC General Statute 7B-301, Mandatory Reporting Law. Furthermore, the After

School Ministry will not tolerate **sexual harassment** in any form. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Bus transportation** includes pick-up at the elementary school provided that written permission has been granted by the parent or guardian. For children weighing less than 40 pounds, the parent must provide a booster seat. The total number of children and adults being transported will never exceed the number of available seat belts in the vehicle. Attendance will be taken before reaching the church. The bus will comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations including:

- Fully charged fire extinguisher and functional spare tire in case of emergency
- Vehicle properly registered, insured, and has passed an annual State inspection
- Adequate insurance coverage to protect both the children and the child care program
- Applicable staff-child ratio based on at least 1 adult to 19 children
- Functioning cellular telephone in case of emergency
- First aid kit
- Emergency and identifying information for each child

**Car transportation** to the center can be provided by the parent. Upon arrival, the parent or guardian must accompany the child inside and sign him/her in.

**Departure** procedures require that each child's parent or guardian come into the building to notify the staff that the child is leaving and sign an attendance roster. Children will only be released to those individuals whose names are provided on the enrollment application. We reserve the right to ask for a current photo ID for anyone picking up the child other than their parents. It is the parent's responsibility to keep a current list of those who are allowed to pick up and to make them aware we may check ID's before releasing the child. The safety of your child is most important!

**Parental Custody** issues may necessitate the parent providing a copy of the official custody papers which will be kept on file in our office. Without proper paper work, we are legally required to release children to either parent.

**Attached please find a copy of the "North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules."**

**Thank you for allowing us to serve your family.**

# North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules

Division of Child Development  
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
319 Chapanoke Road  
Raleigh, NC 27603

## What Is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more unrelated children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis, of at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

It is only when all of these conditions exist that regulation is required. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development. The purpose of regulation is to protect the well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

## Star Rated Licenses

Centers and homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program.

## Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, and can include three additional school-age children. This includes preschoolers living in the home but the provider's own school-age children are not counted (Individuals caring for one or two children are exempt from being licensed.) Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

- Home providers must be 21 years old with at least a high school education or its equivalent, and mentally and emotionally capable of caring for children.
- He or she must undergo a criminal records background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All household members over age 15 who are present in family child care homes when children are in care must also undergo a criminal records background check. As of December 2008, criminal records rechecks are done every three years.
- All family child care home providers must have current certification in CPR and first aid and complete an ITS-SIDS training every three years. They also must complete a minimum number of training hours annually.

All family child care homes must meet basic health and safety standards. Providers must maintain verification of children’s immunization and health status. They must provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities, as well as nutritious meals and snacks for the children in care.

**Child Care Centers**

Licensing as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

Licensed centers must meet requirements in the following areas.

**Staff**

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21, and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger, and CPR and first aid training. All staff must also undergo a criminal records background check. As of December 2008, criminal records rechecks are done every three years.

**Ratios**

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below and must be posted in each classroom.

| <b>Age</b>   | <b>Teacher : Child Ratio</b> | <b>Maximum Group Size</b> |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 0-12 months  | 1:5                          | 10                        |
| 12-24 months | 1:6                          | 12                        |
| 2 years old  | 1:10                         | 20                        |
| 3 years old  | 1:15                         | 25                        |
| 4 years old  | 1:20                         | 25                        |
| School-age   | 1:25                         | 25                        |

*Small centers in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.*

### **Space and Equipment**

To meet licensing requirements, there must be at least 25 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child outdoors. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

### **Curriculum**

The Division of Child Development does not promote or require any specific curriculum over another unless programs are using curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Child care programs choose the type of curriculum appropriate for the ages of the children enrolled. Activity plans must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore and use materials on their own.

### **Health and Safety**

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. Meals and snacks must be nutritious, and children must have portions large enough to satisfy their hunger. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed programs to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) and must have space and time provided for rest.

The following requirements apply to both centers and homes.

### **Transportation**

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratio must be maintained.

### **Records**

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's attendance, immunizations, and emergency phone numbers. A record of monthly fire drills practiced with safe evacuation of children must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care.

### **Discipline**

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all family child care homes and centers. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

## **Child Abuse or Neglect**

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the county department of social services.** In addition, any person can call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829 and make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect in a child care operation. Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any abuse/neglect complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility.

## **Parental Rights**

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The law and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Child care resource and referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a child care resource and referral agency in your community. For more information visit the Resources in Child Care website at: [www.ncchildcare.net](http://www.ncchildcare.net). For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829, or visit our homepage at: <http://www.ncchildcare.net>.

## **Reviewing Files**

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every center or family child care home. These files can be:

- Viewed during work hours;
- Requested via the Division's web site at [www.ncchildcare.net](http://www.ncchildcare.net); or,
- Requested by contacting the Division at 1-800-859-0829.

## **How to Report a Problem**

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be fined up to \$1,000 and may have their licenses suspended or revoked. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development at 919-662-4499 or 1-800-859-0829.