



Parent Handbook

First Presbyterian Church
471 Main Street
PO Box 548
Highlands, NC 28741

828-526-3175
Fax: 828-526-3175
Sonshine School:
828-526-8865

Welcome to the Sonshine School Afterschool Program

Our Mission:

The Sonshine School Afterschool Program assists parents by providing a safe, Christian, caring environment for children after school. We strive to create a clean, nurturing atmosphere where a child can grow spiritually, physically, socially emotionally, and intellectually.

As a Christian center with affiliation to the First Presbyterian Church, we will provide a moral and spiritual environment where each child is treated with respect.

About Our Program:

Children in grades K-4th grade are eligible to attend our program. We are open daily, Monday thru Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.. We help parents by assisting students with completing homework, providing daily literacy activities, and engaging students in enrichment activities to balance learning.

About Admission:

Admission to the Sonshine School Afterschool Program is on a first-come, first-served basis. Students may not begin to attend the after school program until all required forms are read, completed, signed and submitted.

These forms include:

- Child's application
- Emergency Contact Information
- Copy of the Parent Handbook
- Tuition Information
- Permission slip for field trips

Permission slip for pickup
Permission slip to take child's picture
Permission slip for sunscreen (parents will provide this)
Medication and Allergies

Confidentiality: Information concerning the child and their family will not be made available to anyone, by any means, without the expressed written consent of the parents or legal guardian.

The School Day

Arrival:

Upon entering the building, children will wash their hands and prepare for snack time. We provide healthy snacks and juice or water for the children. A grace will be said before eating. If your child has allergies please let the after school care staff know. Our day will also include a devotional.

Homework:

Staff members will work with the children to ensure the accuracy and completion of their assignments. There is no better way for your child to succeed than getting their homework done correctly. Each parent/guardian should review the homework and complete if unfinished and sign off if the teacher requires.

Literacy:

During homework time each child will be given the opportunity to read out loud to an adult or to be read to by an adult. Developing early reading and language skills will help your child succeed in school.

Enrichment/Play:

It is our belief that children need play and exercise. Upon completion of daily homework and reading the children will participate in activities designed to be motivational, encourage creativity, and learning. Other activities may include field trips, guest speakers, music and movies.

Discipline and Guidance:

We guide children so that they can learn to discipline themselves. In order to achieve this goal, we set up an environment that has boundaries, rules and routines so that children know what is acceptable. When a child does not follow the rules, we use techniques that are respectful to the child, such as redirection or teacher mediation. Parents will be informed of any disciplinary incidents.

Dismissal:

The After School Program closes at 5:00 pm each day. Pick up as soon after as possible. Please remember to sign your child out at the end of the day. Children must be released to a parent or adult listed on the admission form as having permission to pick up the child or we must have name of unknown person ahead of time.. If the adult is not known to the staff, a photo ID will be required.

Snow Days or Closings:

The Sonshine School afterschool program will follow the schedule for the Highlands School. On holidays, teacher work days, snow days, and other days when the Highlands School is closed...there will be NO AFTERSCHOOL CARE.

Any day that The Highlands School sends the busses home or discontinues classes early due to weather, there will be NO AFTER SCHOOL CARE.

On any day that the Highlands School dismisses children early that is not weather related there WILL BE AFTERSCHOOL CARE.

If it starts snowing after 3:00 p.m. please pick up your child as soon as possible.

Direct Line for the Sonshine School classroom:

526-8865 (an answering machine is available)

First Presbyterian Church Office: (closes at 4:30 pm)

828-526-3175

What to bring:

Children are expected to bring their homework and the tools necessary to complete their homework, daily. We take homework seriously and ask that you work with your child to do the same by bringing all of their materials to afterschool care each day.

Toys at After School:

Please do not send toys to the afterschool program. It sometimes causes hard feelings when toys are lost, broken or not shared. Our program is well equipped with appropriate toys and materials. NO GUNS OR TOYS OF WAR are allowed.

What is needed?

Emergency Contact Information:

Parents are required to complete a contact form for their child that includes emergency contact people. Be sure that there are at least 3 different names and phone numbers by which you can be contacted in case of emergency. Should phone numbers change, please inform the center as soon as possible. Please inform anyone

picking up your child that they will be asked to show picture identification if no staff member can recognize them. No one under the age of 16 can pick up a child from afterschool care.

Access and custody:

All biological parents have access unless we have a copy of court documents on custody arrangements. The police will be notified if any unauthorized person seeks custody of the child.

Attendance:

Please notify the Sonshine School in advance if you know your child will be absent. If we do not hear from you, we may call your home or work.

Health and Safety:

When to stay home:

If your child is too ill to attend regular school, he/she is too ill to be at the Sonshine School afterschool program.

Illness at the Afterschool Program:

If a child has any of the following symptoms, he/she will be isolated from the other children, with a staff person present, until the parent is able to pick up their child.

- Lice

- Suspected signs of communicable disease

- Nausea or diarrhea

- Constant cough or difficulty breathing, complaint of a sore throat or chest discomfort

- Discharge from ears or eyes, inflamed tissue around ears or eyes

- Any visible rash or spots, untreated infected skin patches

- Continuing headache or generally not feeling well

Elevated fever -100 degrees auxiliary (digital)

Contagious and Infectious Diseases:

If the child develops a contagious or infectious disease while at the Afterschool Program the other parents will be informed that their child has been exposed. Parents, in turn, should inform the Afterschool Program of any contagious or infectious disease that their child develops at home or to which the child has been exposed. Infectious or contagious diseases include red measles, chicken pox, and others.

First Aid:

Simple first aid will be given for any injury or illness needing only minimal attention.

Should an illness or emergency arise that is deemed by the staff to potentially be life-threatening, the staff will call 911, then contact the parent.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect:

In North Carolina, all childcare staff are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services in the appropriate county.

About Emergency Situations:

Fire and Thunderstorm/Tornado Drills:

The Sunshine School practices fire safety and thunderstorm/tornado safety drills.

Building Evacuations:

Should our building become unsafe for the children/staff, we will go to the Hudson Library (526-3031). The afterschool coordinator will appoint staff to call parents and notify them of the change or a notice will be posted on the door of the school.

Tuition Policies:

Afterschool Care fees are set at \$5.00 per day, per child.

Parents are required to reserve days and make advance payment of all tuition fees on Friday for the following week.

Tuition fees may be paid by check or cash.

Exact change is requested for fees paid with cash.

Should a check be returned, parents are required to pay all bank fees.

If there is no contact between the after school care staff and a parent or authorized adult by 6:00 pm, local police authorities may be called.

Fees will be charged for every day your child is enrolled.

For example: if your child is enrolled M,T,W,TH,F they are expected to pay the full amount, even if they are absent one of those days. In the case of an extended illness (5 days or more) your child will be eligible for the inactive list with no charge.

Please feel free to speak to us at any time about your account..