



SonShine Weekday Preschool
Parent Handbook
2023 - 2024 School Year

234 Hawkins St
Dahlonega, GA 30533
(706) 864 - 3676
Director: Mrs. Nancy Gallagher
Curriculum Director: Mrs. Angie Davis
sonshine@dahlonegabaptist.com



Dear Parents,

We are so pleased to have your student(s) enrolled in our preschool program. This handbook is designed to give you an overview of our program and the policies necessary for providing a safe and loving environment. Hopefully, it will help you and your student(s) make the transition into our care a pleasant experience.

Dahlonga Baptist Church is committed to SonShine Weekday Preschool, not just as a program, but as a vital ministry to our church. Our staff at the church and at the preschool are committed to loving every student, and to providing rich opportunities for them to learn and grow.

Please know that we are here to help our students and their families in any way possible. If you have any questions, please feel free to call on us.

God Bless,

Mrs. Nancy Gallagher
SonShine Director
sonshine@dahlongabaptist.com

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SonShine Weekday Preschool is a Ministry of Dahlonega Baptist Church. At DBC and SWP we believe and are committed to creating an environment where each student is a special gift from God, with unique talents and abilities. We strive to offer a warm, nurturing, Christ-centered environment.

Contact Information:

Mailing Address: Dahlonega Baptist Church
Attention: SonShine Preschool
234 Hawkins St.
Dahlonega, GA 30533

Office Hours: 8:00 AM– 2:00 PM

School Hours: 9:00 AM– 1:00 PM

School Tours: By appointment only

Telephone: (706) 864 - 3676

Email: sonshine@dahlongebaptist.com

Website: <https://preschool.dahlongebaptist.com/>

Mission Statement

The mission of SonShine Weekday Preschool is to provide our students with a safe and loving Christ-centered environment that recognizes the uniqueness of each student and encourages spiritual, emotional, academic, social, and physical growth.

Parent Handbook

Each parent is responsible for reading the SonShine Parent Handbook. Your signature on the Parent Handbook link on your registration in Smart Care states that you have read the handbook in its entirety, understand it, have asked the Preschool Administration any questions regarding the handbook, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures listed within. The last page of this document will also need to be signed as it will be kept in your student's file.

2023 - 2024 Calendar

SonShine classes will begin August 1, 2023 and go until May 21, 2024 and follow the Lumpkin County Public Schools calendar, observing the same holidays as Lumpkin County Public Schools. We reserve the right to adjust the school calendar as needed throughout the year.

Orientation

Parent Night will be Friday, July 28th from 5 – 7 PM. This is a parent only event. A parent or guardian of an incoming student is required to attend orientation. We will review the Parent Handbook, carpool procedures, and school calendar together. You will have an opportunity to visit your student's classroom and meet their teacher. This is a great time to spend a few minutes discussing anything with your teacher. We will also have a booth set up as an opportunity to learn more about the church activities here at Dahlonga Baptist Church.

Open House

Open House is a time for your student to come look at their new classroom and meet their teacher. This is a great time for you to talk to your student about preschool and how much fun they will have! Open House will be Monday, August 1st from 9:30 AM–11:30 AM.

Early Release Days

Our Kindergarten, half-day class will report to school on half days that fall on the Lumpkin County Public Schools calendar, but the other classes at SonShine Weekday Preschool will not be in session on those days. Early release day hours are 9:00 AM–11:00 AM.

Registration Fee

The registration fee for all classes is \$65.00 per student per year. The fee is due at the time of registration and is nonrefundable. The registration fee will secure your students spot for the school year 2023 - 2024.

Curriculum/Supply Fee and Tuition

The curriculum/supply fees and monthly tuition can be paid to SonShine in two different ways. The first way would be to use the Smart Care App to make the one-time curriculum/supply fee payment and then monthly tuition payments with a debit or credit card. Tuition can be set up on auto pay that would draft on the 5th of each month from the account you select. There is a 2.85% processing fee that Smart Care charges for all debit and credit card payments. The second way to make a payment is through check, money order, or cash. Money orders and checks are to be made out to SonShine Weekday Preschool and handed directly to the Director. All payment forms made to the Director will be placed in to the Smart Care App and a receipt of payment will be generated and emailed to the email address on file in Smart Care. All payments are due by the 1st and will receive a late fee of \$25.00 if paid after the 5th of each month. Regardless of the way you choose to pay monthly tuition, an invoice will be emailed to the email address you provided during registration.

Tuition Options

2-day Tues.& Wed. program (1 year old): \$1900.00 per month for 10 months.

2-day Thur. & Fri. program (1 year old): \$190.00 per month for 10 months

3-day program (2-year-old): \$219.00 per month for 10 months

4-day program (3-year-old and young 4 yr. old): \$276.00 per month for 10 months

Pre-K Program (5 day): \$317.00 per month for 10 months

Kindergarten half day Program (5 day): \$317.00 per month for 10 months.

(Kindergarten half day will tentatively open only if we receive a minimum of 6 students - parents will be made aware of confirmation no later than May 1st)

Discounts and Scholarship Options

SonShine Weekday Preschool does provide a 10% discount to military families. We also offer a multi sibling discount - 10% second student, 20% third student, and 30% fourth student. Limited partial scholarships are available and are based on an application process. Contact Mrs. Nancy at Sonshine@dahlongabaptist.com with any questions.

Curriculum/Supply Fee

This fee is based on the tuition level that you have selected for your student. The cost covers all individual curriculum and classroom supplies that will be needed for your student for the entire year. **This cost does not include lunch, diapers, or any other personal hygiene items that each individual student would need daily.** This fee is due prior to the first day of school.

Kindergarten and Pre-K will be using Abeka Curriculum for the 2023-2024 school year

Kindergarten half day: \$170.00

Pre-K: \$120.00

Four Day: \$100.00

Three Day: \$75.00

Two Day: \$50.00

Arrival

Each day the doors to the preschool will open at 8:55 AM. Students will be greeted at their vehicles by one of the SonShine staff members. The doors will be closed and locked at 9:10 AM or as soon as the car line is completed. Please stay in your car during the car line process.

Walk-ups

If you choose not to use the car line in the morning, please park in the side parking lot and walk up to the double doors under the black awning. The doors will open at 8:55 AM. Students will be greeted at the door by a SonShine staff member that will help escort them to their classroom. Parents are not permitted to enter the building during this time. At 9:10 AM the doors will be closed and locked. If a parent desires to have a conversation with the Director or Teacher, contact the office and schedule an appointment or reach out via email.

Dismissal

Afternoon car line begins the first day of school. Students will begin to exit the school stating at 12:55 PM. You will follow the same procedures for afternoon car line as for morning car line. Please stay in your car. The teacher will assist your students in to your car. Please pull completely away from the carpool area into the parking area to buckle your students into the seat securely. **Parents are responsible for buckling their students car seat properly.**

Walk-up Pick up

Park in the side parking lot and walk up the sidewalk to the double doors under the black awning. Staff and students will continually be coming out of this door. Please inform the staff member that is at the door that you are there to pick up your student and then move to the side. Parents are not allowed into the building. The doors will open at 12:55 PM.

Attendance

Strive for regular and punctual attendance with your student(s). A student who is frequently absent, misses opportunities for developing social skills and academic readiness. Please notify your student's teacher if you have a planned absence coming up. If your student is sick, let your student's lead teacher know so we can do extra cleaning in the classroom and notify the other parents in the class, if necessary.

Tardiness

It is very important that students get in the routine of arriving to school on time. When a student arrives late, other students may be disrupted, and the late arriving students may have more difficulty joining in the routine of the day. But things do happen, and we understand. If you do arrive late to school, please approach the double doors by the playground and ring the doorbell. A SonShine staff member will greet your student and assist them with getting them to their classroom.

Authorization to Pick Up Your Students

If your student needs to be picked up by someone other than you or the authorized adult listed on the enrollment form, please inform the director by sending a note with your student. The person picking your student up should be prepared to show their ID and have a car seat. If they do not have a car seat, we will not be able to release your student. This is for your student's safety.

Emergency Contact

Each student should have two emergency contacts on file. If a student's parent needs to be contacted or in case of an emergency at the school, we will always start with the primary contact and then move down the contact list if we are unable to reach a parent. Please notify the office of any changes of information over the school year.

SonShine Preschool Program

SonShine Weekday Preschool is a non-profit outreach ministry designed to build a solid foundation based on Christian values for the students of our community and congregation. Our experienced and caring staff is dedicated to honoring God and sharing the love of Jesus with our students through a Christian curriculum. SonShine Weekday Preschool is where your students learning begins.

Curriculum

Kindergarten half-day and PreK will be utilizing Abeka curriculum. Each student will have their own set of workbooks that will be kept in class to go along with the teacher's instruction. All the other classes at SonShine will be utilizing curriculum provided by Play to Learn Preschool and incorporate Biblical foundations in all activities, along with a variety of phonics programs to enhance their learning and development experience.

Chapel Time

The school provides chapel time weekly for all classes to experience stories from the Bible and a time of prayer. The students will learn and practice saying the following pledges during chapel time: The Pledge of Allegiance, The Pledge to the Christian Flag, and The Pledge to the Bible. In addition, each class will incorporate the Bible lesson from chapel into their weekly activities, have daily prayer time during circle time, and a mealtime blessing that will be used daily at lunch. Christmas and Easter are celebrated, and the religious significance of holidays are included in the curriculum, where appropriate.

State License

SonShine Weekday Preschool Ministry of Dahlongega Baptist Church, operating in exempt status from state licensure, is committed to ongoing self-monitoring to ensure the safety of all students. The SonShine Weekday Preschool Ministry does not discriminate based on race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin.

Enrollment Restrictions

All students enrolled are uniquely created by God. We work with in the constraints on the staff we have at SonShine Weekday Preschool to accommodate the needs of our students. However, we are unable to provide individualized care for a student that requires special accommodations due to a physical, emotional, mental, or educational restriction. If within the first two to four weeks of school we have identified a concern that would hinder the growth of your student in our particular learning environment, it will be discussed with you and appropriate action, at the discretion of the Director, will be taken. If for any reason within this same time frame you feel we are not meeting your

needs, you may withdraw your student(s). Please send the Director a written request to withdraw your student(s). Registration fees are not refundable.

Statement of Dismissal

SonShine reserves the right to dismiss any student in its discretion when it discerns that continued enrollment in the Preschool Program is disruptive to the school, other students, or incompatible with the school's mission. Such reasons may include, but are not limited to: violation of classroom behavioral guidelines and expectations either of a serious or continual nature (such as bullying, kicking, biting, hitting, spitting, verbal misbehavior, continual willful refusal to follow directions, etc.); failure of parents or guardians to adhere to school terms and policies; misrepresentations or omissions by parent or guardian on enrollment forms or in other interactions with the Preschool personnel; failure to pay tuition and/or fees completely or timely; and/or school's inability to meet the special needs of a student. Note: Families who are more than 90 days behind in tuition and/or fee payments are automatically withdrawn from SonShine Weekday Preschool.

Withdrawal by Parent

To withdraw your child from SonShine, a 30-day advance written notice is required to be submitted to the SonShine front office in a timely manner either in person or through email which secures your withdrawal. Verbal withdrawals are not accepted as an official form of withdrawal. Tuition and fees must be current through the last month of attendance. Tuition and fees are non-refundable in the event of withdrawal. Any parent desiring to re-enroll in the same school year should follow the regular Preschool enrollment process which includes repayment of the enrollment fee. Parents who withdraw without a 30-day advance written notice or who withdraw with a balance due may not be eligible for re-enrollment. A parent who goes through the official withdrawal process then has a change of mind may rescind their withdrawal. This should be done in writing and given to the SonShine front office. If the spot is still available, the student may continue at the discretion of the Director. However, if the spot has been filled, then the student will be placed on the waiting list until a new spot opens. The re-enrollment fees will apply.

Dress Code Guidelines

Please dress your student in durable clothes that are easily removed for diaper changes and going to the restroom easily and quickly. Students, depending on the age group, will be involved in a variety of activities including being on the floor, playing outside, painting, etc. Please do not dress them in clothes inappropriate for play or in a special outfit you do not want to get messy. Students will spend time outdoors each day except when the temperature is too cold, or it is raining. For your students' safety, we recommend closed toe shoes, no rainboots or sandals, for the playground. Please send an extra pair of gym shoes with your students if they wear the above shoes with their outfit to school that day. Please be sure your student has warm clothing for chilly days. Please send in at least one complete change of clothing to keep in your students' cubby in case of an accident. Place clothing in a plastic zip bag. Do not forget to change out clothing with the season. If your student wears diapers, please be sure to bring 3 to 4

diapers for the day or you may send in a pack of diapers to keep in their cubby. We will provide wipes.

What Not to Bring

Students should not bring toys to school except on days designated by the teacher. Students should not bring their breakfast into school with them in the morning. Students should not have peanut items or candy in their lunch boxes for snack/lunch time.

Lunch

All students will have a lunch time built into their schedule each day. Parents will be responsible to pack a nutritious lunch following the SonShine food allergy guidelines in this handbook. SonShine does not have additional lunches on hand for those who forget their lunch box, but we will provide students with goldfish, pretzels, or another snack that may be on hand. All students should be able to feed themselves and hold their own cups. It is a goal that all students can open each item and/or container in their lunch box with little assistance. The following suggestions may help when packing a lunch:

- Keep foods simple and use packaging that is easy to open.
- Transfer foods from difficult to open packaging and containers to something that is easier to open.
- Prepare foods that do not have to be heated. (Teachers do not have access to microwaves.)
- Allow your students to assist you when preparing and packing their lunch.
- Consider adding foods that come in interesting shapes and colors such as broccoli “trees” or cauliflower “clouds.” Sandwiches can also be cut into shapes using cookie cutters.

SonShine Food Allergy Guidelines

The following items are not permitted in snacks/lunches due to allergies or due to being a choking hazard.

- Peanut butter, nuts, or any nut products, soy butters, nut butters, seed butters, home ground butters, cookie spreads, or if it looks like, smells like, or has the consistency or general appearance of peanut butter.
- Popcorn
- Hard candy
- Suckers
- Honey
- Chocolate
- Marshmallows
- Hot dogs (must be diced – halved then quartered into very small bites at home)
- Milk, almond milk, and any other substitute milk products.

Examples of Appropriate Items

- Applesauce cups
- Pudding cups
- Jell-O cups
- Yogurt
- Mini bagels
- Fresh fruit – DICED – bananas, apples, oranges
- Small sandwiches or roll ups – cheese, ham, turkey
- Pretzels/chips
- Cheese cubes or string cheese
- Raw vegetables – DICED
- Tomatoes (must be halved then quartered at home)
- Grapes (must be halved then quartered at home)
- Graham crackers
- Vanilla wafers
- Cheez-Its
- Goldfish
- Clear juices
- Water

Car Tags

Each student will be provided with two initial car line tags. Please place one of the car tags in each vehicle that will be used to pick up and drop your student(s) at school. Place the tag in a visible place to help the SonShine staff be able to quickly identify the student that belongs to the vehicle. If a person that does not typically pick up a student plans to pick up a student from the preschool, please be sure to have them have their identification ready to show a staff member.

Inclement weather

In case of bad weather (snow, sleet, etc.), SonShine will follow the lead of the Lumpkin County School system and close school. We will post the information on SonShine Preschool's Class Dojo account. If Lumpkin County Schools call for a time delay in starting the school day, SonShine will cancel school for that day. If it becomes necessary to close early due to weather, you will be contacted to pick up your students.

Fire / Tornado / Intruder

SonShine staff members have all been trained on how to handle a variety of different drills that we practice monthly. Each classroom has specific classroom procedures. All emergency personnel will know where to locate classes and have any necessary codes. Students will partake in practicing fire, tornado, and intruder drills periodically throughout the year.

SonShine Preschool committee

SonShine Weekday Preschool has a committee of members from DBC that serve the program in an advisory capacity. They assist with setting policies, making long range plans for growth and development, hiring of new teachers, weighing in on disciplinary staff issues, and assisting in financial matters.

SonShine Staff

Each staff member of SonShine Weekday Preschool has expressed a commitment to Christ and to the ministry of this program. The staff is chosen for their love of young students and their ability to create a fun learning Christian environment. Our staff members are church members of Dahlonga Baptist Church or members of a church elsewhere. Staff members attend appropriate training sessions and are constantly teaching, reading, and learning how to be better prepared to provide students with the best program we can offer. They are committed to creating the best preschool experience for your students. Each classroom is staffed with a lead and assistant teacher. All staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid.

Potty Trained Policy

All students enrolled in a 3-year-old, PreK, and K class must be potty trained and able to accomplish the following on their own:

- Use the toilet in the bathroom
- Wipe themselves
- Pull up clothes – minimal assistance may be given for zippers and buttons
- Flush the toilet
- Wash and dry hands

Students who are enrolled in a 2-year-old class and younger are not required to be potty trained and the teacher may request that a change of clothes be kept at school. However, if you are potty training your 2-year-old, please let your teacher know and she will be happy to work with your child at school.

Behavior Management

Our goal with behavior management at SonShine is to support our students in feeling good about who they are, making sound decisions, finding solutions to their problems, having self-control, getting along with others, being responsible citizens, and caring about others. Within our classrooms, we allow students the freedom to learn from their mistakes and experience the consequences of their decisions. With young students, we set developmentally appropriate limits for their safety, the safety of others, and the safety of property. Discipline is regarded as part of the total program, and the consequences of misbehavior will be stated in positive terms and discussed with the students. Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in students by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling appropriate behavior, encouraging expected behavior, redirecting students to a more appropriate activity, and setting clear

limits for the benefit and safety of all students. If redirecting is not successful a student will be placed in “time-out” as a tool to diffuse the situation at hand and give the student space to effectively reflect on the situation before finding a solution with the aid of their teacher. If a student is placed in time out, a parent may not receive a note on the daily sheet nor receive an incident/accident report. This is because we believe that “time out” can be a tool of behavioral guidance and is not indicative of bad behavior. No form of physical punishment will be allowed at SonShine.

Core Values

The motivation for above God’s rule is God Himself. That’s the attitude that we want to foster in the children under our care.

We want kids to know why to behave even more than we want them to behave. Leviticus 19:2 tells us to “be holy, because God is holy.”

Respect God & His Word. . .

- This rule is based on Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and reminds us that rules come from God and that everything we do should be about God.
- The motion for the rule is to point up.
- This means that we listen when someone is reading the Bible or praying. This means that we remember that we’re here to learn about God.



Respect Teachers & Leaders....

- This rule is based on Hebrews 13:17 which reminds us that God instituted authority over us.
- The motion for this rule is to salute one of our teachers.
- This means that we listen when an adult is talking.
- This means that we participate and do what we're told to do.



Respect Each Other....

- This rule is based on Hebrews 10:24-25 which teaches us the importance of the gathered church.
- The motion for this rule is to point to our neighbors.
- This means that we need to be kind, loving, and encouraging to our classmates.
- This means that we need to keep our hands & feet to ourselves and refrain from distracting each other



Health Information

Please keep your student at home if he or she seems to show any signs of illness. This is for his or her own good, as well as for the protection of other students. A student who has experienced the following symptoms in the previous 48 hours should be kept home: fever or flu-like symptoms, vomiting or diarrhea, any symptom of childhood disease (i.e., scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough, etc.), green or cloudy runny nose, sore throat, any skin infection, pink eye, or head lice. If your student contracts any of these while attending preschool, please notify the director. If your student becomes ill at school, you will be notified and required to take him or her home as soon as possible. A doctor's note will be required to return to school after a hospital stay or a communicable disease. A current immunization certificate (Form 3231) must be completed by the first week of school. If you choose not to vaccinate, you must provide a waiver. Georgia Law allows two types of exemptions to vaccinations. You may provide a medical waiver that is signed by your physician or a religious waiver that must be notarized.

Policy and Procedures Acknowledgement

I HAVE RECEIVED AND READ THE 2023-2024 POLICY AND PROCEDURES PARENT HANDBOOK FOR THE SONSHINE WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL MINISTRY OF DAHLONEGA BAPTIST CHURCH AND I WILL COMPLY WITH ALL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

The SonShine Weekday Preschool Ministry of Dahlonega Baptist Church, operating in exempt status from state licensure, is committed to ongoing self-monitoring to ensure compliance with state regulations. The SonShine Weekday Preschool Ministry does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin.

Printed Name

Signature