



1025 Johnson Road | Keller, Texas 76248 | [www.kellerumc.org](http://www.kellerumc.org) | 817-431-1332

## **Building Blocks Preschool Parent Handbook**

### **Program**

The Building Blocks Preschool and Kindergarten programs provide a caring, Christian atmosphere and a hands-on learning experience dedicated to the growth and development of the whole child. Building Blocks Preschool is located in the Family Life Center of the Keller United Methodist Church.

Program activities are planned according to the children's development level and will offer challenging experiences that:

- Build on each child's natural curiosity
- Enhance self-esteem
- Encourage large and small motor development
- Broaden cognitive skills
- Enrich language skills
- Provide for spiritual education
- Nurture social and emotional development
- Offer creative opportunities

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum is developmentally based using thematic units and learning centers to encourage each child's physical, social, cognitive and spiritual growth. Each day will offer a balance of vigorous and quiet activities that are appropriate for the preschool child and encourage a positive attitude toward learning and school. Specific curriculum areas that will be included are:

- Literature and whole language activities
- Music and rhythms
- Bible centers and chapel time
- Math and science activities (including cooking)
- Sensory and creative expression learning centers

- Large motor and outdoor play
- Socialization experiences
- Small motor and manipulative learning centers

## **Staff**

Each of the staff at Building Blocks Preschool has a Bachelor's Degree and/or experience teaching preschool age children. Our staff is affiliated with the following professional associations:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Texas Association for the Education of Young Children

The staff continues to improve their understanding and skills in preschool education through inservice training, continuing education and professional seminars taken throughout the year. The staff is also trained in First Aid and CPR.

The Building Blocks staff has been made aware of the Center for Disease Controls' new recommendation for adult immunization boosters. However, we have decided to allow each teacher to make their own individual choice in the matter.

## **Class Structure**

Each class structure offers a ratio of 8:1 or 7:1. All children will be placed in classes according to their age as of September 1 of the current school year, but groupings are flexible depending on the developmental level or individual needs of each child.

Classes for our 2-day programs are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Classes for our 3-day programs are offered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Our Kindergarten program meets Monday through Thursday. There are no classes on Fridays.

**All children must be potty trained to be accepted at school.**

Children will also have the opportunity to participate in special Chapel times, library and music classes. The 3-day program for the 4 year olds will also introduce Spanish time.

We will continue to offer enrichment days for our 3 year olds and 4 year olds. The enrichment day for 3 year olds will be on Wednesdays. The enrichment day for the 4 year olds will be on Mondays.

Our CAP (Creative Arts & Play) class is another option available to our Building Blocks families. These classes are designed to integrate arts with literature and science and provide opportunities to explore and engage their senses. CAP classes are scheduled for Wednesdays and open to 3 and 4 year old enrollment. The availability of this class is based on interest.

## **School Calendar and Hours**

Building Blocks will operate for 9 months from August through May, and will follow the Keller Independent School District for major holidays and vacations. In case of inclement weather, the preschool will close if KISD schools are closed. If KISD has a delayed start, the preschool will open at our regular time.

All preschool classes meet from 9:15am until 2:15pm.

Although we ask that you not bring your child earlier than 9:10am, since our teachers use the time before class to set up and prepare for the day, we encourage you to make every attempt to have your child in class by 9:15. Regular and timely attendance helps your child adjust to school routines. Your child's teacher will not be able to repeat activities missed by late arrivals.

Please be prompt at dismissal, a late pick-up can be very upsetting to a young child. There will be a late fee of \$10 for pick-up after 2:30pm.

## **Enrollment, Tuition and Payment Information**

The program director shall review and approve, or deny all applications for enrollment. Enrollment will be open to any child, provided the school can meet the needs of that child. There will be no discrimination due to race, color or national/ethnic origins.

The following forms are required. They will need to be downloaded from our website at [kellerumc.com](http://kellerumc.com). Click down on the "Know" tab and click on "Building Blocks" page. The enrollment forms link is on this page. Fill these forms out **completely** and turn them in to your child's teacher on the **first** day of school:

- Preschool profile
- Health History signed and dated by your child's doctor
- Immunization record\* signed and dated by your child's doctor  
(Signed and dated Immunization records can also be supplied by your doctor's office)
- Authorization and Release Form
- Directory Information Sheet

\*Each child enrolled must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Requirements.

There will be a **non-refundable** registration fee of \$100 due at the time of enrollment. Registration for returning students is \$50. Supply fees are \$200 for the 2-day program, \$225 for the 3-day program and \$250 for the 4-day program. If registration occurs after December 31, the supply fee will be prorated for the remainder of the year.

Tuition is based on a yearly fee. Equal monthly payments have been calculated for your convenience and do not reflect the number of school days each month. Tuition for the 2-day program is \$2,340 a year or \$270 per month. Tuition for the 3-day program is \$2,970 a year or \$330 per month. Tuition for the 4-day program is \$3,420 a year or \$380 per month. Tuition for all classes is due on the first of each month. If tuition is not paid by the end of a given month, the child will not be allowed to attend classes effective the first school day of the following month. Tuition payments will begin in August and conclude in April for a total of 9 payments.

**There will be a late charge of \$10 if payment is made after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

Please make checks payable to **Keller UMC** (Please indicate BB Tuition in the memo line). If you would like to pay with credit card, debit card or ACH, we offer a link on our website at [www.kellerumc.com](http://www.kellerumc.com). Click down on the “Kids and Student Ministries” tab and click on “Building Blocks” page. The payment link is on this page.

No refunds or credit is given for scheduled school holidays and vacation periods, or for inclement weather days. Nor will refunds or credits be made for days missed due to family vacations or illness, except under extenuating circumstances which will be reviewed on an individual basis. There will be a \$20 charge on all returned checks.

## **Communication**

It is a very high priority to keep the lines of communication open. Mass communications will be through one or several of the following avenues: written communication in your child’s cubby, written communication that is posted on our bulletin boards and easel, by email or Facebook.

Parents will only be notified in writing of any changes to operational policies or enrollment procedures. This information will be posted on our bulletin board or in notices sent home from the office.

## **Safety**

The designated parking for Building Blocks is located on the north side of the Family Life Building. The parking lot is a busy place. Help us maintain a safe environment for all of our children. **Please do not park in fire zones, handicap spaces or the traffic lane on the west side of the building.**

The entrance for Building Blocks is located on the north side of the Family Life Building. These doors will be the only doors available for drop off and pick-up. The side (west side) doors will be locked during these times and not accessible at drop off or pick-up times.

For security reasons, all the doors in the Family Life Center will be locked from 10am until 2pm. If you should have the need to visit or pick up your child at another time during the day, please contact the office and someone will meet you at the door.

**Parents/guardians are required to sign their child in and out every day. Adults must accompany the child to the classroom and meet the child at the classroom at the end of the day.**

Teachers will release a child only to an adult whose name has previously been given to the staff. Proper identification (i.e. driver's license) will be required before a child is dismissed to anyone other than the parent and unknown to the staff.

**Once you have signed your child out of the classroom, please keep them with you until you reach the safety of your car. We will remind children that there is no running in the big room after school for the safety of all children present.**

Emergency procedures are reviewed with the staff frequently. Fire exit routes are posted in each classroom. Smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are also provided. There are carbon monoxide detectors on each floor. Your children will practice emergency drills throughout the year.

Building Blocks is subject to an annual inspection by the Tarrant County Health Department.

## **Health**

Your child's health is important to all of us. State licensing guidelines require that your child not attend school if one or more of the following exist:

- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 48 hours
- Less than 48 hours fever free without medication (99.4 or higher)
- Acute cold
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Symptoms of a possible communicable disease (i.e. sore throat, headache or rash.)
- Constant cough
- unexplained rash
- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in center activities

Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease or if the child's absence will be extended.

No medications will be dispensed by the preschool staff except in life threatening situations such as asthma or severe allergic reactions. These forms must be updated each semester and the medications must have current prescription labels attached. Please see the school office for the required medical authorization forms.

If your child has a severe allergy that requires an Epi Pen, you must have a completed FARE plan (Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan) prepared by your child's physician. An Epi Pen kept at school must be in an original box with prescription label.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will notify you immediately and try to make your child as comfortable as possible.

In case of accidental injury or sudden serious illness, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. Please leave a number where you or your spouse can be reached if you will not be home during school hours. If we cannot reach you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. A signed consent form agreeing to these provisions must be on file with the school.

**It is to your child's benefit to keep up to date phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent information on file. If any of this information changes throughout the year, please stop by the office to update your child's permanent file.**

The Texas Health and Safety Code requires a screening or professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. **Parents will be responsible for requesting this screening be completed by your child's physician.**

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

Our emergency preparedness plan is designed to insure the safety of the children in case of an emergency. Our website, [www.kellerumc.com](http://www.kellerumc.com), will include information with important phone numbers and evacuation routes in case of any type of emergency. You will receive a card with this information that will fit in your wallet at registration time. Our emergency preparedness plan is available to view in the school office.

### **Animal Policy**

Child Care licensing has very strict regulations regarding animals in childcare facilities. For the safety and well-being of our children, Building Blocks has adopted a **"No Animals"** policy for our facility. We would greatly appreciate your cooperation on this issue.

## **Playground**

Classes will use the playground located on the north side of the building. The play structure is rated for children ages 2-5. We have several other active areas on the playground including swings, instruments, tricycles, etc. Parents and children are welcome to use this playground outside of normal school hours. Parents must supervise their children.

## **Snacks, Lunches and Special Days**

A nourishing mid-morning snack such as crackers or cereal will be provided by the preschool. Occasionally there will be cooking opportunities for them to prepare their snack during school.

Please send a lunch with your child each day. We encourage you to include nutritious foods that are easy for your child to eat, such as fruits and vegetables or cheese. This should include a nonstaining drink such as milk, apple juice, orange juice or water. We do not provide refrigeration or heating options.

**\*KUMC, including Building Blocks preschool and kindergarten, makes a concerted effort to be as nut free/peanut free as possible by:**

- Educating students, faculty and staff about the severity of peanut/tree nut allergies.
- Encouraging peanut free/tree nut free food use by students, faculty and staff.
- Checking food brought into Building Blocks classes attended by a child with a peanut or tree nut allergy and removing items labeled as containing nuts or traces of nuts.
- Providing snacks for Building Blocks and events such as Vacation Bible School that are nut free/peanut free.
- Requesting that outside groups that use KUMC facilities not bring in products that contain nuts or traces of nuts in KUMC's Building and Use Policy.

Peanut free/tree nut free products are defined as products free of peanuts or tree nuts, peanut or tree nut products and traces of peanuts or tree nuts. Products whose labels say "may contain peanuts" or "produced on equipment that also produces peanut or tree nut products" are strongly discouraged.

*( \*Taken from KUMC Peanut and Tree Nut Policy)*

Red or purple juices and peanut products will be sent home unopened. If this is the case, your child will be given water to drink. If needed, left over snack or crackers will be added to their lunch. We

will also send home a reminder in the lunch box. Lunch boxes should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Birthdays and other special days may be celebrated with a special treat or snack. Please check with your child's teacher prior to the special day to coordinate such occasions. Please do not bring party favors or gifts. Party invitations may be passed out at school provided all children in the class will be included.

There will be parties for Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter holidays. Parents will be invited to help with these special occasions; however, parents will not be responsible for direct supervision of children in the classroom. ***\*Since this will be a special time for you and your Building Blocks child, other arrangements should be made for siblings.***

### **What to Wear and What to Bring**

Think of your child's comfort when getting them dressed each morning. To encourage independence in the restroom, clothes that have simple fasteners and are easy to pull down are very helpful. Their shoes should be ones that are appropriate for the playground. (Tennis shoes are preferred). We will provide smocks for messy activities, however, paint may still get on their clothing. Washable play clothes allow the children to explore without worrying about dirtying their clothes. Please send a seasonally appropriate change of clothes (pants, socks, undies, etc.) each day in case of an accident. All children must be potty trained to be accepted at school.

Except for toys that are needed at the very beginning of school to help with the transition to a new situation, we discourage bringing toys from home. Your child's class may have Show and Tell opportunities. In this situation, we encourage each child who wants to participate to bring something that relates to our theme, color or letter of the week. Please label any items brought from home.

**No toy guns, knives, or other simulated weapons should be brought to school at any time.**

### **Field Trips**

The Preschool will not take any field trips due to state regulations. We will make efforts to bring in community helpers and schedule other seasonal activities.

### **Nursing Moms**

Provisions have been made for nursing moms to have a comfortable seat in our facility.



## **Guidance**

Our program provides a caring environment that encourages the children to use their verbal and social skills to solve problems and conflicts. Our focus is on positive methods of discipline and reinforcement while also providing the opportunity for the child to develop self-control. Occasionally a teacher may use “time-out” or “thinking time” to encourage calming and redirection of behavior.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child’s level of understanding
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

Teachers use methods of discipline and guidance that are positive and encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction. There will be no harsh or unusual treatment of any child.

## **Conferences**

Open house will be held before the first day of school. This will be your opportunity to meet the teacher and ask any questions you may have about the program. Conferences will be scheduled in the spring. Special conferences may be scheduled at any time you have a concern or question, Building Blocks has an open door policy. Parents are welcome to visit at any time. Please check in with the preschool office before reporting to your child’s classroom.

## **How Parents Can Help**

Parents and teachers can help each child to grow to his/her full potential. Parents can do this by:

- Preparing him/her for the first day of school, talking about the fun the child will have, telling them the teacher’s name, speaking of school positively.
- Being prepared to say goodbye to the child outside the door of the classroom.
- Completing cell phone calls/texts before entering the building. Your child looks forward to greeting you and sharing about their day and you may miss your opportunity to see posted communications.
- Taking time to look over your child’s work on a daily basis and encouraging them to talk about their day at school.
- Planning holiday parties and helping with special events.
- Sharing with your child’s teacher any information that will help her know and understand your child better.

Please feel free to bring any concerns or questions about Building Blocks policies or procedures to the attention of either your child's teacher or the Director.

### **Withdrawal**

#### **School Withdrawal:**

Building Blocks reserves the right to request withdrawal of a child in the following instances:

- payment is more than 1 month delinquent
- inability of a child/parent to adjust to our program which could include toilet training for 3, 4 and 5 year olds
- incomplete records on file
- continual disruptive behavior and endangering others or self
- the school's ability to provide a safe environment such as a child's allergies or other behavior situations

**Parental Withdrawal Notification:** We require 2 weeks written notice and payment of days that your child was enrolled even if they were not in attendance.

### **Department of Family and Protective Services Information**

Child Care Licensing was established by the Department of Family and Protective Services. It monitors the safety and wellbeing of children attending licensed facilities. Our license, facility inspections and a copy of minimum standard rules for Child Care licensing are available for review in the school office.

Firearms are prohibited (concealed or open carry) unless the individual is a law enforcement official who is trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty.

In compliance with DFPS, the church and school are a gang-free zone. This means that under the Texas Penal Code any area within 1000 feet of a childcare facility is a gang-free zone where criminal offenses are subject to harsher penalties.

The Building Blocks staff are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Teachers receive training on how to recognize signs of physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

You are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the center director to show you the most recent copy of:

- Current snack menu
- Minimum standards for this Licensed Facility
- Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Inspection Report
- Fire Marshal's Inspection Report

- Health Department’s Sanitation Inspection Report
- Gas Pipe Inspection Report

Contact information for the DFPS, Child Abuse Hotline, and the childcare website are listed below and available in the school office.

Child Abuse Hotline.....1-800-252-5400

Local Child Care Licensing Office..... (817) 321-8604 (800)582-8286

Child Care Licensing website ..... <https://hhs.texas.gov> formerly [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

### **Keller United Methodist Church Mission Statement:**

The purpose of Keller United Methodist Church is to connect God’s Family by Knowing, Loving and Serving so that the World might experience Christ’s love.

### **Building Blocks –Parent Handbook (Revised for 2022-2023)**