

Parent Handbook

2020-2021



A Ministry of Shades Mountain Baptist Church

2017 Columbiana Road • Birmingham, AL • 35216 • 205.823.0550

• www.shades.org/elc •

Welcome to the Early Learning Center!

Statement of Purpose

At Shades Mountain Baptist Church Early Learning Center (ELC), our purpose is to encourage early childhood learning experiences which will help children develop socially, spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Our teachers love young children and are here to participate in their growth and development. We consider it a privilege to be a part of your child's early learning years.

Age Requirements

Children must be eight months up to six years of age by 9/1/2020

Children with Special Needs

Our church values all children. Because of the current structure and staffing of the ELC, we are not able to provide the necessary support for children with special needs. If you believe your child has special needs, we recommend community resources such as Early Intervention (1-800-543-3098, www.rehab.alabama.gov/individuals-and-families/early-intervention) and United Ability (205-944-3900, www.unitedability.org). Although the ELC is not able to serve children with special needs in its weekday program, Shades Mountain Baptist Church has a special needs ministry (Hand in Hand) that provides children and young adults the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled worship and worship-related activities. To learn more about Hand in Hand, please visit www.shades.org/ministries/special-needs or contact Amy Kirby at 205.822.1670.

Hours of Operation

9:00am to 1:00pm

Visit other Preschool activities at Shades:

Sunday School @ 8:00 and 11:00am

Sunday Worship @ 9:30am

Wednesdays@6:00pm for Great Adventure-Missions and Music

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor
with God and man.”

-Luke 2:52

General Information

Fees and Tuition

- Tuition is due the FIRST day of each month by on-line payment, check or cash. Check or cash may be dropped off in the ELC Tuition Lock Boxes at the reception desk, or given to a teacher in carpool. Do not place tuition payments in the students' bags.
- Payments may be made online through tuitionexpress.com for a small fee. ACH payments are charged \$.75. Credit/debit cards are charged 2.3%, an amount less than the card companies charge the ELC.
- Months with holidays have the same fees; the annual tuition has been averaged for the nine-month period. Refunds **will not** be made for absences of any kind, including holidays, sickness, vacations, inclement weather or any emergency closings.
- Supply Fee: \$140 per family – Due midsummer of the current school year. For subsequent registrants, supply fee due upon registration. All fees are non-refundable.
- Kindergarten Supply Fee: \$160 per child–Due midsummer of the current school year. For subsequent registrants, supply fee due upon registration. Kindergarten September tuition due July 1 to hold class placement. All fees are non-refundable.
- Delinquent Tuition and Fees: Tuition that is not paid in full by the 5th of each month will be penalized with a late fee. You will receive a notice if this occurs. A late fee of **\$5 per school day** will be charged until the tuition and all late fees are paid in full.
- **If tuition has not been paid within 30 days then the student will be unenrolled. The student cannot return until all tuition is paid in full.**
- Withdrawal: If you wish to remove your child/children from the ELC at any point during the school term, a **30 days' written notice** is required for the following month's tuition to be waived from your account balance.
- Late Pick Up Fee: Children picked up after 1:10 PM will be charged a late fee. Late fee charges: 1st time: \$5, 2nd time: \$10, 3rd and subsequent times will be charged \$15.
- Returned Check Fees: A \$25 charge will be assessed to you if your check is returned for insufficient funds. The fee and the amount of the returned check must be paid in cash promptly upon request of the ELC.
- Tax Receipts: Receipts for Flexible Spending and tax purposes are available upon request. Please give 24 hours notice.

Tuition prices are as follows:

2-day Classes: \$190/month • 3-day classes: \$215/month • 4-day classes: \$235/month

5-day classes (except Kindergarten): \$255/month

Kindergarten: \$280/month

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Arrival and Departure

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The diagram on the next page shows the route for carpool drop-off and pick-up.

- **8-23 month old children** must be brought into the building and picked up from their classroom by an authorized adult. Parents may park in the lower parking area. Enter the glass doors on the east end of the ELC (**the metal doors are used for carpooling students ONLY**). When picking up your child, the authorized adult must present a valid driver's license before receiving your child. See Fall 2020 Guidelines for more details.

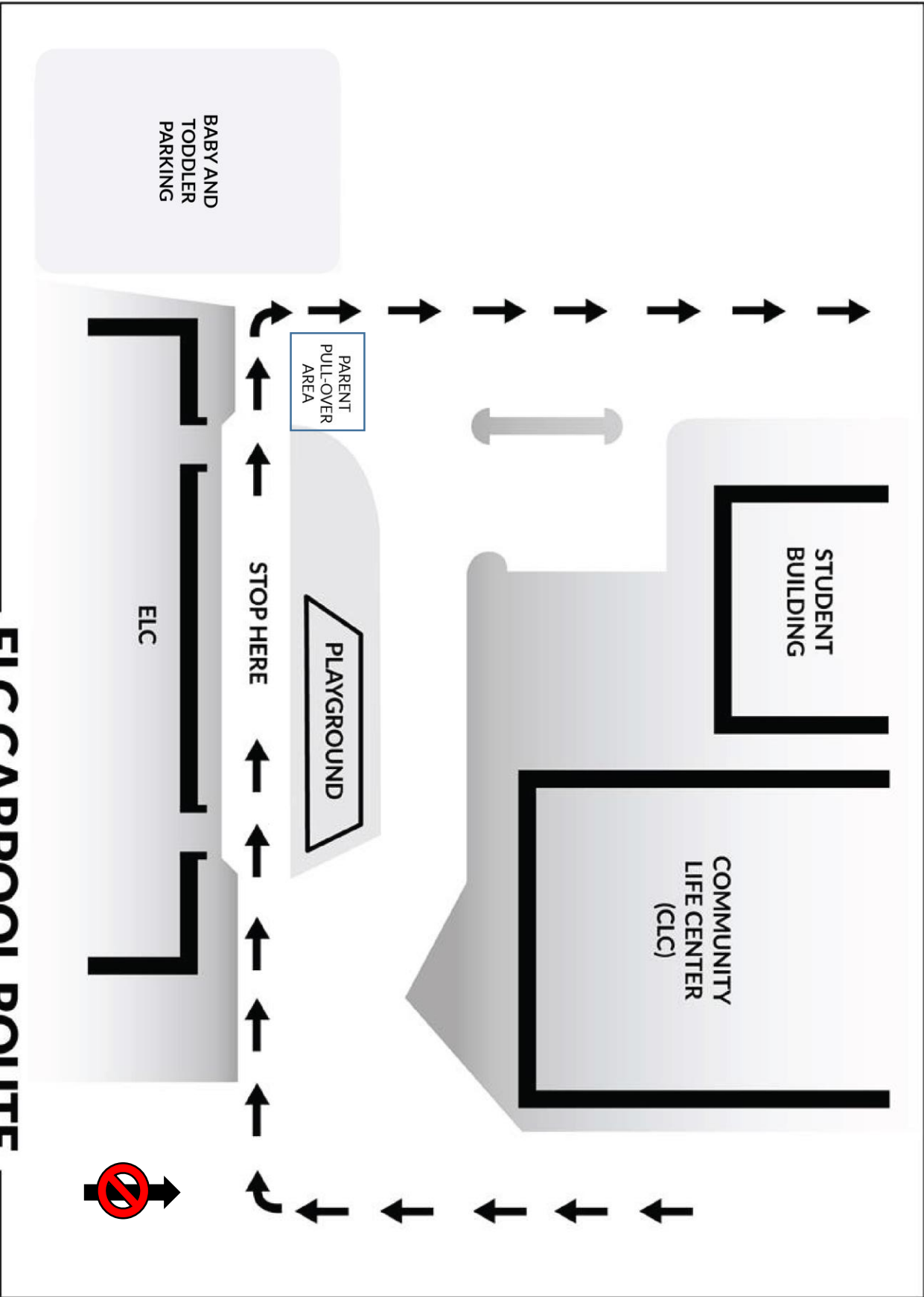
- **2's - Kindergarten children** must use carpool. **NO LEFT TURN FROM OLD COLUMBIANA ROAD.** Please come from the direction of the pavilion (west end of campus). We cannot block this city street in both directions, or the city could take away our ability to do carpool at all. Children cannot be walked in unless they have a younger sibling attending our school. Temperatures will be taken before a child is removed from the vehicle. Each family will be assigned a carpool number tag for each child. Please hang this number from your rear-view mirror when picking up your student(s). Possession of this carpool number implies consent to pick up your child. Please put car in park before we unload or load children. Do not get out of the vehicle. We cannot climb into vehicles; please have your child sit near a passenger door. If your child cannot sit in a passenger side seat, or if there is difficulty getting a child out of the car, we will ask the parent to pull into a designated lane and get the student out.

- During carpool, please **drive slowly and carefully** on our campus and **refrain from talking on your cell phone**. Please do not allow your child to sit in your lap.

- Please refrain from using this time to hold a discussion with our teachers. All personnel are on carpool duty and are performing a specific task. Conferences can be scheduled with your child's teacher.

Morning carpool will begin at 8:50am. Students and/or parents **MAY NOT ENTER THE BUILDING** before this time. Afternoon carpool begins at 12:50pm. If you are detained, call the Early Learning Center Office at 823-0550 and leave a message for the Director. If a student is picked up after 1:10pm, a late fee will be charged to your account. Please see the Fees and Tuition section of the handbook for late fee charges.

If someone other than those listed on the *Registration Form* will be picking up your child, you must contact the ELC Director by email, a written note, or phone call. Before picking up the child, the newly-authorized person will be asked to present their driver's license and positive identification will need to be approved by the Director or Assistant Director.



ELC CARPOOL ROUTE

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Health/Illness

A child will not be accepted into the ELC when contagious conditions exist. These conditions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Fever (must be free 72 hours without the use or aid of fever reducers to return)
- Vomiting (must be free 48 hours to return)
- Diarrhea (must be free 48 hours to return)
- Head lice (bug- and nit-free to return)

The following illnesses will require a physician's excuse stating that your child's condition is NOT contagious and must be presented to the Director in order for your child to return to school:

- COVID-19 symptoms (cough, sore throat, fast breathing, muscle pains, headache, loss of taste and smell)
- Strep throat
- Scarlet Fever
- Measles
- Chicken Pox
- Pinkeye
- Any skin infection: impetigo, ringworm, etc.
- Allergies that produce thick or dark colored mucus

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent will be notified. Arrangements to pick up the child must be made immediately, within 30 minutes at the latest.

The Jefferson County Health Department requires an Alabama Blue Certificate of Immunization be on file for each child. In addition, a notarized *Medical Release Form* must be on file for each child. In case of emergency, we will make every effort to contact parents. However, if we are unable to reach you, the medical release form will give us authority to seek medical treatment.

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A Healthy Classroom Environment

Classroom, bathrooms, and toys are cleaned daily. Teachers use good hygiene practices when changing diapers, handling food, and cleaning surfaces.

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Injury

All minor injuries will be treated at the discretion of the ELC staff. Teachers will complete an Accident Form to be signed and returned by parent.

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Discipline

The ELC staff will be positive role models in manners, language, and tone of voice. Discipline is a door of opportunity to teach children appropriate ways to meet their needs. Discipline will be handled in a two-fold process: first, to immediately stop inappropriate behavior; and then, to help the child find another more appropriate way to behave.

We encourage communication between parents and teachers when working through a developmental stage that calls for more behavioral guidance and intervention than usual.

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Aggressive Behavior

The ELC has a separate policy for disciplining what we consider “aggressive behavior” (**behavior which is not in retaliation or response to other students’ actions and results in physical injury to any other student or teacher**). We understand and realize that children are growing, learning, and experimenting with many emotions and ways to handle these emotions; but we do not allow continued, uncontrolled aggressive behavior. Uncontrolled, aggressive behavior includes but is not limited to the following: **biting, pushing, hitting, and kicking**.

Listed below are the steps taken concerning our response to such behavior:

First and Second offense: Redirect unacceptable behavior and a behavior report is sent home, to be signed and returned by a parent.

Third offense: Redirect unacceptable behavior and a behavior report is sent home, to be signed and returned by a parent. A parent-teacher-Director conference will be set up at that time.

Further offenses: The parents will be called immediately to meet with the Director. Other options will be discussed at that time.

Of course, each case is a separate situation, handled in the way most suitable for the parties involved; but this general policy will stand.

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Emergency Plans

School Closings: The ELC will close during inclement weather or if hazardous conditions are present, or due to health-related public school closings (pandemic). Parents will be notified if the ELC will close early, delay start, or not open. The following communication will be in place:

- An email and text will be sent to parents and other authorized adults indicating the closure.
- The ELC Office voicemail will indicate the closure.
- Tune in to local TV stations for closing announcements.

Toilet Training

Students entering the 3's, 4's, and Kindergarten classes must be **completely** toilet trained. Completely toilet trained means the child must enter the restroom on his or her own and use the restroom without assistance before returning to the classroom. Our classrooms are not equipped to provide diapering services with these age groups. We do, however, encourage restroom breaks many times during the day.

Clothing

Please see that your child wears comfortable play clothes and shoes. Tennis shoes or other soft-soled **closed-toe** shoes are necessary for your child's safety in physical movement both indoors and out. Flip-flops and Crocs are not allowed at the ELC. Children will go outside each day that weather permits. Children will not play outside if the temperature is below 45° or above 95 °. Send a change of clothes for your child including underwear and socks. Place all articles in a plastic bag to be kept in child's bag **at all times**. PLEASE LABEL ALL clothing items.

Attendance

Our ELC teachers work hard to prepare lessons for our students. Unless your child is ill, please make every effort to attend school. Consistency is extremely important to preschoolers!

Birthday Invitations

Invitations to parties held outside school hours may only be brought to school and distributed among the class if every child in the child's class is invited.

Learning Environment

8 Months - 23 Months

What to Bring:

Disposable diapers/bibs
Plastic bottles/cups
Pacifier, Blanket, etc.
Lunch/Finger Foods
Clear juice/milk

What NOT to Bring:

Toys from Home
Glass containers
Foods that may cause choking
(raisins, nuts, hot dogs, grapes, etc.)
Medication*

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Entering and Leaving the Classroom

Please knock on the door of your child's classroom and wait for the teacher to respond. **Do not enter the room**, but allow the teacher to retrieve your child from you, or to bring them to you at the door. If you enter the room, it eliminates our security and disrupts the other children.

Curriculum

The learning experiences are designed to meet the needs of the whole child—physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual.

*With limited exception, the ELC is not equipped to store or administer medication to students. As explained elsewhere parents may come to the ELC to administer medication to their student. Emergency medications such as an epi-pen or asthma medications should be discussed with the ELC Director.

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2 - 5 Year Olds

What to Bring:

Juice Boxes
Clear Juice/ Water
Lunch

What NOT to Bring:

Glass containers
Foods that may cause choking
(raisins, nuts, hot dogs, grapes, etc.)
Toys from Home
Medication*

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Tote Bags

All new students will be provided with an ELC tote bag. Returning students are requested to continue using their personalized bag. One “take-home” folder per student will be provided at the beginning of the school year. This folder should remain in your child’s tote bag and will contain correspondence from your child’s teacher as well as important memos and completed class work.

Please check this folder every day.

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Curriculum

Each child will be exposed to both letter and number recognition, along with pre-reading and pre-writing skills. In addition to classroom instruction, your child will participate in various age-appropriate activities. Our weekly units include topics such as *All About Me, Pets, Community Helpers, My Family, Seasons, Holidays, Animals*, and other subjects.

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"Specials"

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Please refer to the Fall 2020 Guidelines for more detailed information

Music

Children will be given an opportunity to interact with music through the use of instruments, movement, singing, and sounds.

Wiggles

Children will enhance coordination, balance, and motor skills at the Community Life Center on Wednesdays.

Chapel

There will be a short worship time each Tuesday and Thursday. Worship time will include singing, movement, and a short Bible story.

Missions

Three and Four Year old children will learn about our world and study about other cultures.

Computer

All three- and four-year-old students will attend a computer class once a week. Students will be exposed to beginning computer skills.

Other Enrichment within the ELC

Instead of leaving the ELC campus for field trips, we have special guests who come to visit us. Some of our guests may include a dental hygienist, fireman, marine biologist, policeman, paramedic, and other community professionals.

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School Calendar

2020

August 31	Meet the Teacher
September 1	First day of School
September 7	Labor Day (no school)
October 9-13	Vestavia Schools holiday (no school)
November 11	Veterans Day (no school)
November 23-27	Thanksgiving Holidays (no school)
December 10	Christmas program **Pending** 11:30am Worship Center
December 18-Jan 6	Christmas Holidays (no school)

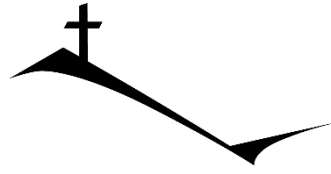
2021

January 7	First day back to school
January 18	Martin Luther King Jr Day (no school)
February 12-15	Presidents' Day holidays (VHCS)
March 22-26	Spring Break (no school)
April 2	Good Friday (no school)
April 16	Vestavia Hills Inclement Weather Day
April 20	Spring Sing/Art Show **Pending**
Pending	
May 13	Last Day of School
May 13	Graduation **Pending**

Kindergarten 11:00 AM

4K

6:00 PM



www.shades.org

Dr. Danny Wood, Pastor

Dr. Lisa Davis, Minister to Adult and Families

Stacey Puckett, ELC Director

Melissa Shockey, ELC Assistant Director

ELC Office: 205.823.0550

Shades Mountain Baptist: 205.822.1670