



Riverchase Day School

EST. 1992

2023-2024 Parent Handbook

Riverchase Day School
1953 Old Montgomery Highway
Hoover, AL 35244
rds@riverchasedayschool.com
(205)989-8070

A ministry of Riverchase United Methodist Church

Introduction

Riverchase Day School (RDS) is a vital ministry of Riverchase United Methodist Church. The Director, Assistant Director, administration, teachers, and support staff are accountable to the Day School Board which oversees the Day School operation and finances.

Philosophy

The Day School provides a secure, loving, Christian environment in which young children may grow, learn, and develop spiritually, cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. Students will learn through play and music with the opportunity to explore, create, develop, discover, and make choices. Learning activities, materials, and curriculum are developmentally and age appropriate for infants, toddlers, preschool, and kindergarten aged children. Staff and teachers are committed to identifying and embracing each child as an individual.

Admission

All children aged 6 months through Kindergarten are eligible to attend Riverchase Day School. Classes are filled on a first-come basis and is dependent on availability. A waiting list for each class is kept, and parents will be notified by the Director if a vacancy occurs. Riverchase Day School has a non-discrimination policy for all admissions.

Registration

Registration for the next school year takes place in late January. For current families, summer session registration begins at the same time as school registration . The exact dates will be announced well in advance and emailed to currently enrolled or waitlisted families. It will also be published on the RDS Facebook page and the RUMC church bulletin. Registration is always offered first to current RDS students and their siblings. Next, it is opened to children of church members not currently in our program. Finally, registration is opened to the community. A student's place is reserved upon receipt of a completed registration form, non-refundable registration fee, and supply fee for the school year. Both fees will be determined prior to registration for the following school year. Kindergarten registration requires a separate tuition commitment form.

Tuition

First month's tuition will be billed at the beginning of July and due mid July prior to the new school year starting. Once paid this will be a non-refundable charge due to our 30-day notice policy. Tuition is due on the second day of each month. On the first of each month an invoice will be emailed out for the current month. This is sent as a courtesy. Tuition will not be refunded or excused for missing class due to illness or travel. A ten percent (10%) discount is given on the tuition for the second and subsequent children of one family.

Forms of Payment:

- Bank draft or card payment via the Procure app
- Check written to RDS or Cash (Must be walked into office for receipting)

Delinquent Payments Payments not received by the 15th of the month are delinquent, and a late fee of \$25 is assessed. When tuition exceeds 30 days past due, the Day School reserves the right to fill the student's spot. The student may re-register at RDS if/when a space becomes available and only if the account is paid in full. A service fee of \$25 will be charged for a returned check. After two returned checks, all future payments must be paid in cash. The RDS Board reserves

the right to review any account and, upon proper notification, dismiss any student whose account is not in good standing. This ruling will be final.

Class	2 Day T/TH 9am - 1pm	3 Day M/W/F 9am - 1pm	3 Day T/W/TH 9am - 1pm	4 Day M-TH 9 am - 1pm	5 Day M-F 9am - 1pm	5 Day M-F 9am - 3pm	5 Day M-F 8 am - 3pm
Infant (6-12 months as of 9/1/2022)	\$290	\$355	N/A	N/A	\$455	\$655	\$755
Toddler (13-23 months as of 9/1/2022)	\$270	\$335	N/A	N/A	\$435	\$635	\$735
2K	N/A	N/A	\$325	N/A	\$415	\$615	\$715
3K	N/A	N/A	\$240	\$290	\$350	\$550	\$650
4K	N/A	N/A	\$240	\$290	\$350	\$550	\$650
Kindergarten	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$400 *9am - 3pm Tues & Wed	\$510	\$600

Withdrawal

If a student is withdrawn for any reason, families must give a 30-day written notice of the child's last day to the Director. Please email rds@riverchasedayschool.com if you must withdraw your student. Registration and supply fees will not be refunded. Tuition is required during that 30-day period.

School Calendar

The Day School is open from August through May, with a six-week long summer session from mid-June through July. The Day School calendar follows the Hoover City School System for holidays, teacher workday closings, and most weather-related closings. However, please check the RDS calendar for specific days as some may differ from Hoover City Schools.

Inclement Weather

If the Hoover School System closes, due to inclement weather, we will not open. Decisions concerning delayed opening or early dismissal will be made on a case by case basis. Parents will be notified of school closing, delay or early dismissal via email and Procure. *Please make certain that you keep contact information updated in Procure.*

RDS 2023-2024 School Year Calendar

August 16th Wednesday	Meet the Teacher	Kindergarten
August 17th Thursday	1st Day of Kindergarten	Kindergarten
August 14th-18th Monday-Friday	Teacher Work Week	Staff Only
August 21st Monday 9am and 11am	Meet the Teacher	Infant-4K
August 23rd Wednesday	1st Day of Preschool	Infant-4K
September 4th Monday	Labor Day	RDS Closed
September 17th- 22nd	TNT Children's Consignment Sale	RDS Fundraiser
October 9th Monday	Fall Break	RDS Closed
October 17th-20th	School Pictures	Individual Pictures
November 10th Friday	Veteran's Day	RDS Closed
November 20th-24th Monday-Friday	Thanksgiving Week	RDS Closed
December 14th Thursday	*Last Day of 2023	School Wide
December 15th -Jan 3rd	Christmas Break	RDS Closed
January 3rd Wednesday	Teacher Work Day	Staff Only
January 4th Thursday	Students Return from Christmas Break	1st Day of 2024
January 15th Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	RDS Closed
February 19th Monday	President's Day	RDS Closed
February 25th- March 1st	TNT Children's Consignment Sale	RDS Fundraiser
March 25th-March 29th Monday-Friday	RDS Closed: Spring Break	RDS Closed
April 12th Friday		RDS Closed
TBD	Spring Pictures	Class & Individual
May 15th Wednesday	4K and Kindergarten Graduation	4K & K
May 16th Thursday	Last Day of School for Students	Close at 1:00PM
May 17th Friday	Teacher Workday	Teachers Only

Hours of Operation

The Day School Office is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We will offer the following schedules for the 2023-2024 school year: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; or 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This applies only to classes that meet 5 days per week. Classroom hours for classes meeting less than 5 days per week will be 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Teachers begin daily lessons/activities at 9:00 a.m. Parents are strongly encouraged to arrive on time, so the child does not miss this vital learning time. Parents are *not* to enter the building during carpool times. Do not drop off children before 8:45 as teachers are preparing for their day. Carpool helps get the morning off to a smooth start. Children begin classroom activities immediately upon arrival. This greatly lessens any separation anxiety. If you are experiencing your own separation anxiety, feel free to call the office for an update on your child.

Arrival

Early care arrivals (8AM): Students with an 8 am schedule will carpool at the RDS Front Office Door. Please stay in your car while your student is being unloaded. If you arrive after 8:10, please bring your child through the 8:45 carpool.

Regular arrivals (9AM): Carpool will begin at 8:45 am and conclude at 9:00 a.m. Please arrive during morning carpool and allow a staff member to escort your child inside the building. Please inform administration prior to that morning if your child will be late due to an already scheduled appointment.

Dismissal

Regular Dismissal (1PM): Carpool begins at 12:45 p.m. and ends at 1:05 p.m. Any student not picked up by 1:05 p.m. will be taken to the office.

Extended Day Schedule (3PM): Carpool begins at 2:45 pm and ends at 3 pm. Any student not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be taken to the office.

Late Pickup Fines

The late pickup fine will be \$25 per student for the first 10 minutes. Each minute after 1:15 p.m. will be an additional \$1 per minute, per student. A form with the time of pickup will need to be completed by the office and signed by the parent/caregiver picking up. Students will only be released to authorized adults. (See "Security" additional information.)

Security Policy

For security reasons we monitor all persons entering the school area by video camera. We lock the doors between 9:05 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. To enter the school during this time you will have to enter at the "Main Door" entrance.

If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, written notification is required. The parent must notify the office by sending a note in the child's folder or by sending an email. We will not release a child to anyone not listed on the Authorized Pick-Up List without written permission from the parent. This list may be amended by the parent at any time using Procure. *We will require a photo ID for anyone we do not know.*

Communication

RDS uses 3 methods to communicate with families:

1. Folders
 - a. Each student receives a folder to facilitate the transfer of information between school to the home and from the home to school. Please check it every evening for important information and to see your child's accomplishments.
 - b. Bees, Toddlers, and Twos will receive a daily report from the teacher giving specific information about your child's day.
2. Email
 - a. E-mail will also be used to communicate with parents. Please make sure your current email address is on file with ProCare. Open communication between RDS and the families we serve is vital. The Director and teachers are available to speak with you all year. Please email the RDS office at any time with questions, comments or concerns.
3. ProCare
 - a. You may also message your teacher using ProCare. To set up a conference, call your child's teacher or the Director through the school office at 989-8070 during school hours. Please keep in mind teachers will NOT have immediate access to messaging during the day. They devote their attention to their students during the school day. In the event that an immediate message must be shared with the teachers, please call 205-989-8070 or email the office at rds@riverchasedayschool.com.

RDS Staff are not to communicate with parents using their personal cell phones. This includes calls and text messages.

Important Carpool Guidelines

- Always have your carpool sign prominently displayed during and throughout the morning and afternoon carpool.
- Infants, Toddlers, and 2K students will carpool at the Carl Raines entrance. Children will be walked to the vehicle for the parent or authorized caregiver to buckle them before leaving the car line. We will have 2 lanes working so please be observant of the students, teachers, and other parents.
- 3K and older will carpool at our main door. Students will be brought to the car and placed in a legally appropriate car seat. You will then pull up and out of the way to finish buckling your child. (See Car Seat Requirements) If the line backs up to Old Montgomery Hwy, cars must circle the upper Mission Center parking lot. We must keep cars off the highway.
- As a safety precaution, please do not walk into the building to pick up your child during carpool.
- Always put your car in "Park" while children are entering or leaving the car.
- For the safety of students and RDS staff, please do not use cell phones during carpool.
- Please do not pull around cars parked in front of you.
- Please do not have involved discussions during carpool or at the classroom door.

Medical and Illness Policy

Safety and well-being are our priority here at Riverchase Day School. Children attending RDS must be able to participate in all daily activities, including outdoor recess. Documentation from your child's health care provider may be required in certain circumstances. However, RDS reserves the right to request that a parent pick up a student, if the child is not well enough to be present.

Please do not send your child to school if he/she exhibits any symptoms of contagious illness or signs of being uncomfortable due to an injury. If a student should arrive ill or become ill during the school day, parents will be contacted. Children who become sick at school must be picked up within the hour, once the parent/guardian has been notified. To keep other children and our staff healthy, your child can not return to school until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer. Please notify us immediately if your child is ill so we can watch for similar symptoms in other children.

Your child must be kept home or picked up for the following:

- Temperatures- A fever is any temperature over 100.4^{0F}
- Symptoms and signs of possible illness, including:
 - Unusual Lethargy
 - Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying
 - Uncontrolled coughing
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Wheezing
- Diarrhea- 2 or more watery stools
 - Children may return to school 24 hours after the last diarrhea episode.
 - In instances of uncontrollable diarrhea, the student may be sent home for the rest of the day regardless if this is caused by medication. This is a health hazard for students and teachers.
- Vomiting- 2 or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours

Following an illness, the student may return:

- Chicken Pox- 5 days from first outbreak, all sores scabbed and with Doctor's release
- Conjunctivitis/Eye discharge (pink eye)- 24 hours after first antibiotic treatment
- Croup- two days after diagnosis and with doctor's note
- Flu (including all subtypes)- fever free without fever reducer for 24 hours and able to participate in all activities.
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth- all sores scabbed, fever free, no drooling if mouth sores are present
- Impetigo- 24 hours after antibiotic treatment, no drainage from sores that can't be covered
- Lice- day after treatment begins with no visible nits
- Meningitis- 24 hours fever free without fever reducers Mumps- 10 days with a doctor's excuse
- Pneumonia- fever free and no difficulty breathing
- Rash with fever- note from the doctor stating child has non-contagious disease
- Ringworm- 24 hours after first treatment
- RSV- 5 days from diagnosis
- Scabies- day after treatment begins
- Streptococcal Infection- 24 hours after antibiotic treatment and no fever

- Surgeries- any child having surgery, even if outpatient, must remain at home and follow Doctor's release.

The school has the right to seek its own professional opinion before deciding on the length of time a child must be out. Whether a child is at school or is required to stay home, the family is still required to pay tuition. If a family has received a religious exemption from vaccinations and an extreme illness breaks out, student(s) will be required to stay home until cleared by the administrator. Tuition will still be required.

Please keep in mind: RDS cannot administer any medication to students.

Health Records

A current Alabama Certificate of Immunization form and medical history form for each student is REQUIRED to be on file in the Day School office. *Religious exemptions are not accepted.* To verify your child's certificate is up to date, log on to Procure and check the date of the attached certificate. If no attachment is present, please call the Day School office.

Please notify the Day School office in writing of all changes or updates in immunization, health status or family home environment. All information is considered personal and confidential.

Allergies

Please notify RDS if your child has an allergy (food, insect or other) or any special health concerns. Please provide a letter from your child's pediatrician documenting the allergy/health condition and, in the case of food or other severe allergies, an "Allergy Action Plan." This should include all details and specific steps that need to be taken to keep your child safe at school.

Discipline

Riverchase Day School Teachers and Staff will work together to address behavior concerns for each child. Each child and situation will be handled in a manner that works best at that time and for that child.

It is *never* acceptable for a RDS teacher or staff member to:

Physically touch a child (i.e. spank, pinch, squeeze, etc.)

Withhold food (i.e. snack, lunch, drink, etc.) Yell in the class

Belittle a child

Biting

While biting is not an uncommon occurrence, we work hard together with parents to prevent this from becoming a habit. Biting by infants and toddlers is usually considered a relief from teething pressure and not behavioral. Usually pacifiers, teething rings, etc. can help with relieving pressure. Biting in older children is more behavioral. Should your child bite at school, we ask that you be willing to work with us as we look for a solution. While biting concerns can usually be resolved, we will ask you to pick up your child for the day after their third bite.

Potty Training

We will do everything possible to assist in potty training your child in the two-year-old classes. Toilet training must be consistent and a joint effort between the home and school. Please keep an open discussion with your child's teacher.

At school, we recommend pull-ups with Velcro fasteners until the child uses the potty at home on a regular basis. Please keep in mind that training in a class setting is different than at home. If your child should have more than two accidents in a day, they will need to wear pull-ups instead of underwear until they have mastered toileting to prevent unsanitary conditions in the classroom.

A bathroom with a child size toilet is accessible to the 2K students. Please dress your child in clothes which are easy for them to manipulate. One-piece outfits, tight clothing, belts and leggings will frustrate your child and slow down the process of getting them on the potty.

3K students are required to be potty trained. Teachers always assist their students when needed; however, we ask that you teach and encourage your child to take care of their personal needs, like their clothing and toilet paper.

Car Seat Requirements

The staff of Riverchase Day School will not load a child into a vehicle that does not have a properly installed, age appropriate car seat for the child.

Riverchase Day School reserves the right to contact the Department of Human Resources or the Hoover Police Department if children are not provided with properly installed car seats that meet the laws of the State of Alabama. State law requires that children age 4 and younger and under 40 lbs. be secured in a child safety seat with a 5-point harness. Booster seats secured with the vehicle's seat belt are not lawful until age 5. If you have any concerns about the installation or compliance of your child's car seat, please consult your local fire station. This is a free service.

Field Trips

Field trips Kindergarten students are facilitated with the help of volunteer parent drivers and chaperones. Permission slips for each child, signed by a parent, are required prior to the field trip. No child will be allowed to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip and transportation authorization. Some fees may apply such as admission costs, etc. Specific details and information, including car/booster seat use and permission slips, will be sent to the parent prior to the planned field trip.

Volunteers, chaperones and/or drivers must make child care arrangements for any younger siblings. This will allow you to offer your undivided attention to your child and to the other children who are traveling with you.

Enrichment Classes

- *Chapel:* Students attend Chapel once a week. The teachers lead songs and tell stories designed to teach children of God's love for them and others. Jesus Christ is the foundation of our Faith here at Riverchase. While we know RDS has a diverse student body, teachers will not be able to withhold any child from Chapel classes.
- *Music:* Our Music teachers lead the children in song, movement, and use of musical instruments. The 4K and Kindergarten classes participate in a music performance during the school year.
- *Happy Feet:* This weekly program combines physical education and creative movement designed to develop balance and coordination skills. Tennis shoes are required.

- *Spanish*: Kindergarten students attend Spanish class weekly. They are introduced to the language, culture and traditions of Spanish speaking countries. 4K students also have a weekly Spanish introduction lesson.
- *Nutrition and Gardening*: Kindergarten and 4K students will participate in a “hands-on” program geared to promote life-long, healthy habits and proper nutrition. This class meets once a month and will include cooking demonstrations, guest speakers and a field trip. Students will also have the opportunity to assist in planting, cultivating and harvesting fruits and vegetables in the school garden.

What to Bring

Each student is expected to bring the provided RDS school bag with the following items clearly labeled with the child’s name:

- Complete change of clothes including socks placed in a **labeled** Ziploc bag.
- Folder (provided by RDS)
- Snack (2 for those that stay until 3pm)
- Lunch & leak proof cup or water bottle (see food policies)
- 3 VELCRO Pull-Ups and wipes (2K)

WE DO NOT ALLOW NUT PRODUCTS OF ANY KIND IN THE INFANT, TODDLER, AND 2K CLASSES

Please do NOT bring toys or any items that have special value. We cannot be responsible for items that are lost or broken.

Items needed daily for Bees, Lambs, Owls, and Turtles

- 3 diapers or pull-ups labeled with child’s name
- Bottles-premixed (infants)
- Wipes
- Send (2) drinking cups-one with water for the playground
- Pacifiers, blankets, and security toys (if needed)

**All items must be clearly labeled. **

Food Policies

RDS does not provide snacks or a lunch service. All snacks, drinks and lunches will need to be sent from home with each child to school. Please send “finger food” items that your child can easily eat on their own. Precut the food to the proportion best for your child. We do not have the ability to refrigerate or heat any food items. (except for infant bottles). If necessary, include an ice pack. Please make sure your child has eaten breakfast before arriving at school.

We ask that you *do not* send the following:

- Glass containers or cups
- Red, pink or purple juices
- Chocolate and/or candy
- Fast food
- Soda

Special Policies for Bees, Lambs, Owls, and Turtles and 2K:

- Do not send peanut butter or nuts (any kind).
- If you want your child to wear a bib, put it in the lunch box where it is easier to find.
- No Juice Boxes. “Sippy cups” only.
- Please do not send gum, popcorn, hot dogs or gummy fruit snacks as these are choking hazards.

What to Wear

Send your child in comfortable, washable clothes appropriate for school activities. They will get dirty during the day! As your child begins potty training, send them in clothing that is easy to facilitate the process. Please encourage your child to learn how to work their clothing as they are capable, i.e. snaps, belts, buttons. A complete change of clothing (socks too) should always be in your child's bag. Label them with your child's name and store in a large zip-top bag. As the weather changes, remember to change the clothing in the bag. Important: Jewelry and small hair accessories are not allowed in the Infant, Toddler, and 2K classes because they pose a choking hazard.

On the playground, appropriate clothing and shoes are a safety must. Please remove drawstrings from shirts and jacket hoods. Tennis shoes with socks are suggested. Flip-flops, high-heeled shoes, and rubber rain boots are NOT permitted.

When needed, parents should apply sunscreen in the morning, prior to school.

During the winter please send a jacket, coat, hat and mittens for outdoor playtime. Teachers will assist your child in putting on their outdoor wear.

Note: In very cold or rainy weather, the children will have indoor playtime in the Fellowship Hall or "Big Gym".

Class Parties/Celebrations

RDS sets specific parties to allow parents to attend each year based on the age level. Your child's teacher will give you information regarding the parties parents are invited to attend. Large events will also be scheduled and planned based on age level.

Parent volunteers are asked to make child-care arrangements for siblings, as classroom space is limited. Students and teachers will appreciate your undivided attention and help.

Birthdays

If you would like to send a small birthday treat (cookie, doughnut, mini cupcake etc) with your child to celebrate his/her birthday with classmates, please arrange that with your teacher. We ask that you make arrangements with your teacher no less than 48 hours before sending the treats. For parties outside the classroom, please include every child in the class if you want the teacher to distribute your invitations.

How You Can Help Your Child Benefit from RDS

- Encourage regular attendance except in case of illness.
- Encourage a healthy diet.
- Follow a regular bed-time routine.
- Arrive at school on time so as not to miss the morning routine.
- Drop-off/Pick-up in carpool.
- Check the folder daily for notes, newsletters and important information.
- Post the monthly calendar and refer to it each morning.
- Encourage your child to share his/her daily experiences and discuss them with interest.
- Reinforce concepts, skills and classroom rules at home.
- Inform the Director or your child's teacher of any out-of-the-ordinary situations such as family illness, moving, etc.
- Keep personal irreplaceable items (toys, "lovies", cosmetics, jewelry, electronics, candy or gum) at home.

Staff Qualifications

A background check is completed on each member of the RDS staff. Additionally, each employee completes a CPR, AED and First Aid certification course. CPR certification is renewed every two years. RDS staff are required to complete six hours of Professional Development programs each year.

Curriculum and Religious Teaching

RDS has a dedicated staff member that serves as the curriculum coordinator. The curriculum coordinator works alongside RDS teachers and staff to promote age appropriate skills in various categories, including emotional/social skills, cognitive skills, gross motor skills, physical development and language/literacy skills.

There is also a religious component to our curriculum. Students have a weekly chapel lesson that ranges from 10 to 20 minutes depending on the age of the child.

Staff to Student Ratios

Class	RDS Child to Staff Ratio	DHR Mandated Child to Staff Ratio
Bees	1 to 3	1 to 5
Lambs/Owls/Turtles	1 to 4	1 to 7
2K	1 to 8	1 to 8
3K	1 to 10	1 to 11
4K	1 to 12	1 to 18
K	1 to 16	1 to 18

Tried and True Children's Consignment Sale (T-N-T Sale)

A semiannual fundraising event for the school. See riverchase-tnt.com for details!

Consignors bring seasonal children's clothing, shoes, toys, books, electronics, baby furniture, strollers, high chairs, car seats, décor and much more.

Sellers receive 70% of the sale price and the school gets 30%.

This sale is run entirely by volunteers. There are many volunteer opportunities for our parents to help the school. Consignors and Volunteers get to shop the special presale for the first choice of the sale items.

For more information, please go to: www.riverchase-tnt.com or email rdstnt@riverchasedayschool.com

TNT Supports the following ministries or causes:

- Riverchase Children's Ministry- Missions and VBS
- Riverchase Student Ministry- Discovery Weekend and Grunt Week
- The Charlie Jean Foundation- Supports families at Children's Hospital with a child currently battling cancer
- Noah Crowe Fund- Current or former students in need of financial assistance due to medical condition

Please read, sign, and return this page to your child's teacher. Forms may also be emailed to rds@riverchasedayschool.com

Riverchase United Methodist Church
Riverchase Day School Parent Agreement

I/We the parent(s) of _____ acknowledge that I/we have read the Parent Handbook of Riverchase Day School and agree to comply and cooperate with all policies and procedures within.

Parents Name

Date

Parents Name

Date