

Parent Handbook  
Policies & Procedures  
2010 - 2011

(last revised 2/1/2011)

# Contact Information

Trekkers After School Ministry  
Longview Heights Baptist Church  
4501 Goodman Road  
Olive Branch, 38654  
662-874-1010

*Pastor*

Dr. Wayne Marshall

*Minister to Children and Families*

Alan Wilson

[awilson@longviewheights.org](mailto:awilson@longviewheights.org)

*Director of Trekkers*

Pam Stout

[pstout@longviewheights.org](mailto:pstout@longviewheights.org)

Office hours

In-School days: 2:00-6 p.m.

Out-of-school days: 7 a.m.-6 p.m.



## Who We Are

At Longview Heights, the Trekkers After-School Ministry offers quality afterschool and summer care programs designed to give your child a safe, loving environment.

In after-school care, transportation is provided from school to LHBC. After arrival, snacks are enjoyed followed by some "cool down" activities to help your child unwind from a stressful day. Homework time is designed to give children a jump start completing their assignments for the evening. After homework time is over, classes rotate to different activities including: Bible, crafts, movies, computer/game room, gym/playground, or reading room. Each day holds a different adventure for your child.

In summer care, we provide 11 weeks of summer "camp-like" atmosphere. A focus on the Bible guides our camp with a theme that runs all summer. Each Tuesday we have "chapel" as well as indoor/outdoor games, activities and fun. On Thursday we venture off campus for field trips. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday we rotate through our group activities. Children attending summer care also participate in VBS at Longview Heights Baptist Church. Fun and friends make for a great summer.

We hope you will consider placing your child at Trekkers. Our staff sees children as gifts from God. We strive to maintain a low teacher/child ratio giving the best care possible. If you have any questions about our program feel free to call us at 662-404-4884. We look forward to seeing you at Trekkers.

We service the following schools....

**Center Hill Elementary**

**Chickasaw Elementary**

**DeSoto Central Primary**

**DeSoto Central Elementary**

**DeSoto Central Middle**

**Lewisburg Primary**

**Lewisburg Elementary**

**Olive Branch Elementary**

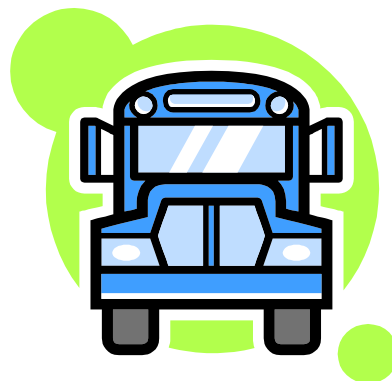
**Olive Branch Intermediate**

**Olive Branch Middle**

**Overpark Elementary**

**Pleasant Hill Elementary**

**SBEC (new starting Fall 2011)**



## **Registration**

All school-age children — kindergarten through sixth grade — attending Trekkers must be registered with the program director. To ensure accurate records, new registration forms must be filed every other year. Any changes of contact information should be given to the director immediately.

To apply for a place in the program, parents should submit the official registration form and a \$40 application fee. The application will be reviewed, and if a space is found for your child, you will be notified via email. In the event that classes are filled, parents will be given the option to place their child on a waiting list until space is available.

Before a child can attend Trekkers, all forms must be turned in. A checklist of the required documents and fees is provided with the registration packet.

Registration packets may be obtained from the Trekkers office, registration desk, or our website.

## **Tuition:**

### **Current Tuition Rates:** (for 2010-2011 school year and summer 2011)

**School Year \$60 per week (Additional children \$55)**

**Summer Care /School Holidays \$115 per week (Additional children \$105)  
With a \$75 activity fee to cover field trip and special activities**

**Year Round Rate \$70 per week (Additional children \$65)** (enrollment open in Aug. only)

**School Holiday Rate for after school Trekkers \$12 extra per day (Additional children \$11/day)**

\*Please make checks or money orders payable to Longview Heights Baptist Church and write Trekkers in the memo section.

\*Paypal payment is available via our website. [www.longviewheights.org/trekkers](http://www.longviewheights.org/trekkers) (A Paypal account is not required.)

\*Payments are due each Friday for the upcoming week. Monday is a grace day only until 6 PM. Late fees will apply on any payments, online or not, made after 6 PM.

\*If accounts fall two weeks behind, children will not be allowed to attend Trekkers the following week until all accounts up to date.

\*If non-payment is due to extenuating circumstances, please talk with the director of the program. We want to help and minister in any way we can.

\*There will be no refunds for nonattendance, whether because of illness, sponsored school activities, school cancellations, etc. There are also no refunds if you withdraw your child from the program.

\*Due to state regulations, all children in attendance must be registered. It is not acceptable for childhood friends or relatives to accompany your child to Trekkers.

## Payment Plans

### All Plans:

- All families are on a "weekly" tuition plan. This program is not designed for drop-in care. We schedule our workers in advance and strive to provide the best care for your children.
- Tuition is based solely on a child being enrolled in Trekkers. The numbers of hours or days a child is on campus does not determine the amount of tuition.
- All plans are prepaid. Tuition is expected on Friday to cover the upcoming week.

### SCHOOL YEAR TUITION

Regular weekly tuition is due every week except Christmas week when Trekkers is closed. Each family gets an additional vacation week of their choice. Some use it at Christmas; others save it for Spring Break or choose other times. The cost of the program is factored over 49 weeks.

Tuition is due even if children do not attend. When a family wishes to use a vacation week, an email should be sent authorizing the use of this credit. During "vacation week" children are not allowed to attend the program.

### SUMMER CARE TUITION

We will provide you with a calendar before summer term. Please mark the **WEEKS** your child will attend. After that calendar is turned in, tuition will be expected for those **WEEKS** only. This will give you more flexibility during the summer and help us with planning.

**Please note: Once you sign up for summer weeks, tuition will be expected for those weeks.**

### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (When school is out, but Trekkers is open)

Trekkers care is open all day for the following school holidays: **Teacher's In-service Days, 60% days, Fall Break, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Christmas Break (with the exception of Christmas week), King/Lee Holiday, President's Day and Spring Break.** Extra charges apply if children attend these full days. Parents are asked to sign-up for school holidays in advance. Signing up obligates you to pay the **extra** fees accordingly.

### YEAR-ROUND TUITION

This payment plan has open enrollment in August only. This **OPTIONAL** tuition program allows parents to keep their weekly payments consistent all year long, making Summer Care more affordable. Like the School Year plan, Year-Round families receive 2 vacation weeks during the school year **PLUS** one additional vacation week during the summer. The Year-Round rate also includes all School Holidays. (The "year-around" rate averages each weekly cost and divides by 49 weeks.)

## Hours/Days of Operation

In-school days: 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

- In-school days are defined as after-school care provided when DeSoto County Schools are in session. The program will begin on the first day of school for the children and end on their last day of school.

Out-of-school days: 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

- Out-of-school days are defined as full-day care provided during summer vacation or other holidays when DeSoto County Schools are not in session. (i.e. teacher in-service days, spring break, etc.). See the Trekkers calendar for a full list of these days. *Children must be signed up in advance to attend these days, thus allowing staff to be scheduled.*

The school calendar will be followed in most instances. There will be no Trekkers on major holidays or when schools are closed due to bad weather.

## Holidays

Trekkers will be closed to observe the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday), the week of Christmas Eve and Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day and July 4th. For specific dates, please refer to the current calendar.

## Weather/Emergency Closings

Trekkers will follow the DeSoto County School System for all weather/emergency closings.

The decision to close schools, calendar changes/make up or to delay opening will be made by DeSoto County personnel no later than 5:30 a.m. If possible, the decision will be made the evening before the closing or delay. If no announcement is made on area radio or television stations, you may assume that schools will operate on a normal schedule and that Trekkers will operate on normal schedule.

Weather conditions sometimes worsen during the day after children have arrived at school. If early dismissal is necessary, local radio and television stations will make the announcements.

- **If school is closed or DISMISSED EARLY because of weather conditions, Trekkers will not operate that day.**

**Parents are responsible for picking up their child from the school.**

- If school is closed due to inclement weather, Trekkers will be closed. (cont. next page)

### Weather Continued:

*Fees will not be prorated for any days missed due to inclement weather. If the school calendar changes, rates or credits will be adjusted to reflect changes.*

*Because weather conditions and other emergencies can occur after children arrive at Trekkers, it is imperative that parents **keep all contact information up to date**, especially cell phones.*

### Absences

Parents are expected to contact the program if a child will not attend the After School Program on a regularly scheduled day. Call the Trekker phone at 662-874-1010. This includes if the child doesn't attend school that day. Please contact the program director via phone or email prior to After School hours.

If on a specific day your child attends a sponsored after-school activity with DeSoto County Schools (i.e. sports, tutoring, clubs, etc.) please provide the director notification so the child will not be expected in Trekkers on that given day.

*There is no refund of tuition for absences.*

### Illness

For the protection of all children, parents are requested not to bring a child who appears to be ill. Upon recommendation of the *Committee on Control of Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, a child should not be taken from home when any of the following exists: fever (currently or within previous 24 hours) vomiting or diarrhea, any symptoms of a childhood disease (such as scarlet fever, German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough) common cold, sore throat, croup, any unexplained rash, any skin infection, pink eye or other eye infection.

If a child has symptoms of illness or signs of a communicable disease, the parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child **within an hour of notification.**

Any contagious illness may require a doctor's note for re-admission. The staff is expected to instruct children on State Regulations for washing hands as posted at each site in an effort to reduce contagious illness.

A child who is absent from school during the school day or who has been picked up due to illness may not attend Trekkers that day. There will be no refunds of tuition for nonattendance.

*Multiple absences due to extended illness should be discussed with the program director.*

## Medication Administration

Should it be necessary for your child to receive medication at Trekkers, the procedure below should be followed:

- The parent must complete the Medication Release/Administration Form, available from the director. Clear, concise written directions must be provided.
- Medicine must be brought in the original container.
- The child's name must be on the container.
- Trekkers will not administer medication without written authorization.

## Medical Emergencies

An authorization to obtain emergency medical treatment must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) **and notarized** by a notary public and returned to the Trekkers office to be kept on file for each individual child.

In the event of a medical emergency that cannot be handled by the program director, EMT personnel will be called. Physician and hospital preference will be taken directly from the registration form. The following people will be contacted immediately in order: parent/guardian or emergency contact person and the church office.

- It is imperative that each parent provides current, up-to-date phone numbers (home, cell and work) and physician and hospital preferences to the program director.

## Sign In/Out Procedure

Roll will be taken each day to mark attendance of every child. Students arriving from school will be checked in by Trekkers staff.

Parents must sign their child out on the electronic keypad daily. On full days and Summer Day Camps, parents are required to sign in their child in the morning and sign out in the afternoon. Children are not to be dropped off; a parent/guardian must accompany the child into the building.

A child will be released only to the parent/guardian or person(s) (minimum 16 years of age) designated by the parent/guardian on the enrollment form. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the person listed, the program coordinator must be notified in writing. A parent may also call to notify the director of the person picking up the child, but I.D. must be presented at the time of pick up. A program staff member may call the parent to verify any written authorizations to release a child to someone else.

- Anyone not recognized by Trekkers staff will be asked to show identification.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

Children are to be picked up by 6 PM. If you are unable to pick your child up by 6 p.m. it is your responsibility to contact a director by phone at **662-404-4884** to let us know your circumstances and projected arrival time.

If you arrive between 6:11 p.m. and 6:20 p.m., please be prepared to pay a \$10.00 late fee. Between 6:21 PM and 6:30 PM, \$15.00 must be paid. After 6:30 PM, the charge is \$15.00 plus \$1.00 per minute.

- Anyone picking up a child will be asked to fill out a *Late Pick-up Form* indicating if the money was paid or to be added to the next week's tuition payment.
- Time is determined by cell phone time.
- If a particular parent abuses the grace period, that parent will be asked to begin paying penalty fees after 6 p.m. Persistent tardiness (more than 3 late arrivals) will result in a conference with the director and possible assessment of additional fees at the director's discretion. Continued abuse may also result in dismissal from the program.

*We realize that circumstances beyond your control can occur, and we desire to meet those situations with compassion and understanding, but please remember that the staff at Trekkers also have families at home waiting for them.*

## Transportation

- Vans, mini-buses or buses will be used to transport children from the schools to our facility.
- Two caregivers will be present on each vehicle.
- Staff will have attendance sheets that will be checked as the children load the vehicles. Once the children arrive, their names will then be signed in to the master roll in the main office.
- Children are expected to follow standard bus rules of safety and consideration. Bus rules will be provided for you to go over with your child. Seat belts must be worn when available.
- In the event of mechanical failure, Trekkers has an agreement of reciprocation with John Wade's Karate and Gymnastics for emergency transit assistance.

## Discipline Policy

Because we care about your children, and in order to provide a safe and respectful environment where children can play and learn, limits are set on behavior.

Disciplinary practices will:

- be directed toward teaching the child to understand and practice acceptable behavior
- help children learn respect for adults, other children and themselves
- be consistent and individualized for each child
- be appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- never be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to the child
- prevent children from injuring themselves or others

When discipline is necessary, the standard form will be supervised time-out. A time-out report, may also be assigned, based upon the severity of the offense. During this time the child will be instructed concerning his/her improper behavior and what is acceptable behavior. One minute of time-out per year of age is recommended, but may be increased or decreased based on the behavior problem at the discretion of the teacher or director.

Teachers have the option to "write up" children using "conduct forms". These forms may be used to ask the director to intervene with an "office visit".

- Children will be encouraged to **respect their teachers and other students** in all activities.
- Corporal punishment (i.e. spanking, slapping, or pulling hair, arms, legs or clothes) and unsupervised total isolation are not acceptable forms of discipline. As verbal abuse is also unacceptable.
- Positive redirection will be used whenever possible.

Trekkers recognizes the importance of safety for each child and the need to show respect for the authority of the teacher. A class cannot function properly when a child does "what is right in his own eyes." If a child does not respond positively to discipline measures, other measures may be taken. These include, but are not limited to, the following: limiting privileges, a teacher/parent meeting, a director/parent conference, or suspension.

We appreciate your cooperation in dealing with behavior management. While on campus, adults are expected to model the desired behavior that is expected of the children. A parent who is humble and teachable will find success when he or she works with our staff.

*If a parent does not agree with implemented discipline measures, a private meeting with the program coordinator may be requested.*

## Cell Phones

Children will not be allowed to use cell phones during Trekkers. If a child needs to contact a parent, he/she can speak with one of the staff to use a phone. Cell phones are a distraction and are often used when they shouldn't. If a child is caught using or playing with a phone, it will be taken up and given to the parent at the time of pick up.

## Other Electronics

Individual teachers may allow children the opportunity to bring electronic devices from home such as DS Games or I Pods...

- This policy is at the teacher's discretion, not the children's. Teachers will notify parents in writing IF they choose to allow these items in their classroom.
- Trekkers is not responsible for loss or damage to any device that a child brings on campus. Teachers will do their best to help children keep up with their belongings, but it is the child's responsibility to safe guard these items.
- Bringing such items to Trekkers is always **OPTIONAL**. If you do not feel your child is responsible enough, do not send them. There will always be other games and activities available for your child's enjoyment.
- **ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE LABELED WITH CHILD'S NAME** or initials. This includes chargers and game cartridges.
- These items will only be allowed on days and times specified by your child's teacher.
- Teachers reserve the right to revoke this privilege from individuals or an entire class due to lack of cooperation.

## Parent Participation and Communication

Parents are welcome in our program at any time. It is important for parents' peace of mind to have regular information about their child's experiences. As well, parent participation and input are valuable to the child and the facility. Staff will share brief information about a child's day with family members on a regular basis, if this can be done without interrupting supervision of other children. This is not always possible in the rush of drop-offs and pick-ups, so Trekkers provides the following opportunities to ensure communication between parents and staff:

- *Evaluation* - Parents are requested periodically to fill out a program evaluation form.
- *Family events* - Parents are invited to visit Trekkers, especially during open house and parents' night. Families are encouraged to participate in special events that are offered throughout the year.
- *Personal appointments* - Arrangements can be made for a meeting at a mutually agreeable time for parents and staff.
- *Email* - A primary means of communication.
- *Open door policy* - We are here to serve and minister to your family. The staff of Trekkers is committed to providing an environment that fosters children's growth and learning, and responds to the needs of parents. If a parent feels their child's needs are not being met, they are encouraged to speak directly to the director. The door is always open.

*If at any time there is a praise, concern, constructive criticism or suggestion, please do not hesitate to talk with us. Feedback is always welcome.*

## Security

While we wish to foster an "open door" policy, please be aware...

- For your child's protection, the Trekkers campus is a secure environment with locked doors and a receptionist at the check in desk.
- Children will only be released to adults on your approved pick up list.
- Please do not send unexpected relatives or friends to "visit" with your child while they are in our care. We do not wish to appear rude to any family who mistakenly expect free access without prior arrangements.
- Anyone not recognized by our staff may be asked to show photo identification.

## **Homework**

All students will have a homework time each day. It's very beneficial for them and you. Many students will often tell us that they don't have homework when actually they do. Please let your children know that they can begin their homework during this time, even if they don't finish. If they don't have homework, they may read a book, complete extra worksheets we have on hand for practice, or find a quiet activity such as drawing. Students who are finished will not be allowed to disturb other still working. Please remember that we are not a tutoring service and cannot provide individual attention to each child.

- We will guide and assist when applicable but believe it is the parent's job to check homework.
- Our goal is not completion of all assignments, but to give your child a jump start, making your evening easier. Each class has daily activities planned after homework time.
- Tutors are allowed on campus, should you wish to hire one to meet with your child.

## **Dress Code**

Children will be expected to follow the dress code for the DeSoto County School System. Trekkers reserves the right to make additional dress codes to preserve a Christian environment for special events (such as one-piece swim suits for water/swim day, etc.) Please be aware that shorts should be of acceptable length in the summer. It is also preferable that shorts be worn under skirts and dresses to preserve modesty on the playground.

## **Withdrawal from the Program**

The program coordinator should be notified two weeks in advance of the date a child is to be withdrawn. Failure to do so may result in additional tuition being charged. A withdrawal form must be filled out and signed by the parent when the child withdraws.

Once a child withdraws, his/her spot will be filled from the current waiting list. If the parent decides to re-enroll the child in the program during the school year, it may not be immediately possible if a working waiting list is applicable. A child may withdraw and re-enroll only one time per school year without paying another enrollment fee.

## **Insurance**

Trekkers, a ministry of Longview Heights Baptist Church, is covered under the LHBC church liability policy.

## Waiting List

Trekkers is licensed by the State of Mississippi; thus enrollment is limited to licensing requirements based on the amount of space and the caregiver/child ratio. A child may be placed on our waiting list for the current school year and parents will be notified when a vacancy is available, in his/her age group.

## Orientation

Parents are asked to attend an orientation meeting that is generally scheduled prior to or during the first week of school and summer camp. This meeting covers Trekkers' policies and procedures and gives parents an opportunity to ask any questions. Parents are also given a copy of the Trekkers Parent Handbook at that time.

## Snacks/Lunch

- On school days a nutritious snack will be supplied each afternoon.
- If your child has a **food allergy**, please advise the program director of that fact in writing and include the information on the medical portion of the registration form.
- If a food substitution is necessary, written documentation from a physician is required.
- **On Holidays/ Full Days:** (i.e. President's Day, Fall Break, Summer Term, etc.)
  1. Two snacks will be provided by Trekkers.
  2. **The parent will be responsible for sending a sack lunch with the child.**
  3. Trekkers will provide drinks for all snacks and lunch.
  4. Do not send food that must be heated. We do not have a full functioning kitchen. If your child requires a hot meal, please heat the food at home and send it in a thermal lunch container.
- All meals must adhere to state policies regarding acceptable nutritional standards. Please find these standards at: <http://www.msdh.state.ms.us>
- If a child arrives after the scheduled meal/snack time, the parent should provide snack/lunch for the child.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips may be planned by the program director to offer extra learning and enrichment opportunities. Parents will be notified in advance of any field trips so permission forms can be completed. No child may participate in a field trip without written consent from a parent or guardian.

## **Staff**

The duties of the program director include managing the facility, enrolling new children, purchasing supplies, collecting fees, and preparing bookkeeping information. The director must meet state regulations for qualifications and experience. Assistant Directors have the same duties and requirements. Parents may speak to an Assistant Directors as you would to the director.

Other caregivers/teachers will be assigned to each group of children. Their duties include planning, supervising, and interacting with the group. The number of caregivers/teachers is dependent upon the number of children enrolled in the program as well as state mandates for caregiver to child ratio.

Each employee must be fingerprinted and pass a criminal records check before employment. At least one staff member certified in Red Cross First Aid/CPR training will be on campus at all times. Staff is also required to complete 15 contact hours of staff development annual training in child care education classes and must meet and maintain Mississippi state licensing requirements. They must also attend an orientation for the facility to be familiarized with policies and procedures.

- The staff of Trekkers genuinely cares about and loves your children and will invest their lives in each child in order to guide, nurture and encourage them in their development.

## **Year-End Tax Statements/Reimbursement Requests**

Quarterly and Year End statements are available. Parents are asked to sign up via email to receive these reports. If a tax ID number is needed for childcare tax credit information, please see the program director.

### **Campus Evacuation:**

In most emergencies, Trekkers has the ability to evacuate to a different building on our own campus. However, it could become necessary for a campus wide evacuation due to extreme weather damage, gas leaks, chemical leaks, major accidents on Goodman Road near our campus or other unforeseen circumstances. In the event of a campus wide evacuation, Trekkers will relocate, via church vehicles, to one of the following locations:

1. Broadway Baptist Church at Getwell and Goodman, 7400 Getwell Rd., Southaven, MS 38672; 662-349-5002; contact-Sam Wrigley, principal.
2. YMCA in Olive Branch near Olive Branch city park, 8555 Goodman Rd., Olive Branch, MS 38654; 662-890-9622; contact-Jim Robinson.

Teachers will notify parents via cell phone of our location and give further pickup instruction.

### **Nutritional Standards**

Standards given by the MS State Dept. of Health can be found on our website. We ask parents to follow these guidelines when preparing sack lunches.

### **Complaints to Mississippi Department of Health**

The Mississippi Department of Health investigates complaints about the quality of care provided by licensed child care providers. To file a complaint, call the Child Care division toll-free at 1-866-489-8734. You may also mail your complaint to MS Department of Health, Child Care Facilities Licensure, PO Box 1700, Jackson, MS 39215.

You can find out if complaints have been made against a child care provider by making a Public Records request. To file such a Request, please follow the guidelines on the public records request page of the Mississippi Department of Health at [www.msdh.state.ms.us](http://www.msdh.state.ms.us).

The Childcare Regulations are rules and regulations that each child care facility in Mississippi must follow in order to maintain their childcare license. A full copy of the Childcare Regulations should be located in the director's office of your child care facility. You may also access these regulations at [www.msdh.state.ms.us](http://www.msdh.state.ms.us).