



THE FALLS CHURCH EPISCOPAL

THE DAY SCHOOL



PARENT HANDBOOK

115 E. FAIRFAX STREET, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22046

Revised 8/25/2016

THE DAY SCHOOL

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THE FALLS CHURCH EPISCOPAL MINISTRY

The Day School is a ministry of The Falls Church Episcopal. The Church permits the school to use, free of charge, its facilities as needed. The clergy participate in Chapel and most special children's programs such as the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter celebrations.

PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to providing an age-appropriate curriculum in a Christ-centered environment. In serving the Lord by serving His little ones, the staff of the school seeks to provide the following:

- *An environment in which children can be nurtured in and taught about the love of Jesus.*
- *A challenging learning environment appropriate for each developmental level.*
- *A loving place where children are able to develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically.*
- *A strong foundation to grow in self-confidence and to develop a sense of purpose and responsibility.*
- *Experiences through play that promote self-expression, creativity, and the acquisition of knowledge and skills.*
- *An atmosphere of trust and encouragement between parents and teachers in which understanding and cooperation are shared for the good of the children.*

God showed His marvelous love for children throughout the Bible. In Mark 10:13-16, we read that Jesus was "indignant" when His disciples "rebuked" people for "bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them. . . . And He (Jesus) took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them." We know God has a special plan for each child and we are privileged to play a role in fulfilling these plans.

PROGRAM

The Falls Church Episcopal Day School was founded in 1963 for the purpose of providing opportunities for intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social growth for the children of our community.

We seek to provide a rich, stimulating learning environment at the Day School. Our curriculum is grounded in universally accepted benchmarks for child development in each age group. It incorporates content standards in mathematics, science, language and literacy, social studies and the arts developed by national education organizations and deemed appropriate by The National Association for the Education of Young Children. Programs of Learning (POLs) for each age group have been developed at The Day School to provide a consistent, challenging and appropriate curriculum framework for each classroom. The POLs for The Day School Kindergarten include the content of the Standards of Learning for the State of Virginia and, in many cases, exceed the expectations of those standards. The Programs of Learning are available on our website and are available on request at any time.

It is essential that parents view themselves as an indispensable part of their child's education, working in close cooperation with teachers throughout their child's school career. This view requires a high level of commitment at home and involvement at school. Working together, parents and teachers build on a foundation of trust that nurtures and sustains the joy of discovery and the excitement of growth.

As part of your child's early learning environment, the staff of The Day School seeks to work with you to understand your child's individual pace of development and unique place as a precious and valued citizen of God's world.

THE DAY SCHOOL BOARD

The Board is composed of people appointed by the Vestry of The Falls Church Episcopal. A list of current board members is available through the office. The Board meets monthly during the school year for the purpose of setting policy. If you are interested in attending, contact the Board Chair through the Day School office.

CLASSES

Kindergarten class	9 a.m. — 1:30 p.m. M-Th
	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. Friday
5 Day 5 year old class	9 a.m. — 1:30 p.m. M-Th
	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. Friday
5 Day 4 year old extended class	9 a.m. — 1:30 p.m. M-Th
	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. Friday
5 Day 4 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M-F
4 Day 4 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M-Th
4 Day 3 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M-Th
3 Day 3 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M,W,F
2 Day 3 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. T/Th
3 Day 2 1/2 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M,W,F
2 Day 2 1/2 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. T/Th
2 Day 2 year old class	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. M/W or T/Th
Friday Add-On classes	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. F
Friday Parents' Morning Out	9 a.m. — 12:00 p.m. F

All children must be toilet-trained except those in Parents Morning Out, two-year-old, and two-and-one-half-year-old classes.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Classes begin **promptly** at 9:00 a.m. Drop-off for students is **no earlier** than 8:50 a.m. Teachers must finish daily preparations and are unable to accept responsibility for students prior to 8:50 a.m. Children should be picked up at 12 or 1:30 depending on their class.

PARENTS' MORNING OUT (PMO)

Program policy:

- (1) PMO classes have 8 children in each class, aged 18 months to 23 months. The Code of Virginia requires us to maintain an adult/child ratio of 1 to 4 for this age group.
- (2) Parents enroll for only one morning per week for the entire year.
- (3) Parents are requested to bring children at 9:00 a.m. Children are picked up promptly at 12:00 noon. Parents provide diapers and wipes. Graham crackers and water are provided as a mid-morning snack.

CHAPEL

A Chapel schedule is available in the office. Special services are held before Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and at other times as well. You are encouraged to attend the chapel programs, as well as the special services.

During special services, students are expected to remain with the class and parents may not sit with classes due to space considerations. Siblings are most welcome; however, we ask that unhappy or noisy siblings leave the service so that the students can hear and not be distracted.

Prayer and Praise is a weekly time of worship for children ages 3-5. This is a fellowship spent in song and dance, praising the goodness of the Lord. Parents and siblings are invited to this lively service. Parents may check with each class for its schedule of Prayer & Praise.

PARENT BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

This is an **important** time in September for parents to meet each other, the Day School staff, and the Day School Board. You will receive necessary information about the school and will be able to ask questions about school policies or programs. A notice will be mailed to each family in mid-summer advising the time and date. Children do not attend; this meeting is for adults.

CHILDREN'S OPEN HOUSE

This event is in September for children to attend! Catch some of the joy and excitement of school! It is an opportunity for parents and students to meet their teachers, see their classrooms, look at the playground, and get acquainted with new friends. A schedule is included in the mid-summer mailing to families.

SCHOOL/PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication to parents by The Day School is primarily done through our official email notification system called "TFCEDS e-Blast". It is very important you notify the school at the main office (room 141) of any changes regarding your email account so you can stay informed. E-Blasts alert families to weather related school closures or late openings (see page 14), important event reminders or changes, and delivers our monthly newsletter "The Bridge".

"The Bridge", a Day School publication, advertises upcoming school wide events, updates, calendar information, and other important notices that impact the school as a whole. Hard copies of The Bridge are posted around the school bulletin boards and outside teacher classrooms as well.

Monthly letters from classroom teachers are emailed to parents by their child's teacher directly. Teacher letters contain detailed curriculum and activity plans in your child's classroom for the coming month.

CONFERENCES

Informal

Parent-teacher conferences are held by telephone in late October. This is an opportunity to share information about your child's transition and continue the lines of communication between home and school.

Formal

In-person parent-teacher conferences occur in January for classes. These are very important times for communication about your child's school experience. At other times, please communicate with teachers by telephone, in writing, or by prearranged private conference. *(It is not helpful, and may be harmful, for your child to overhear discussions about himself in any context - with adult friends, relatives, or teachers. Teachers will not conference during drop off or pick up.)*

PARENT COMMITTEE

The Parent Committee offers opportunities for children and families to play together, to get to know one another, and to enrich our Day School community. It is also responsible for implementing unique and interesting fundraisers to improve our school and to create scholarship opportunities for families in need. Participating in the Parent Committee is a wonderful way to meet other Day School parents and fosters community belonging. Meetings are held throughout the year and all parents/caregivers are encouraged to become involved.

PARENT COFFEES

This is a great opportunity to get together socially with other Day School parents. These coffees are sometimes combined with Parent Enrichment Programs. Please look for announcements of dates, times, and topics in the newsletters.

ROOM PARENTS

Each class will have a volunteer room parent. Some of the duties may include organizing class parents for special snacks and contacting class parents to assist in organizing a special event. This position is a great help to the teacher and a good opportunity to be involved in your child's school.

SNACKS

A daily snack is provided for each class by the school. We welcome good ideas and special treats! Occasionally, parents may be requested to bring in a particular food for snack. **If you would like to bring in something special, please check with your child's teacher for food allergies and a convenient time. PEANUTS, NUTS, NUT BY-PRODUCTS, OR ITEMS PROCESSED IN A FACTORY USING NUTS ARE NOT ALLOWED AT ANYTIME.**

BIRTHDAYS

A child's birthday is always special! Parents are encouraged to bring refreshments and are welcome to participate in the celebration. Again, please check with your child's teacher about allergies, timing, etc. See the prior paragraph about nut allergy concerns.

VISITING SCHOOL

The Day School has an access control system. This system is operational during school hours. After drop-off and pick-up times, visitors will be asked to enter the Day School hallways only through monitored doorways.

When visiting the school outside of drop-off/pick-up times, please go directly to the Day School office to sign-in the Visitors Log and obtain a name tag. In case of an emergency, we need to know who is in the Day School at all times. Be sure to check with your child's teacher for a good time to visit the classroom. Parents visiting in our classrooms will be asked to participate in the activities.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Director is available to meet with parents. **Please come in with your ideas, questions, concerns, and suggestions.** Of course, you may call the office at 703-534-8687 to schedule an appointment as well.

PARKING, ENTRANCE AND EXIT

Parking is at the curb on East Fairfax Street, across the street in the lot, or in the church lot off Broad Street. Please use the crosswalk to cross East Fairfax Street. If you enter by the church office, use the stairs or elevator located adjacent to the office doors.

HEALTH

All students are required to submit a physical health exam, as well as have current immunization/vaccination records, in order to attend the school. All staff are required to submit annual staff health reports and to be screened for TB.

Please keep a sick child at home. Vomiting, fever, coughing—may be symptoms of a contagious illness. The surest safeguard for your child and the others in the class is to keep the child home until all signs of illness are past. We require that there be no green or yellow nasal discharge, fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for at least 24 hours. Children may not attend classes if they are not well enough to participate in normal school activities, to include playground activities. If they present symptoms of a contagious illness, or have been diagnosed by a physician as having a contagious illness, please keep them home.

The guidelines used for screening:

Diarrhea
severe coughing
rapid breathing
pale or yellow skin tone
tears, redness, or discharge from eyes
open sores
unusual spots or rash
sore throat
headache
stomach ache
fever
vomiting
unusually cranky, lethargic
head lice

If you suspect your child may have a communicable disease, get a reliable diagnosis from your family doctor. Please notify the school office as to the nature of the illness so that other parents can be informed (*child's name will not be disclosed to other parents*). Thank you in advance for your consideration in this important area.

Parents will be notified should a child become ill during the school day and are required to pick up child promptly to insure the health and safety of the other children.

INSURANCE

Student Insurance coverage while at school is provided to the Day School by Gerber Life Insurance Co. and is on file in the office.

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY FORMS

A School Entrance Health Form must be provided for each child upon entry to The Day School. This form must include a certificate of immunization and a comprehensive physical exam report. Thereafter, immunization updates are required. Please have the form filled out by your child's doctor and returned to the school by the first day of school. Children who do not have completed health care forms will not be able to attend classes. In addition, we must have on file a "Permission for Emergency Care" form in case parents cannot be reached at the time of illness or accident and emergency care is required. **Please provide us with updated information to help us keep medical forms and contact information current!**

EMERGENCY MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Day School staff have CPR, First Aid and EMAT training. The Day School does not administer any type of medication to students during the school day except for emergency use of epipens, Bena-dryl and inhalers. Families must provide a physician's authorized treatment plan for children requiring emergency medication. Forms are available in the office and must be submitted annually.

FIRE DRILLS

We are required to have eight fire drills during the school year to prepare your child to exit the building safely. These begin shortly after school starts. The children and staff exit through their assigned doors and go to the enclosed playground. If you are in the building during a drill, please exit quickly and try not to interfere with the children's lines. **Children may not be dismissed to parents during a fire drill.**

TOILET TRAINING

Our program encourages overall good hygiene practices including toileting and hand washing. Toilet training is more easily accomplished at home; however, we will follow parent's guidelines when possible to ensure consistency for the child in our 2 year-old program. All students in 3, 4, 5 year- old, and Kindergarten classes **must be toilet trained.**

CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

All "take-off" clothing should be marked with the child's name. Please dress your child appropriately so that all activities - from finger-painting to the sandbox - can be enjoyed.

Sneakers are the safest choice for footwear. Dress shoes, flip-flops, sandals, Crocs, and cowboy boots present a danger for running or climbing. Children go outside daily unless it is raining. Boots are needed in snowy weather.

CANCELLATIONS/LATE OPENINGS

Local radio and television stations report cancellations and late openings. **Please listen for announcements about Fairfax County Public School closing:**

- (1) If Fairfax County Public Schools close because of adverse weather conditions, our school will be closed—except for closures due only to low temperature. In that instance, we will operate on a 1 1/2 hour delay schedule.
- (2) If Fairfax County Public Schools open two hours late, classes will begin at 10:30 a.m. and end at 12:30 p.m. Children are to be dropped off no earlier than 10:20 a.m. Extended Day and Enrichment classes will end at their regular times.

In the event of inclement weather that could affect the safety of our students, school may close early. Notification of this will come by TFCEDS E-blast.

SNOW POLICY

The school year includes the following number of snow days for each class:

- 7 days for 5-day classes
- 6 days for 4-day classes
- 4 days for 3-day classes
- 3 days for 2-day classes
- 2 days for 1-day classes

If school is closed for emergencies in excess of the allotted days, the school year will be extended the equivalent number of days as follows:

- (1) by adding additional days; or
- (2) by lengthening the school day; or
- (3) by a combination of the two at the discretion of The Day School Board.

Make-up days will only be extended to a maximum of 5 days for any effected class.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Drop Off

To ensure the safety of your children at The Day School, please see that your child is accompanied by an adult to his or her classroom and released to the teacher or assistant there. Young children can get confused in crowded halls and may enter the wrong classroom.

Please try to be on time for classes. Late arrivals can be disruptive to the whole group. Consistent prompt arrival provides children with a comfortable transition into the school environment. Please make every effort to be on time, but if you must be late, please be sensitive to any disruption you may create and complete leave-taking quickly.

Pick Up

Please wait in the hall for the teacher to dismiss your child. This reduces confusion and enables the teacher to safeguard the other children. A written list of those persons permitted to take your child home must be provided. On this list, please include **anyone** who might be even a remote possibility to drive your child home. Children may be picked up from the classrooms *only* by persons authorized on the Authorization for Pick-Up Form or through a **signed written note** to the child's teacher prior to pick up. **Any person authorized by the parent, but unknown to the Day School staff, must show a picture ID before that child can be released.** Should an emergency arise, please contact The Day School to provide the name of the person who will pick up the child.

Children should be picked up promptly. Children not picked up promptly become anxious. We want to provide a stress-free learning environment that offers students security and happiness. Emergencies may arise. If this happens, contact the Day School office to allow us to explain the situation and prepare your child. **Picking up your child in a timely manner allows teachers to attend staff meetings, training seminars, and planning sessions on time.**

The policy for late pick-ups is as follows:

- 1st occurrence - verbal reminder
- 2nd occurrence - written warning
- 3rd occurrence - charge of \$10.00 for the first five minutes or any part thereof after:

12:10 p.m. for regular classes

1:40 p.m. Kindergarten/5 Day 5 and 5 Day 4 Extended day classes.

1:40 p.m. for Enrichment Classes

An additional charge of \$10.00 for the next five minutes or any part thereof, a rate of \$1.00 per minute will continue until child is picked up. Two or more children in a family will be charged individually.

REGISTRATION

Registration is held in January for the following school year. The State of Virginia requires all persons enrolling a child to provide information on all previous programs and schools attended by the child. Persons must also provide proof of a child's identity and age. Proof of a child's identity may include a **certified** copy of the child's birth certificate, notification of birth (hospital, physician, or midwife), registration card, or a passport. The following documents must be presented to The Day School not later than the first day of school: Proof of birth, Immunization record, Permission for Emergency Care and Authorization for Student Pick Up.

A registration fee and supply fee are required to enroll your child. These fees are **NON-REFUNDABLE**. A pre-payment of one-ninth of the annual tuition is due one year in advance by May 1st of the current year and is **NON-REFUNDABLE**. New families of incoming students will be required to make this payment plus the registration fee and supply fee. Failure to pay in a timely manner will result in a loss of the student's space in the school.

ADVANCE TUITION, REGISTRATION FEES, AND SUPPLY FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE WHEN A CHILD IS ENROLLED.

We must consider the dynamics within each class during student placement. Birth dates, male/female ratios, and temperaments are all considered; therefore, we regret that we cannot honor parents' requests for specific teachers or classmates.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Payment of the annual tuition may be made on a yearly, quarterly or monthly basis. If you elect to pay on a monthly schedule, payment is due by the 1st of each month. Quarterly payments are due September, November, January, and March. Payments received after the 10th of the month must include a \$10.00 late fee. If the 8th of the month falls on a day when school is not in session, payment is due by the last day school is in session **prior** to the 10th. **All payments must be made by check.** No cash or credit cards can be accepted. The returned check charge is \$30.00. All checks should

be made payable to FCEDS. The oldest sibling in our school pays regular tuition; however, any younger siblings will each receive a 10% discount on their tuition if they are in a two, three, four, or five-day program.

SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of scholarships are available. Groups and individuals within The Falls Church and Day School communities contribute to this fund. For further information, please inquire in the office. All requests are confidential. The Scholarship request form is also available on the website. Please submit a completed request to the Director.

DISCIPLINE

Young children are learning what is and what is not acceptable behavior. We must guide them in this social learning process. The cornerstone for maintaining acceptable behavior at The Day School is based on Biblical principle found in Scripture:

"My brothers, if someone is caught in any kind of wrong doing, those of you who are spiritual should set him right, but you must do it in a gentle way."

~Ephesians 6:1

To fulfill our responsibility to the children, The Day School Board has established procedures for dealing with unacceptable behavior. A copy of this policy is available in the Day School office.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Day School is a ministry of The Falls Church Episcopal and, as such, is exempt from licensure; however, the local fire department and health department officials, to insure compliance with all applicable regulations, inspect the facility. The Day School also meets, and in most cases exceeds, the Virginia Social Services Code requirements:

- Child to adult ratio of one to four children up to twenty-four months of age and one adult to ten children from two years to six years of age.
- Each teacher/assistant has been certified by a practicing physician to be free of any disability that would prevent that person from caring for children.
- Each staff member has submitted to a criminal history record check.
- All staff members must attend sexual abuse awareness training.
- All staff members must be at least 18 years of age. All lead teachers must be at least 21 years of age and have the minimum requirements of a high school diploma and two years of college and/or two years experience as a teacher of pre-schoolers.
- All Staff are CPR and First Aid Certified
- The center is covered under the umbrella of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia for public liability insurance and accidental injury insurance.
- Children are provided with a pre-packaged snack and water during the morning. Five Day Four Year Old Extended, Five Day Five Year Old, and Kindergarten students bring a bag lunch from home on their extended days.

Physical Plant: 4,735.7 sq. ft. for 12 classrooms and three offices
1,927 sq. ft. indoor playroom
3,700 sq. ft. outdoor playground with
mulched surface maximum number of
students per day may not exceed 153

The Day School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at The Day School. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admissions policies or scholarship programs.



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