

Fairlington Preschool

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SCHOOL INFORMATION FORM

(2021 – 2020)

Fairlington Preschool is a non-sectarian, non-profit, morning preschool that operates in the Fairlington United Methodist Church. The school admits students of any race, religion, national and ethnic origin, or ability. The preschool supports the learning and development of all children, including those with disabilities, and to that end, our curriculum, staffing and learning environment supports the inclusion of children with disabilities in each classroom. Children with special needs or disabilities are included in each class. In addition, Fairlington Preschool operates two Community Partnership inclusion classrooms in conjunction with Alexandria City Public Schools. Fairlington Preschool is licensed to operate as a Child Day Center by the State of Virginia and follows NAEYC standards.

Mission Statement

Fairlington Preschool is an outreach ministry of Fairlington United Methodist Church. Children and families of all faiths and cultures are welcome here. The preschool is a family centered, inclusive community. Our mission is:

- ✚ To provide children the active learning experiences which facilitate social-emotional, cognitive and physical growth using the developmentally appropriate HIGH/SCOPE curriculum.
- ✚ To create inclusive classrooms where diversity is treasured and children with differing needs, abilities, and cultural backgrounds, learn and grow together.
- ✚ To offer parents the opportunity to be active participants in their child's education, work as a team with teachers, and become effective, life-long advocates for their children.
- ✚ To be a model for inclusion education to families, teachers, and administrators in our community.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

CURRICULUM: At Fairlington Preschool, the framework for the experiences offered to children is the High/Scope Curriculum. High Scope is a proven, research-validated preschool curriculum that advocates an active learning approach where children learn by being involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events.

Play is the natural mode of learning for the young child. Within the context of play, the curriculum emphasizes sensory awareness, independent thinking, decision making and the development of social skills. The learning environment offers a wide variety of experiences and materials. Children learn pre-reading and early math skills through developmentally appropriate activities. A great emphasis is placed on language development and social skills. The school has a lending library and children are encouraged to choose and take home a book from school each week. Outdoor play is also a key element of the daily routine. Children go outside every day unless it is raining, or the temperature is exceptionally cold. When outdoor play is not possible, the children play in the church fellowship hall which is a large open area. Riding toys, tumbling mats, climbing structures and ball games are set up for the children. No religious instruction is included in the curriculum.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES: Teachers plan daily activities that stimulate each child's curiosity about his world

and facilitate social interaction and growth of independence and problem solving. Children work in a garden space on the playground. Activities from *Handwriting without Tears*, a program designed to promote writing readiness is used in the 3's and 4's classrooms. The school has a large lending library and children have a library time each week to select a book and bring it home to be returned the following week. Fairlington preschool has a licensed recreational therapist on staff who works with every class once a week in what we call FAIR PLAY, *Fun, Activity, Imagination and Recreation Play*. FAIR PLAY is a program which uses recreational games, music activities, social stories, big body play to further enhance and support the High/Scope Key Developmental Indicators.

CLASS SIZE AND TEACHING STAFF: There are 2 teachers in each class. The 2-year-old classes have 9 – 10 children; 3 year olds have 12-13 children and the 4's, a maximum of 16 children per classroom. All Fairlington teachers and associate teachers have bachelor's degrees in Early Childhood Education or a related field. Many teachers have graduate degrees. The Community Partnership classes (Red and Teal) are taught by licensed, master's level, special education teachers provided by Alexandria City Public Schools. The maximum number of students is limited to 12. Partnership classes have 6 ACPS preschool children with disabilities and 6 typically developing children. The classes are mixed age groupings of 3 ½ and 4 year olds. Children must be 3 ½ to attend the partnership classes. Partnership classes meet 5 days per week and for the most part, follow Alexandria City Public Schools calendar. All classes at Fairlington Preschool include children with special needs.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: At Fairlington Preschool, children with and without disabilities learn together, a form of educational programming commonly referred to as inclusion. In inclusion classes, there are benefits to all children as they learn together. Children with special needs have stimulating, positive peer modeling from their typically developing peers. Equally important, typically developing children gain an understanding and acceptance of differences among people through their interactions with children with special needs and disabilities. Both children with special needs and their typically developing peers benefit from being together. An inclusion specialist is on the staff to serve as a resource to other staff members. Support services for children needing special attention in language, sensory integration, or motor development may be provided by the speech therapist and occupational therapist on the staff. These professionals work with the children individually and in the classroom. There are extra fees for therapy services, the cost of which is supplemented by private foundation grants. There is benefit to all staff and children in having these 2 therapists on the staff.

CONFERENCES: Parent-teacher conferences are held twice yearly. These conferences are very important and at least one parent must attend. Attendance by both parents is recommended. Parents may request conferences with the teacher or director any time by arranging an appointment.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: Fairlington parents provide snack for the entire class on a rotating schedule. Snack guidelines are provided in the parent handbook given to each family at the beginning of the school year. Parents are welcome in our classrooms at any time and are encouraged to come into their child's classroom and read stories or just play! Parenting workshops are also offered through the year. Fundraising is generally not done unless there is a specific reason. A few years ago, the Preschool Board elected to raise tuition and not do any fundraising.

TYPICAL DAILY ROUTINE AT SCHOOL

Each classroom participates in the following each day. The daily routine is posted in each classroom.

Hello Time and Planning: The children join for a time during which they greet each other and chat together, read the message board and participate in songs and finger plays.

Small Group Time: Small Group is a fifteen-minute teacher-directed activity when teachers work together with small groups using similar materials. Materials may be paper and scissors, small blocks, paints, tape or staplers, colored cubes, counting bears, etc. **Small Group Time** is organized around the Key Developmental Indicators set forth in the High/Scope curriculum and is designed to open possibilities and choices to the children as they work together as a group.

During **Planning Time**, children and teachers talk about the children's plans for **Work Time**. They discuss what each child wants to do and how the child might go about doing it. Depending upon their age and developmental level, children may designate their plans by gesturing, using words, tracing an object or drawing a picture.

Work Time: The plan made during **Planning Time** is usually for a starting activity during the 45 minutes of **Work Time**. Children carry out these initial plans and spontaneously make new plans as they change activities. Children play with the toys and materials in the classroom. Each classroom has opportunities to play with blocks, manipulatives, drama play, science, art materials, books and music.

Clean Up Time: At the end of **Activity Time**, all children participate in cleaning up the work areas in each classroom. As they put away toys and materials, they not only learn where things go, but that things go together and they begin to develop a system for finding things they need.

Recall and Snack Time: This time of day gives children the opportunity to remember and represent what they did during **Work Time**. Snack is served in each classroom. Nutritious snacks are supplied by parents. No peanut butter, peanuts or tree nut products are served. Filtered water is served to the children to drink.

Outside Time: Outside Time is an integral part of each day in which children spend a minimum of 30 minutes outdoors on the playground, weather permitting. During this time, children have a chance to exercise large muscles on swings, slide, climbing equipment, and in organized play with balls, parachute, sand toys, and housekeeping toys.

APPLICATION, ENROLLMENT, TUITION

APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT: Due to the pandemic, the enrollment process will begin in February for new families. New student applications may be filled out and returned with the \$50 application fee, (\$25 for returning students). Priority is given to current students who turn in applications by the due date of January 27, 2021. Siblings of current Fairlington Preschool students, as well as the children of church members are also given priority. After that, applications are received from the community for the 2021-2022 school year. Families are sent an acceptance letter via email by March 18. New and returning students pay a one-month tuition deposit and the supply fee by the due date to hold the spot in the classroom for September. **These fees are not refundable, and the tuition deposit is applied to the June 2022 tuition.**

Forms may be mailed to Fairlington Preschool, 3900 King St. Alexandria, VA 22302, or delivered to the preschool. If more applications are received than slots available, a lottery will take place. When capacity enrollment is reached, a waiting list will be established and continued for the current school year. Children on the

waiting list **must** reapply for the following school year. If a child is withdrawn within the school term and desires readmission, he/she must wait until space is available.

CLASSROOM	AGE	DAYS CLASS MEETS	TUITION
Purple	young 2's	Thursday, Friday	\$355
Lilac	older 2's	Monday - Wednesday,	\$470
Coral	3's	Tuesday - Thursday	\$470
Yellow	3's	Tuesday – Thursday	\$470
Green	4's	Monday – Friday	\$605
Orange	4's, 5's	Monday – Friday	\$605
Teal and Red	3 ½ by Sept.30	Monday – Friday	\$605

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

TERMS, DAYS AND TIMES: The new school year begins in September 2021 and runs through mid-June 2022. School hours are 9 – 12. A calendar for the entire school year is given to families in September. Tuition is determined by the number of school days, divided into 10 monthly payments as some months have a greater number of attendance days than others.

SNOW DAYS: Classes will not be held whenever Alexandria City Public Schools are closed due to weather. If Alexandria Schools open late, Fairlington opens at 10:00 am and closes at noon.

HOLIDAYS: Classes will not meet on holidays listed in the Parent Handbook. These include government holidays, winter break, spring break, as well as parent teacher conferences and staff development days.

WITHDRAWALS AND ABSENCES: If a child is withdrawn during the school year at a parent's request, a thirty-day written notice is requested. If a child is kept home temporarily because of illness, family trips or other reason, tuition charges will continue. If a child is absent for an extended period because of serious or protracted illness, a reasonable adjustment of tuition may be made after the first thirty consecutive calendar days. If the school is closed temporarily tuition will continue to be charged.