

Faith Primary School

Student and Parent Handbook

FAITH PRIMARY SCHOOL

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY In 1994, St. John's Episcopal Primary School was established to provide a strong reading-based academic program, integrated with spiritual teaching, that was offered as an educational alternative for families in the Waynesboro area. In January of 2007, the church decided to focus its mission in a different direction, and notified the school that it would no longer be part of the church. With that in mind, Faith Primary School was born. Through the hard work and dedication of parents and faculty, a new location was found at Blue Ridge Chapel Church of the Brethren. Although the location and name have changed, the School continues to dedicate its efforts to the intellectual, cultural, social, and spiritual growth of each student. The School strives to create a flexible but controlled environment that encourages creativity, self-discipline, and motivation to learn. The curriculum aims at developing strong academic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Academic studies also include history, geography and science, as well as introductions to music, art and physical education.

The School is operated by an elected School Board, with the Head of the School as its chief executive officer.

ADMISSIONS The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, gender or national origin in its consideration of applicants. However, it does give priority in admission to: (1) members of the sponsoring church (2) siblings of students enrolled or previously enrolled and (3) children of current faculty. A waiting list may be formed. Prospective parents are encouraged to schedule a visit so that they may gain an understanding of the School and its program. All candidates are evaluated for entrance and placement at Faith Primary School.

PAYMENT POLICY Tuition is due July 1, and the first day of each month, through April. Monthly invoices are not sent. The Fall semester materials fee is due September 1, and the Spring semester materials fee is due January 1. Payments should be mailed to the school. It is preferred that you pay with check, money order or cashier's check, but if you must pay in cash it is your responsibility to ask for a receipt. Please make checks payable to and mail to:

Faith Primary School
19 Brown's Lane
Waynesboro, VA 22980

The treasurer is

William Fitzgerald
540-941-8427

Since the success of Faith Primary School is incumbent upon everyone doing their part, the board has adopted the following policy to encourage prompt payment of monthly tuition and material fees.

If the tuition payment for a month is not received by the 15th of the month, the Treasurer will send a statement indicating that the account is past due and assessing a penalty of \$50.00. The family has 5 business days from the statement date in which to pay the account in full. Statements may be requested by parents at any time.

If the Treasurer has not heard from the family by the 23rd of the month, the family will be contacted to arrange a meeting with the parents, the Treasurer and a representative of the School Board. During the meeting, an alternative payment plan will be worked out, agreed upon, and a statement signed to that effect. No payment plan will be accepted which permits the debt for tuition to extend beyond the end of July of the current school year. Failure to pay tuition on schedule according to the agreed upon plan will result in the student's dismissal at the beginning of the following month. The student will not be allowed to attend school until the account is paid in full and a majority of the School Board has agreed to readmit the student.

If no meeting occurs or no agreement is reached, the student will be dismissed on the first day of the next month and will not be permitted to attend school.

The above policy in no way relieves the family of the obligation to pay a full year's tuition as previously signed and agreed to in the letter of intent.

WITHDRAWAL Withdrawal of students must be made in writing to the Head of School. Withdrawal of a student does not relieve the family of the obligation to pay a full year's tuition as previously signed and agreed to in the letter of intent.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS Classroom management and discipline are the responsibility of the teacher in charge. Teachers will take the positive approach to discipline with emphasis on praise for accomplishments and/or improvement. Students at all grade levels need to be encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility for their work and their actions. Students learn respect through being treated with respect as individuals. This does not mean that permissiveness is condoned; it does mean that courtesy and fairness help set the learning environment.

Any behavior that interferes with the safety or learning of others is not acceptable. Appropriate consequences will be directed at a child who continues to fall short of the school's expectations for good behavior. Parents will be told of behavior problems and are expected to cooperate with the School in solving their child's problems. When in the school's sole opinion the child is manifesting symptoms of a learning disability, emotional disturbance, or other challenge that may impact the child's ability to learn, or when requested by the parents, it becomes the parents' obligation to have the child evaluated by an appropriate professional or professionals approved, in advance, by the School.

The School reserves the right to remove a child from its rolls if the School cannot provide the child with an appropriate educational opportunity within the given confines of its curriculum.

Fighting and biting are unacceptable behaviors, especially because of the danger from injury and communicable diseases. If a child is injured or bitten by another, the parents of the injuring child will be called to remove the child from school for the day. Two instances of injury to another will result in suspension from school until the matter is brought to the School Board, where continued enrollment will be reviewed by the Board. Dismissal of the child from school does not release the parents from the obligation of payment of the full year's tuition. Parents of the injuring child may be held responsible for the costs of any or all medical bills incurred in treatment of the injury, including any diagnostic testing.

Any student who damages or destroys school or church property will be expected to pay the replacement cost. In addition, any student who willfully damages school, church, or personal property or intentionally injures others may face disciplinary action.

School Rules Students are expected to obey school rules. Some of these rules follow:

1. Respect the authority of all staff members.
2. Listen politely to others.
3. Use honesty in all activities.
4. Contribute to an effective learning environment for all.
5. Speak with an “inside voice” in the building, using appropriate language at all times.
6. Walk single file on the right side of the hallway.
7. Use the phone only with the permission of a teacher.
8. Leave toys, games and chewing gum at home.
9. During outside activity, stay in the yard and play safely, asking adults to retrieve balls which go astray. Tackling, wrestling and jumping off the playground equipment are not safe and are not permitted. Students are to be visible to supervising adults at all times.
10. Settle disagreements in a peaceful and fair manner. Fighting and threatening are not permitted. Seek help from an adult when necessary.
11. Slides are to be used properly, going down feet first, in a seated position.
12. Obey School Board policies which prohibit the use and possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, fireworks and weapons (real or toy, or the use of other items as weapons). Sticks are to be left on the ground.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The staff of Faith Primary School is committed to problem solving at the lowest possible level. We believe that any concern raised by a student, the parents or a guardian of a student is better served by working directly with the person or persons involved. The following procedure will be used to resolve any grievances within the school.

Step 1.

The parent and the child will work directly with the primary teacher to resolve the concern.

If resolution fails:

Step 2.

The parent, child, and teacher will advance to the next level, a discussion with the Primary School Head of School.

If resolution fails:

Step 3.

The parent on behalf of the child, teacher, and Head of School will advance to the next level, an attempt at mediation using the pastor of the church as mediator.

If resolution fails:

Step 4.

The parent on behalf of the child, teacher, or the Head of School, may appeal to the Board of Faith Primary School.

If resolution fails:

Step 5.

The parent on behalf of the child, the teacher or the Head of School, and the Primary School Board Chairperson appeals to the Executive Board of Blue Ridge Chapel Church of the Brethren whose decision becomes final and binding upon all parties involved in the grievance.

DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE The School encourages grooming habits which show respect for the church and each other. Students' dress should be neat, clean and without holes when arriving at school. Hats and sunglasses are to be worn outside only. Muscle T-shirts and items with inappropriate words and pictures on them are not acceptable. Because outdoor activity is an important part of each day, *we encourage students to come to school appropriately prepared for outdoor play.* This includes warm jackets, hats and gloves in season, and shoes that are securely fastened. Flip-flops are not adequate for outdoor play, and must be changed before heading outside.

MEDICAL INFORMATION Virginia law requires that parents file proof of immunization with the school on or before the first day of school. A student may not attend class until these requirements have been met.

Administering medication: Medication given at school must be in its original container and must be stored in the teacher's care. Parents must sign an Authorization to Give Medication Form before any drugs can be administered.

Illness: Students who are sick cannot benefit from participation in school and are likely to spread illness if they attend. Students who had a fever during the night should not be sent to school until they have been **fever-free for 24 hours**. Please do not send sick children to school. If a student becomes ill while at school, parents will be contacted to make arrangements for taking the student home. Should the student need emergency medical attention, the school will call 911. All students must have on file a completed Emergency Medical Form.

ATTENDANCE School hours are from 8:30 to 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Students should arrive at school 10 to 15 minutes early in order to be able to prepare for the beginning of the instructional day, which begins at 8:30. Arrival between 8:30 and 8:45 will be counted as tardy. Arrival after 8:45 will count as an absence. If there are more than 5 absences per 9 week period, continued enrollment will be reviewed by the Board and a decision regarding continued enrollment will be made by the Board. Excused absences are those which arise from sickness or family crisis. If students miss school, all work missed must be made up. Please give teachers reasonable notice in order to have this work made available.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL Students may arrive between 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. The instructional day begins at 8:30 A.M. In order to encourage responsibility in our students, parents should drop their student off and leave promptly so that instruction may begin.

Dismissal will be at 3:00 p.m. each day, and students will be packed up and ready to leave with a parent-approved adult. Forms will be available listing those adults who may pick up the student. Because teachers use the time after school to prepare for the next day, children should be picked up promptly and leave the classroom. Should a parent need to consult with the teacher, please make an appointment.

If a child is not picked up by 3:15 p.m., the child will be taken to Study Hall and the parent will be called. A fee of \$5.00 per hour (or any part of an hour) will be

assessed. At the discretion of the Head of School, this fee may be waived in the event of an emergency.

EMERGENCY OR SNOW CLOSING POLICY On days which present bad driving conditions, the School will follow the Waynesboro City Public Schools' closings or delayed openings as reported on local television and radio stations, as well as the school answering machine (540-942-1857). All students **MUST** have emergency contact people so that children have a safe place to go in case of early dismissal. Please make sure you have two contacts on file at the School and make prior arrangements with these contacts.

Because the school is located at Blue Ridge Chapel Church, the need may arise to dismiss early due to a funeral being held at the church. We dismiss early because of limited parking and the confusion that can result. In this instance, all parents will be notified at least one day in advance.

BIRTHDAYS In order to avoid misunderstandings and hurt feelings, invitations to private parties must be sent through the mail and **NOT** distributed at school. Also, gifts must be exchanged outside of school. Many of the children enjoy celebrating their birthdays at school with a small snack or with cake. Parents should inform the child's teacher if they wish to do this.

LUNCHESES Parents will provide a healthy daily lunch, including drinks. Milk will be available for purchase for lunch. In addition, parents will provide a healthy daily morning snack. It is not acceptable for children to bring soda for lunch or snack. Students will eat together in the Church's Social Hall and will be responsible for minor clean-up tasks.

TOYS Students may not bring toys from home.

HOMEWORK Homework is used to reinforce classwork, enhance learning and encourage self-discipline. Students should complete homework by themselves. However, it is up to parents to provide a regular homework time and space. Parents may review but should not correct homework. They are encouraged to help students review for tests and quizzes.

REPORTING All students will receive report cards four times a year at nine week intervals. Reports will center on the student's academic and social progress at

school, although students in kindergarten will receive a less formal report. Two regularly scheduled parent conferences will be held; it is important for parents to attend these and the conferences will be scheduled at a time to encourage parent attendance. Additional conferences may be requested if the parents or the staff have concerns about the progress of a student. Parental concerns should first be addressed with the child's teacher. If not resolved at that level, the Head of School should be included in the process. If resolution is still not achieved, the Grievance Policy procedure will be followed.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is comprised of parents of current students. Each spring, the PTO shall elect a president who shall also serve as a full voting member of the Board of Directors of the School Board. Additional positions on the PTO board include chairmen for special events, publicity and fund raising.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT We encourage parents to visit the school to share more closely in their child's learning and growth. The hours spent at school have an important impact on a child's development. Therefore, it is beneficial if parents are aware of their child's daily activities. Class work is sent home each day and parents are encouraged to review this work with their child daily. Frequently, school communications are sent home with daily work. It is also helpful to communicate with your child's teacher on a regular basis and be supportive. Please communicate directly with the teacher in a timely manner whenever concerns arise. Children are always aware when a parent is reluctant to support the teacher, and this lack of confidence may adversely affect your child's school experience. If attempts to communicate with your child's teacher are unsuccessful, then a joint conference with the Head of School, the parents and the teacher involved will be scheduled.

Parents can assist the class and the school in the following ways:

- Providing transportation for any class trips.
- Assisting with class parties or picnics.
- Helping to gather materials for special curricular projects.
- Participating in PTO meetings.
- Helping with plays and other class presentations.
- Asking your child about school work and special programs.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING The School's goal in spiritual studies is to instill an appreciation of the basic values of classical Christianity. While grounded in the Anglican tradition, the School will make no attempt to proselytize and, in fact, encourages openness and understanding toward other points of view.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT As in all communities, rules and policies assure the easy governing of many who work together daily. The communal rules contained in this handbook are intended to bring us closer together as a school. We ask that you follow this document with care and we welcome your suggestions and input as our school community continues to grow.