



FAMILIES OF FAITH
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
2024-2025 Preschool Handbook

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Revision Policy

Families of Faith Christian Academy reserves the right to change any policy or procedure in the dress code at any time when, at the discretion of the staff and administration, it deems the change to be in the best interest of the school.

Rev. 09/09/2024

For our Statement of Faith, Statement of Christian Philosophy of Education and Statement of Objectives and Purpose, see the Families of Faith Christian Academy website at www.fofca.com.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

FOFCA admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to FOFCA students. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions procedures, scholarship awards, athletic and other school administered programs. We do, however, reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from enrollment based on past academic achievement, disqualifying disability, or whose personal life-style is not in harmony with the stated philosophy and purpose of Families of Faith Christian Academy.

PARENT REQUIREMENTS

I. PARENT STATEMENT OF INVOLVEMENT

- A. I commit to complete my Parent-Volunteer hours: 7 hours for part time preschool parent (maximum of 14 hours per family), or 15 for a full time preschool parent (maximum of 30 hours per family). Parents may pay the appropriate amount in lieu of volunteering (\$10 per hour).
- B. Both the father and mother (where there is no separation) are expected to participate in their child's education.
- C. In keeping with the Biblical principle of offering grievances, (Matthew 18:15-17), FOFCA strongly urges parents to refrain from gossiping, as such conversations are destructive to the administration, students, and the parents. Parents are expected to take the following steps to resolve a problem:
 1. Go directly to the appropriate teacher and not to other parents if there is a problem in your child's class.
 2. Go directly to the Principal and not to other parents if a problem arises that the teacher cannot handle, happens outside the classroom, or if you believe the situation is not being resolved.
 3. Go directly to the Administrator and not to other parents.

II. PARENT STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The operating budget of Families of Faith Christian Academy is funded by tuition, fees, and contributions. Capital improvements are funded principally by gifts. Parents are asked to consider making both annual and capital gifts as an expression of their interest in and commitment to Families of Faith Christian Academy.
- B. Parents are expected to pay their bills on time. Students whose accounts are 30 days past due will be restricted from attending classes, participating in extracurricular events, graduation exercises, and/or receiving report cards until the account is brought current.
- C. In the event of academic failure, disciplinary action, expulsion, or extenuating circumstances, all tuition monies, deposits, and fees already paid will be forfeited. Parents/Guardians have entered into a contractual relationship with Families of Faith Christian Academy for the payment of ALL tuition and related fees for the entire school year.

I understand that my obligation to pay the fees for the full academic year is unconditional and that upon receipt of this contract by Families of Faith Christian Academy, no portion of fees paid (i.e. registration fees, book fees, FACTS fees) or outstanding will be refunded or canceled in the event of absence, withdrawal or dismissal from Families of Faith Christian Academy of the above student. The only exception to this policy

would be in the event of a geographic relocation of the family beyond a 60 mile radius of Channahon, IL. In that instance, a prorated refund will be given. If a student withdraws before the first day of school, only paid tuition will be refunded. All fees are non-refundable.

III. PARENT STATEMENT OF COOPERATION

The following statement is printed on each Parental Agreement. Parents will be asked to affirm the statement with their signature on the application form.

- A. We understand that enrollment at FOFCA is not a right, but a privilege, and do affirm that there are standards that must be maintained for the welfare of each student, as well as, for the entire school. Therefore, we give permission for our teachers and/or other school personnel to make and enforce school regulations in a manner consistent with Christian principles of discipline as set forth in Scripture and the Parent/Student Handbook. We will continue to uphold the authority of the teachers and staff of FOFCA by recognizing their right to use appropriate disciplinary measures.
- B. I have read FOFCA's discipline procedures and expectations. I agree to encourage my child to comply with the rules and conduct expected at all times – including evenings, weekends, vacations, and holidays. Furthermore, I agree to provide a home environment which supports FOFCA's expectations.
- C. I understand and agree to the school's right to provide consequences – including suspensions or separation from the school – to my child, for violations of FOFCA's discipline procedures and expectations, which occur at any time while my child is enrolled at FOFCA, including violations that take place on evenings, weekends, vacations, and holidays.

IV. SCHOOL / HOME COMMUNICATION

It is the policy of Families of Faith Christian Academy to communicate educational and personal information about a student only with the custodial (enrolling) parent or guardian. It is the responsibility of the non-custodial parent to seek copies of this information from the custodial parent. A non-custodial parent may be placed on the school mailing list to receive general information, such as newsletters or check the website for a school calendar of events. In the event of joint custody, communication will be made with the enrolling parent. In the event that both joint custodial parents enroll the student, it is their responsibility to designate a primary contact.

V. STUDENT STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Students of Families of Faith Christian Academy have a reputation of excellence to maintain with those in the community. Therefore, as a condition of enrollment, students and parents agree to abide by all the standards set forth in this handbook.

ABSENCES

Please notify the office of the cause of your child's absence. This is helpful in notifying other parents in cases where their child may have been exposed to a contagious illness such as chicken pox, measles, flu etc. It also helps the teacher in her planning. See Health Guidelines for more info.

ACCIDENTS

All accidents that occur during the school day or on any school-sponsored trip will be reported to the office as necessary. Minor injuries will be treated in the classroom (such as getting a wet paper towel or a bandaid) or by the office. Students with serious injuries will be taken immediately to the hospital and parents will be notified by phone.

ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

For health, safety and insurance reasons, we ask that families not bring their pets to school unless specifically requested for a lesson or activity in the classroom which was planned and pre-approved by the teacher.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Arrival: Between 8:15 – 8:30 AM

Half-day dismissal: Between 11:30 – 11:45 AM

All-day dismissal: Between 3:10 – 3:25 PM

Please be sure your students arrive and are picked up on time. Students arriving early or late will be placed into before/after school care and parents will be charged an additional fee.

BIBLE

The Bible is of primary importance at FOFCA Preschool, and all subjects are taught from a Biblical perspective. Each day includes a Bible lesson taught from a non-denominational perspective. Children will memorize 27 Bible verses and students are encouraged to begin applying those verses in their lives.

CAR POOLS

If car pools are desired, parents are responsible for forming them. Upon request, the office will provide a listing of all school families living in your zip code area at the beginning of the school year. The school is not responsible for the safety of children in any car pool. Please be sure that the driver is adequately covered by insurance.

CHEWING GUM AND CANDY

Please have your child leave chewing gum and candy (except for birthday treats or those requested by the teacher for a party) at home.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Parental requests for specific teachers or classmates are not considered in determining class assignments. Class assignments are made for the duration of the year. Preschool assignments are made based upon gender, ratio of new students and returning students, and individual student personalities.

COMMUNICATION

We strongly encourage home/school communication. For this purpose, there are two scheduled conference days where you may sign up for a conference with your child's teacher. Outside of those times, we urge you to communicate in one of the following ways:

- ClassDojo
- Teacher's email
- Call the school office and ask to leave a message for the teacher.
- Catch the teacher OFF-DUTY. (Please do not distract the teacher while on duty by engaging in a lengthy conversation.)
- Send a note in your child's book bag/folder. Place these notes in the spot that your child's teacher designates.

CURRICULUM

The basic curriculum is Abeka, an accelerated Christian curriculum. Learning begins here as a joyful experience that integrates academics and a Christian worldview.

DISCIPLINE

Our standards of conduct are based on three driving principles: respect for God (Rev. 4:11), respect for authority (Rom. 13:1), and respect for others (John 13:35). Academic excellence is not the only goal of FOCCA's education. We want to prepare students for a Godly life well beyond their formative years. God disciplines those He loves, so FOCCA disciplines those we love, our students. The goal of all discipline at FOCCA is to bring a child to a place of repentance where they recognize the fault in their actions, turn from them, and then ultimately come to a place of restoration. God's heart for His creation is restoration and restoration is what we want for our students. We will hold them to high standards of accountability for their conduct so that they are well-prepared for life. Therefore, parental support is vital. These standards provide a framework to help to maintain a safe and orderly school that promotes learning and glorifies God above all.

DRESS CODE

We want to create a self-image in a child that is vital to good Christian growth. To do this, we feel that we must encourage cleanliness and dress that is becoming to young boys and girls. The dress code at FOCCA Preschool is to be observed each day during the school year for all school programs, performances outside school, field trips, etc. unless specific written exceptions have been made by the office for special occasions and a note sent home in advance.

Parents have the responsibility to see that their child is dressed properly for school before leaving home each day. If you have questions concerning your child's attire, please contact the office prior to sending him/her to school wearing the item or style in question.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL WEARING:

- Shirts or outfits with any writing/emblems/music/celebrities that are offensive or antagonistic to the values and beliefs of FOCCA as determined by the administration
- Halter or "cut-off" tops

- Backless shoes or heels, preschoolers are to wear crocs, gym shoes, sandals, or loafer-style (closed toe & closed heel) every day, velcro is preferred!
- “Pull-ups” (disposable pants which are a transition from diapers to regular underwear)

Guidelines for Girls:

- Dresses*, skirts*, slacks, or jeans may be worn to school.
- Hair should be clean, well-groomed, and kept away from the eyes.
- Sweat suits may be worn to school. They should be clean and tidy.

Guidelines for Boys:

- Clean and neat slacks or jeans may be worn to school.
- Hair should be kept clean, well-groomed, and kept away from the eyes.
- Sweat suits may be worn to school. They should be clean and tidy.
- Nail color is not permitted for boys.

Please keep an extra set of season appropriate clothes at school in case of a spill, accident, etc.

*Girls MUST wear shorts under skirts and dresses

MANDATORY DRESS:

- Girls—dresses, skirts, or pants and tops of own choosing within dress code
- Boys—nice pants and sweaters, button-downs or polos (no t-shirts)

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

1. First Offense: The teacher will contact the parent to inform them of the dress code violation. The teacher will report the violation to the office.
2. Second Offense: A letter will be sent home from the office with your child explaining the dress code violation.
3. Third Offense: The parent will be called and asked to bring proper dress code clothing for their child.

ENTRANCE

Students entering preschool 3 must be three years old by September 1st, entering pre-kindergarten 4 must be four years old by September 1st. Both three and four year old preschoolers must be fully potty trained to be in school.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

The faculty and staff desire to foster creative thinking and playing. We also want to enable positive social interactions among the student body. Therefore, electronic and battery operated equipment such as handheld games, toys, musical equipment, cellular phones, etc, are not permitted at school. This includes the entire school day.

These items are to be considered the parent’s responsibility and should remain at home. Any electronic items found at school will be confiscated, and it is the parent’s responsibility to claim the item in the school’s office.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Families of Faith Christian Academy will remain open unless hazardous road or other emergency conditions (including utility problems, electricity, or natural gas outages) necessitate a closing. A decision to close will

normally be made (but is not required to be) by 5:30 AM and will be based upon weather reports, police reports, and administrative inspections of major highways. A text alert and email will be sent to all parents if school is canceled, delayed, or closing early due to weather or a general safety concern or precaution (as in the case of the smell of natural gas). We also will update our social media pages with school closing details. Please keep your personal information updated with the school office, especially your phone number and email address.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Several practice drills will be held each year for fire, tornado, and terrorist threats. Appropriate signs are posted in each classroom. Once the alarm has sounded, students will be escorted to the appropriate location and attendance will be taken. Teachers are trained in each of the emergency plans and keeping your child safe and calm is their highest priority in those circumstances.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

We provide before and after school care as a convenience for parents for an additional fee. Operation is contingent upon enrollment. Before school care hours are from 7:00 to 8:15 AM; after school care hours are from 3:25 to 5:30 PM. For more details, contact the school office.

EXTENDED CARE

If your student is only here until 11:30, you may put them in extended care for a day, week, month or year as long as there is room available in the program. There is a fee and a form to fill out. 24 hour notice is requested.

FINANCES

All tuition and fees are paid through the FACTS System. Accounts with FACTS will be created for each family at the time of registration. The FACTS processing fee is paid directly to FACTS at the beginning of the school year. Please note that registration and FACTS payment fees are nonrefundable.

Parents who are delinquent with regard to educational expenses for their student(s) at any grade level face the probability of student suspension until the deficit is removed. FOECA reserves the right to dismiss a student from school or take other appropriate action until all tuition and fees have been paid.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

A Medical Release and Emergency Card must be signed by a parent/guardian and be kept on file in the office for each student. You must update the card if any information changes.

FOECA's policy regarding these conditions:

1. Chicken Pox: All the chicken pox must have a dry scab and no new pox must have appeared for the last 3 or 4 days.
2. Pinkeye: Eyes must be clear (no redness or secretion) or bring a doctor's note verifying that the child may return to school.
3. Ringworm: The child must be using a doctor-prescribed medication and a Band-Aid must cover the ring.
4. Strep Throat: We must have a doctor's note or the child must be on an antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours.
5. Lice: When a case of head lice is found in the school, all students in the class will be inspected. If another student in the class is found with head lice, a note will be sent home from the office. Protocol requires that

students be excluded from school for 24 hours following treatment, and that proof of treatment is provided to the school (in the form of the box label, a receipt from a lice-removal shampoo or a doctor's note). Once your child has returned to school, they will be checked by school staff to ensure that they are free of lice. Siblings of the affected student will be checked by school staff, as well. It is important to follow the instructions on the box and perform a second lice treatment 7-10 days following the initial treatment. The school staff will follow up with you to ensure that the follow-up treatment has been performed. There are many sites on the internet that are informational on the subject, such as webmd.com or nixlice.com.

6. Fever: Once the office has determined a child has a fever (defined by a temperature of 100.4 or above), he must be picked up within 30 minutes and may not return to school until he has been fever-free for 24 hours. This will aid in preventing sickness among the other children.

7. If a child is vomiting or has diarrhea, even though they may not have a temperature, the parent will be required to pick up the child within 30 minutes of our call. Also, if a child has been vomiting or has diarrhea during the night, before school, or on the way to school, he needs to stay home that day. The must be free from vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

8. Hand, foot and mouth: No fever for at least 24 hours and blisters are dried up.

- We reserve the right to refuse a child returning to school with any unknown skin rash or other unknown illness until a doctor's note has been obtained.
- Health forms (new or updated) must be turned in by the first day of school.

MEDICATION AND ALLERGIES

Absolutely no medications are administered by teachers or aides in the preschool. The office may dispense medications at the parent's directive.

It is very important that you notify your child's teacher and the office of any allergies that your child has (i.e., milk, bee sting, etc.) All allergies that are of a life threatening nature must be recorded in the office and with the teacher before a child may attend the preschool (see the office staff for more detailed information). Life threatening issues are to be taken very seriously. Food intolerances should also be communicated to the teacher.

INSPECTIONS

The administration reserves the right to search student book bags, desks, or jackets/coats at any time. If materials are found and determined to be offensive or inappropriate, they will be confiscated and the administration or teacher will communicate with the parent. Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken if necessary.

LIBRARY

Preschoolers will visit our FOFCA Library once a week. They are encouraged to check out books suitable to their age group. They have the book checked out for a total of one week. We have wonderful volunteer librarians who will work with them, do special projects, and read books with them!

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found will be maintained near the office. The school assumes no responsibility for lost items. Please make sure all personal items are labeled with your child's name. If your child is missing something, please be sure to check with the office. Lost and Found items will be kept for one month only.

MUSIC PROGRAMS

All preschool children have music as part of their weekly curriculum. The classes produce a program for all parents, grandparents, and friends to attend at Christmas time, Grandparents Day, etc. Information regarding programs is sent home in your child's folder/book bag and again in the weekly calendar. We invite you to attend and support these functions. If your child is sick on the day of a program or has been sent home due to sickness during that day, he may not participate in the program that evening. All children will be expected to attend and behave properly at these functions.

NEWSLETTER / REGULAR COMMUNICATION

A monthly calendar/newsletter is emailed from the office which has the events for the upcoming month. Your teacher will also send home periodic updates to share information about some of the upcoming events.

ORIENTATION

Parent orientation is required for parents of both new and returning students. Important policy and procedural changes will be discussed. Parents who do not attend should make arrangements with the office to sign all necessary forms prior to the start of school.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will be held twice each year. Conference dates are printed on the school calendar. Parents may request conferences with any of their student's teachers. All conferences are by pre-arranged appointments. Please contact the office if you must change or, due to an emergency, cannot keep your appointment. If deemed necessary, a conference at times other than Parent/Teacher Conference Week can be scheduled with the teacher. We request that you do not bring the child or any siblings to the conference. Please make appropriate child care arrangements.

PARTIES/ACTIVITIES

The preschool will have scheduled parties during the school year such as for Christmas and Valentine's Day. Teachers may plan other parties as well. Please note that we do not acknowledge or celebrate Halloween.

Birthdays: If you wish, you may send treats on your child's birthday for the children in the classroom. Please make arrangements for this with your child's teacher. If you prefer, you may donate a book, puzzle, or game as a birthday treat to your child's class in lieu of a snack. Gifts given in this way are marked with the child's name and birthday. Please note: If your child is having a birthday party at home, please do not send the invitations to school unless you are inviting the entire class. This causes problems when some children are not invited. Please mail or digitally deliver the invitations instead.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND YEARBOOKS

School photographs are taken each year in the fall and are available for purchase. Details will be sent home from the office prior to the day pictures are taken.

Yearbooks may be ordered in the spring. These albums highlight the events of the school year and are a very special way to preserve pre-school memories. If for some reason a child leaves FOFCA during the school year, but still wishes to receive a yearbook, please leave money in the office for the yearbook and postage.

Occasionally pictures are taken that are so special we would like to use them in our school brochures or on the website. We request that each child have a signed consent/denial form on file for aid in choosing photos to use. This form is a part of the parent contract.

PLAYGROUND/GYM

Recess is scheduled on a regular basis for each class, with the teacher supervising playtime. The children will be required to follow rules for the safety of all children.

We do enjoy playing out in most seasons, but will stay in when it is very cold or raining/muddy. Please dress your children appropriately. In winter and chillier months, your child will need: boots, coats, gloves, hats etc. In the summer and warmer months, do NOT put your children in flip flops or sandals with open backs or toes. Gym shoes or socks are required in the gym.

PROGRESS REPORTS

After the second and fourth quarters, you will receive a Report Card for your student. After the first and third quarters, you will receive a Progress Report and comments on your child.

RETENTION POLICY

At the end of the school year, a determination must be made regarding a student's progress. Retention may be recommended or required based upon a child's development and classroom performance. A principal's recommendation, teacher's recommendation, overall classroom performance, academic analysis, input from outside of FOECA, and/or parental input may all be used to help in making a retention recommendation or decision.

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS

Any persons other than students, staff, faculty, administration, or board members are considered visitors on campus and must come directly to the office for clearance before going anywhere in the building. Parents are welcome to visit, but we request that you discuss this with the teacher or administrator beforehand. You must stop at the office to receive a visitor's pass.

Parents are required to fulfill a 7-hour per child volunteer commitment to FOECA. Any hours not fulfilled will be billed at \$10 per hour.

When volunteering, we appreciate your full attention. Having a young child present seriously limits the volunteer's ability to serve and can put our students' safety at risk. Please arrange care for your younger children. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

WITHDRAWALS

All withdrawals must be made by completing the *Withdrawal Form* which is available in the school office. All accounts (tuition, before/after care, fees, etc.) must be paid in full before official records or report cards will be released. We hire teachers based upon enrollment and have entered into a contract with them.

Withdrawing your student(s) does not automatically guarantee a stop of tuition payments. As a portion of the withdrawal form, you must formally request a stop of your FACTS account with a letter submitted to FOECA administration which is subject to approval. If your request is approved, tuition is due for the full month

regardless of the day of the month the student withdraws from FOFCA. A \$500.00 withdrawal fee will be assessed for the breaking of the contract.