



Dear Parents:

Welcome to the St. Aidan's community where, as our song says, we are downright, upright, inright, outright, happy all the time! St. Aidan's has been helping children grow socially, emotionally, and cognitively since 1965. Our philosophy is that children learn through play, and our goal at St. Aidan's is to provide a safe, supportive environment in which children can play, learn, and grow at their own pace.

This Family Handbook is intended as a reference guide to the policies and programs of St. Aidan's. Our staff is here to help you in any way we can as we jointly nurture your child's development and education in a safe environment. If you have any questions, please see your child's teacher or stop by my office. You may also contact me by phone, 703-360-4160, or by email, staidansschool@verizon.net.

Thank you for entrusting your child's development to our loving care.

Suzanne Odom
Director

St. Aidan's

St. Aidan's Episcopal Day School is a coed, ecumenical school that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policy, financial aid and other school programs. The Code of Virginia, section 63.2-1716 allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the religious exemption law. Certain statements included in this handbook have been prepared and distributed, in part, to meet the requirements of the religious exemption law.

Physical Description

St. Aidan's Day School is located on approximately 8 acres of land that includes a church and parish hall. The Day School is a discrete two-story building. It includes a kitchen that is available for use. The building has eight classrooms and a library. The large, tree-filled playground is fenced and includes swings, a slide, climbing structures, a large wooden playhouse, a tricycle path and two sandboxes. There is a nature trail located outside the playground area.

St. Aidan's Day School Board

The St. Aidan's Day School Board provides management and oversight of the Day School. The Board includes the Rector of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, parishioners of the Church, parents of current Day School students, and a teacher representative. The Director provides advice to the Board as it carries out its responsibilities.

Enrollment

The Day School offers the following classes: 2-day Two Year-Olds, 2-day Three Year-Olds, 3-day Three Year-Olds, 3-day Four Year-Olds, 5-day Four Year-Olds, Young Fives, and Kindergarten. The maximum number of children to be present on any one day is 99.

Teachers

Day School lead teachers have a 4-year college degree in a variety of fields, and lots of experience and training in early childhood education. Each classroom includes an assistant teacher. Teachers are selected based on their ability to relate to young children as well as an interest in early childhood development. All staff members are caring teachers who love spending time with children and want to help the children of our community.

All staff members are certified annually to be free from any physical disability that would prevent them from caring for children. Staff is evaluated for tuberculosis exposure every 2 years. Documentation is on file at the school. The staff is trained in First Aid, CPR, and child abuse awareness, including the Episcopal Church program “Safe Church.” Each year, staff members are required to undergo 8 hours of continuing education in the field of early childhood education.

School Days and Closures

A usual school day at St. Aidan’s is from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Students may arrive as early as 8:55 AM. If you arrive prior to 8:55 AM, please escort your child to the library and wait with them there. Curbside drop-off service is available beginning at 8:55 AM each morning.

Most classes dismiss from the church’s covered breezeway at 12:00. Two-year old students are picked up in their classrooms at 11:45 AM. Kindergarten class has an extended day on Tuesday and Thursday, when children bring a bag lunch and are dismissed at 1:00 PM.

St. Aidan’s policy for closing during inclement weather or an emergency is as follows:

Fairfax County

Open 2 hours late

Closed

Close 2 hours early

St. Aidan’s

Open 1 hour late, close at noon

Closed

Close at noon, late kindergarten and after school activities are cancelled

As a general rule St. Aidan’s does not make up lost snow days. Parents will be notified in advance if the Day School Board determines to make an exception to this rule. In the event of an unforeseen emergency before, during, or after school hours, you will be notified by one of your child’s teachers.

Curriculum

St. Aidan’s provides a safe and loving environment for children to grow and develop at their individual pace, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically. The preschool program goals are based on the Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence. The preschool level Handwriting Without Tears program is used to introduce handwriting. The Kindergarten curriculum

follows the Fairfax County Program of Studies, Virginia Standards of Learning, and also the Core Knowledge Kindergarten curriculum.

In addition to lots of singing and movement in the classroom, children enjoy a school-wide music class together on Mondays. Each Wednesday, children attend chapel to sing songs, hear simple bible stories, and recognize birthdays being celebrated during the week. Two classes at a time meet weekly for a Movement program at the end of the week that emphasizes coordination, balance, rhythm, and just having fun. Several school-wide celebrations are held each year, including a Halloween Parade and Songfest, Christmas Concert, and End-of-the-Year Songfest. Field trips also are a part of the St. Aidan's experience.

St. Aidan's Library

St. Aidan's has its own library and librarian. There is a graduated library program offered for the different age groups. Kindergarten and Young Fives have weekly library time and check out books on their own to take home. Four year-old classes have a weekly story time. Three year-old classes have a monthly story time starting in January. Parents are welcome to come to the library before or after school to read stories with their children or check out books. Books on parenting and early childhood are also available for checkout. Our book collection is constantly growing, and teachers rotate books in and out of the classrooms.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences to discuss your child's development are held in November for children attending a 3-day program (Mon/Wed/Fri), a 5-day program, or Kindergarten. Students do not attend school on November Conference Days but childcare is available while you attend your conference. Conferences may also be held anytime during the year at the request of either a parent or teacher. For children attending a 2-day program (Tues/Thurs), conferences to discuss your child's development are held during school time in January. Conferences may also be held at that time for 3-day, 5-day, or Kindergarten students to discuss progress on issues brought up in a November conference. Parents are encouraged to "touch base" informally with teachers as they are planning and registering for the following academic year.

Extended Day

St. Aidan's offers an extended day program 3 days a week. "Lunch Bunch" is a time for free play and developing new friendships in a supervised

setting. Children are eligible to stay for Lunch Bunch beginning the first day of the month in which they turn 4. All children have the option of staying until 1 PM or 2 PM.

Advance Lunch Bunch Reservation forms are distributed periodically. Families can sign up by returning the Lunch Bunch signup form to the Director's office with their payment. Advance reservations are encouraged to allow planning for adequate teacher coverage. If you have not signed up in advance you may check with the Director's office to see if "drop-in" space is available at a slightly higher cost.

If a child is sick on his or her Lunch Bunch day, every effort will be made to reschedule without charge. If a child decides not to stay or a parent forgets, there is no refund.

Parents are asked to pick up their child promptly. Late pickups are subject to a \$10 late fee. Persistently late pickups may result in forfeiture of future participation.

Health and Safety

The primary concern at St. Aidan's is the health and safety of every child. Sick children do not benefit from a day at school and may unintentionally spread illness to another family. Be considerate and keep a child home if he or she has any of the following symptoms: fever within the past 24 hours, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting. Children with bad colds may not feel up to a full morning of activities at school. If a child is sick, please notify the school and identify any diagnosed illness. This will help track the spread of any illness and allow teachers to notify parents to be watchful for symptoms when a contagious illness such as strep throat, Fifth Disease, or a stomach virus is present.

If a child becomes ill at school, a parent will be notified immediately. If an injury such as a skinned knee or bumped head occurs at school, the teacher may call, email, or speak to you at dismissal. An Accident Report may be sent home for your signature, if we determine that it is necessary. Please sign the report and return it to school the following day. If children are exposed to a communicable disease at school, parents will be notified by note or email.

Teachers should be informed before the school year begins about any allergies or medical conditions. If a child has a severe allergy requiring use of an epi-pen, the school must have a Written Medical Consent Form signed by the child's physician on file in the office. A Written Medical Consent Form is deemed valid for one calendar year.

For everyone's safety, cell phone use is prohibited on school grounds when dropping off or picking up children. If picking up in the carpool line, please display a sign with the name(s) of any child being picked up. A sign is provided at the beginning of the year. This expedites dismissal. It is a very important safety rule that drivers stay in their car while teachers help children into the passenger side of their car. Drivers should then proceed into the parking lot to buckle children into a car seat.

Playground time occurs every day. Children should come to school dressed in clothing and shoes intended for active play. Crocs and flip-flops are not appropriate shoes for active play, as they can be treacherous on climbing structures, causing a child to lose their footing. They may also fly off and strike someone else when a child is swinging.

Toys and other items may be brought for special sharing times as indicated by your teacher, but guns, war toys, or other toys of destruction are not allowed at St. Aidan's. Pets are also not allowed at St. Aidan's as some children can be quite fearful or allergic. Special arrangements with the Director or your child's teacher should be made before bringing a live animal to school.

Lastly, abuse and neglect are concerns for all of us. Please be aware Day School staff are mandated by law to report any suspected case to Child Protective Services.

Snacks

Students are served a simple mid-morning snack. Parents are invited to send other snacks to be shared by their child's class for any reason, including celebrating birthdays and holidays. Some classrooms may have special restrictions because of food allergies, and teacher lesson plans may already include snack preparation, so it is important to coordinate in advance with your child's teacher before sending in snacks.

Birthdays

At chapel each Wednesday at 9:30 AM, the school sings “Happy Birthday” to children celebrating a birthday during the week. Parents and siblings are invited to attend. Children often bring a special snack on their big day (coordinated in advance with the teacher.) Birthday party invitations should not be sent to school because they can be lost or misplaced, leading to hurt feelings on both parties.

Discipline

We help children find acceptable ways to express their anger, negotiate to get what they want or need, and handle aggression directed toward them by peers. Positive intervention is our main source of discipline. When necessary, a child may be given an appropriate Time Out away from other children in order to have some time to regain self-control.

If at any time a child expresses overly or dangerously aggressive behavior, parents may be called to pick up the child. Repeated instances of aggression towards other children or adults will not be tolerated, and children who engage in such behavior may be asked to find a different school setting better able to meet their needs.

Opportunities for Parent Involvement

St. Aidan’s is a wonderful community of families. All parents are encouraged to get involved at the school. There are lots of opportunities for involvement to fit all schedules and interests. Teachers seek Room Parents who coordinate with other classrooms on certain school-wide activities during the year. Teachers also seek parents to volunteer to bring in party snacks or to drive and chaperone on field trips. If interested in reading a story or talking to a class about an area of expertise, parents may schedule a visit with the teacher. Parents who enjoy spending time with children and are interested in occasionally substituting in a classroom other than their own child’s should contact the Director. The Parents Committee also needs parent volunteers to help with evening, weekend, and fundraising events.

Parents Committee

The St. Aidan’s Day School Parents Committee sponsors family-oriented activities like Santa’s Breakfast, Family Fun Night, St. Aidan’s Olympics, the Scholastic Book Fair, Kinderfest at the Church’s Oktoberfest, a Holiday Marketplace, and the annual Ice Cream Social and Art Show. The Parents Committee also fundraises to provide financial assistance to the school.

Fundraisers may include cookie dough sales, spirit wear sales and Original Art Work sales. All families are encouraged to get involved in the Parents Committee as a way to meet other parents and support the school.

Admission Age Requirements

Age requirements for our programs are as follows:

Two year-old program	2 years old by August 31
Three year-old program ¹	3 years old by December 31
Four year-old Pre-K program	4 years old by December 31
Young Fives Pre-K ²	5 years old by December 31
Kindergarten	5 years old by September 30

Registration Process

December 1 New Families (those who do not have a child enrolled in the current school year) may call St. Aidan's to be placed on a waiting list for openings for the following school year. There is no charge for being placed on the waiting list.

Mid to late January Registration takes place for Church members on a designated Sunday following morning services. Church members are offered a reduced tuition rate. If Church members register on this date they are guaranteed a spot at the Day School.

On the Monday after church member registration, the Day School will begin accepting Enrollment Applications from current families (those who have a child enrolled in the current school year.) Current families who submit an application by the end of the week are guaranteed a spot at the school for the following year, although not necessarily their first choice class. This guarantee applies to all age groups except 2 year-olds and Kindergarten.

¹ Children are expected to be toilet trained by their 3rd birthday. Teachers are happy to work with parents to help with this process.

² Priority given to children who turn 5 by September 30.

After submitting an application, Church members and current families will be provided Enrollment Contracts offering them a spot at the school. Signed contracts must be returned by the date specified accompanied by a NONREFUNDABLE \$100 Registration Fee. In addition, Kindergarten students are assessed a \$50 Supplemental Kindergarten Activity Fee to help offset the cost of field trips to museums and places like the Kennedy Center, and celebration days throughout the year.

Early February

After Church member and current family registration is completed, the Director will begin contacting new families on the wait list to offer available class spots. New families can then secure a spot by submitting a completed Enrollment Application and Enrollment Contract accompanied by a NONREFUNDABLE \$100 Registration Fee. Children entering the Day School for the first time must also bring an original birth certificate or passport to the office to be copied and placed in the child's file.

May 1

Tuition Payment #1 is due. This payment is NONREFUNDABLE and must be paid by May 10 to secure a spot at the school. This payment is the last step in the registration process.

Enrollment Requirements

Fairfax County requirements are as follows:

1. Proof of Birth – For identification purposes, a copy of each child's birth certificate or passport must be presented at registration for copying and placement in the child's file.
2. Immunization – Each child must be adequately immunized against rubella, measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, polio, chicken pox, and mumps before admission, unless the parent or guardian submits an affidavit that such immunization is contraindicated on accepted medical or religious grounds.

3. Physical Examination – Each child must have a Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form on file **prior** to starting school. NO child will be allowed to stay at school without completion of this form. An updated health form is required every year for preschool programs. A completed health form based on an examination done after September 1st of the prior year will suffice as a valid, updated health form. Forms are available online at <http://www.vahealth.org/childadolescenthealth/> or in the Day School office.

Additional St. Aidan’s Day School requirements are as follows:

Forms – Each child must have the following St. Aidan’s forms completed and submitted to the school by **September 1**:

1. Child Profile Questionnaire
2. Emergency Information Form
3. General Permissions Form
4. Field Trip Drivers Form

Forms can be found online (staidansepiscopal.com/school.php) or obtained from the Director’s office.

Tuition Payment Procedures

Tuition payments are due on or before the first school day each month, beginning in May after Registration, then continuing in September when school begins, and concluding the following April. Please write the child’s name on the check to ensure proper credit. A \$20 late fee will be charged if payment is received after the 10th day of the month. In addition a \$30 re-billing fee will be charged if the outstanding tuition is not received by the first school day of the subsequent month. If tuition is not received for two consecutive calendar months, the student will not be allowed to return to school until all payments are received or payment arrangements have been made with the Day School Director. A \$40 returned check fee is charged each time a check is returned for insufficient funds. Any family suffering financial difficulties should speak to the Director as soon as possible.

Withdrawals and Terminations

Please give at least 30 days notice of withdrawal. Tuition Payment #1, due in May shortly after registration, is nonrefundable. To avoid being billed for Tuition Payment #2, which would be due September 1, a family would need

to give notice of withdrawal by the end of July. To avoid being billed for Tuition Payment #3, due October 1, a family would need to give notice of withdrawal by the end of August.

If a child is kept home temporarily because of illness, family vacation, or other reasons, tuition obligations shall continue. If the school is closed temporarily as a health precaution, because of weather conditions, or for any other reason beyond the control of the school, tuition obligations shall continue for no more than 30 days.

Our goal at St. Aidan's is to meet the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of each student. In the rare case where the Director and the School Board, in consultation with the teacher, determine that the school cannot meet a child's needs, or that the attention required by a child jeopardizes the safety and care of others, the Director may request that a child be withdrawn from the school. Before a withdrawal request will be made, there shall be a minimum of 2 meetings with the parents at which the teacher and Director shall be present. If a withdrawal request is made, the liability for tuition ceases on the date of the request.

Insurance

In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, the school is covered by public liability insurance that provides coverage in the event that someone brings suit for personal or bodily harm suffered during the operation of the school as a result of negligence.