



Preschool Parent Handbook



**FRANCONIA REC CENTER
SPRING HILL REC CENTER
STONE MANSION HISTORIC HOUSE**



Welcome to the Fairfax County Park Authority Preschool Program! We look forward to nurturing your children's emotional, social and intellectual growth in a safe and inclusive environment. Studies show preschool children learn best through play; therefore, children are provided with hands-on activities that enhance learning, promote independence and foster a positive self-image. Our program is not affiliated with any religious organizations. Transportation is not provided. The preschool program is fully funded through student tuition. No county tax dollars are used for preschool program operations.

REGISTRATION

Registration fees are non-refundable and payable at time of registration. If a child leaves the program for one month or more and returns the same school year, a new registration fee must be paid.

TUITION

This program is billed monthly, with recurring payments processed on the 1st day of each month, for that month. It is the responsibility of the primary member to ensure the credit card on file is valid. Members can update their credit card information in-person or online. If a payment is missed due to a declined credit card, the member is expected to update their credit card information and make payment as soon as possible. If not paid by the 8th of the month, a late fee of \$25 will be assessed. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, enrollment will be terminated.

REFUNDS

Refunds/credits may be given for medical emergencies with a doctor's verification. No refunds/credits are given for absences due to illness.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

Written notice of at least 30 days is required prior to withdrawing a child from preschool to avoid being charged the following month's tuition. Tuition is not prorated for a partial month.

HOLIDAYS/TEACHER WORKDAYS

Fairfax County Park Authority preschools follow Fairfax County Public Schools schedule for holidays and teacher workdays for the majority of the year. Adjustments may be made to the schedule. Check your site's calendar for the most updated information.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Fairfax County Park Authority preschools follow Fairfax County Government closures in cases of inclement weather. Please refer to the guidelines below to see how your child's preschool will be affected. In unique circumstances or if the county has not made an announcement, the Park Authority may make a separate announcement on its website based on weather conditions.

You can also find the latest information in the following ways:

- Online: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks
- Phone: 703-324-8661
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/fairfaxcountyparks>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyparks>.

Generally:

- If Fairfax County Government is closed all day: preschool is canceled.
- If Fairfax County Government opens late: Morning preschool programs will start at 11 a.m. and end at 1 p.m. and afternoon preschool will run from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise announced.
- If Fairfax County Government closes early: Afternoon preschool is canceled; Morning preschool is not affected.

MAKE-UP DAYS

Fairfax County Park Authority preschool allows five missed school days due to inclement weather before scheduling make-up days. Parents will be notified of make-up class dates, which may include days added to the end of the school year. No refunds/credits are given for holidays, inclement weather closures or illness absence.

SIGNING IN/OUT

A parent/guardian must sign the child in and out each day. Any person picking up a child from this program must provide identification and be listed on the pickup authorization form. Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the pickup authorization form. The authorized parent/guardian may update the form at any time by contacting the staff in person or in writing. If necessary, changes can be made by filling out a new form. Custody issues require special attention.

RELEASING CHILDREN TO NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

Staff members are not permitted to release children to anyone who is not authorized by the custodial parent. If the custodial parent is unwilling to give blanket permission to the non-custodial parent, permission for any granted, specific occasion will be required. A custodial parent denying blanket release **MUST** provide legal documentation regarding custody. Questions? Please contact your site's preschool director.

LATE PICKUP FEES

Parents are expected to pick up their children from preschool on time. There is a grace period of five minute after the program ends. Thereafter, a late fee of \$1 per minute will be applied. If a child is consistently picked up late, the center may choose to terminate the child's enrollment. Children become upset when parents are not on time, so please call the site if you know you will be late. Staff members are never allowed to transport children home, nor are they allowed to accept children before class is scheduled to begin.



POTTY TRAINING

Children age 3 and older must be completely potty trained by the first day of school. Preschool teachers are well aware that accidents may happen, and those instances will be handled in a sensitive manner. Please make sure to send in extra clothes in case a change is needed.

SEPARATION

For some children, preschool is their first separation from their trusted adult, and the experience is often difficult for youngsters. It is important to tell your child that you are leaving and to assure them that you will be back to pick them up after school. For the first few days, you may want to stay in the building near your child's classroom until your child feels comfortable with the environment.

CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS

We strongly encourage you to label all children's belongings. Fairfax County Park Authority and the center staff are not responsible for lost items. Personal belongings should be kept in a bag or backpack which will be stored in the program area. Electronics and other devices should be left at home. Children should come dressed in comfortable play clothes.

FOOD FROM HOME

When it comes to snacks and other foods brought from home, Fairfax County Park Authority encourages healthful choices consistent with USDA guidelines. These include fruits and vegetables, sandwiches, biscuits/muffins, cereal and 100% juice. Please check with the program supervisor for the policy regarding snack refrigeration. If you wish to bring in a special treat for your child's birthday, please make prior arrangements with the teachers. All snacks and lunches brought from home **MUST** be labeled with the child's name and the date each day. Food left at the center will be thrown away at the end of each day.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

If children have difficulty controlling their behavior, staff members will try to redirect the inappropriate behavior by providing positive alternatives. The teacher will talk to the child privately to explain the behavior problem. Children may be directed to an individual activity (i.e., reading, puzzles) if the inappropriate behavior persists. In the event of a continued behavior problem, parents will be notified. Repetitive behavior such as extreme tantrums/crying, kicking, or biting will be reported to the parents immediately. Depending on the severity of the behavior, the child may be dismissed from the program.

SUNSCREEN, BUG SPRAY AND LOTION

Staff members are not permitted to apply sunscreen, repellents or lotions to children. Please apply these items before school.

POOL REGULATIONS

Some Fairfax County Park Authority preschool programs use pools. When children use the pool, they must shower before entering. Street clothes are not permitted in the pool. US Coast Guard approved life vests are permitted in shallow water with direct supervision. Water Wings are not allowed. Masks, snorkels and fins may be used at the guards' discretion, based on the child's ability. Inflatable toys must be approved by the pool manager. Children with skin infections, open wounds, nasal or ear discharge or any communicable disease are not permitted in the pool. Swim diapers are required for any swimmer not potty trained. In the event the pool area is to be evacuated, lifeguard will direct exiting procedures with staff supervision. Children are not permitted in the sauna or spa.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Virginia law mandates government staff, including Park Authority staff, to report any cases of suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to the Youth Services Office and Child Protective Services. Confidentiality will be maintained.

SICK CHILDREN

A child who arrives with symptoms of illness will not be permitted to stay. If your child has a temperature over 100 degrees or shows signs of illness, you will be notified to pick up the child. If your child becomes ill prior to the school day, please notify the site that your child will be absent that day. If a child has vomited or had diarrhea within the previous 24 hours, he/she is not permitted to attend class. By enrolling in our preschool, parents must agree to notify the center within 24 hours if any household members develop a reportable communicable disease as defined by the Board of Health. Life-threatening diseases must be reported immediately. The site will notify parents about any communicable disease outbreaks. Please note, there are no refunds or credits for missed days due to illness.

HEAD LICE

The symptoms of head lice include severe itching and scratching on the head and/or visible live lice or eggs (nits). Eggs of head lice attach to hairs as small, round gray lumps. If you suspect your child has head lice, contact your child's teacher immediately. Treatment includes special shampoo to kill lice and combing to remove nits. Children may return to school only after thorough treatment and removal of lice and nits. Multiple treatments might be necessary.

MEDICATION

We strongly suggest medications be given at home whenever possible. If your child requires medication at school, you must submit the Medication Authorization Form, and medications to be taken or kept 10 days or longer require a physician's signature on the form. You can obtain this form from the preschool staff. All medication including EpiPens and inhalers must be in the original box with the child's name and date issued and the appropriate signatures.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers will send home a school year calendar schedule. You may also receive monthly information or calendars. The teachers will communicate how snacks will be assigned or if children should bring their own. Parent/Teacher conferences are held on mid-year Fairfax County teacher workdays; however, informal conferences are available upon request throughout the school year. Parents are also welcome to visit or observe the program in progress at anytime. It is often helpful to let the teachers know when you are coming and who you will be bringing. Volunteers are always welcome after they have supplied proof of negative TB test results to the program director.

LICENSING INFORMATION

Fairfax County Park Authority preschools are licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services. Standards for licensed programs address certain issues such as health precautions, play space, staff-child ratios, program guidelines, recordkeeping and building codes. Compliance with standards is determined by periodic visits to the site by a licensing agent. A birth certificate or passport is required to be shown upon enrollment. For more information contact the Fairfax Licensing Office, 3701 Pender Dr., Suite 125, Fairfax, Va. 22030.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION & IMMUNIZATION RECORD

An immunization record and a completed physical examination form signed by a physician are required prior to a child's admittance. Records for children age 5 and younger must be dated within one year of enrollment and updated as new immunizations are received.





EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency or facility closure, staff will notify parents by phone and/or email as soon as possible and provide information about picking up children early. Preschool staff will stay with the children until the last child is picked up. Contact the center manager to review the facility Emergency Preparedness Plan. Monthly evacuation and biannual shelter-in-place drills are conducted for the children's safety. Parents will be notified immediately if a child is lost, requires emergency medical treatment or sustains a serious injury. Minor injuries will be communicated to parents at pick-up.

LINES OF AUTHORITY

You may address any questions, suggestions or concerns to your child's preschool teacher, the program director, the center manager and/or the Youth Services Manager at Fairfax County Park Authority headquarters. This is the staff chain of command. This parent handbook serves as a guide. When new instances occur where policies need to be created or updated, the program reserves the right to do so. These policy updates will be made with the collaboration of site staff and the Youth Services Section Manager. Updated policies will be sent to program participants and the handbook will be updated as needed.

PHONE NUMBERS

Franconia Rec Center:	703-922-9841	Stone Mansion Historic House:
Spring Hill Rec Center:	703-827-0989	571-347-8340
Youth Services Manager:	703-324-8571	



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FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

To request reasonable ADA accommodations
call 703-324-8727 • TTY: Va. Relay 711

