



PARENT HANDBOOK

7000 Arlington Boulevard or 3022 Woodlawn Ave

Falls Church, Virginia 22042

571-282-3124 or 703-237-0312

e-mail: info@buildingblocksdayschool.com or info@bbdschool.com

"The foundation of the future begins here!"

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ABOUT BUILDING BLOCKS DAY SCHOOL:

Building Blocks Day School was founded by educator with years of experience working with young children. Mabel Espinoza founded New Building Blocks Preschool, LLC in July, 2006 after the space became available for lease in Iglesia de Santa Maria Church. Building Blocks Day School opened on October 15, 2007. In April of 2018, Ms. Mabel opened her second Building Blocks campus at 3022 Woodlawn Avenue, Falls Church, VA 22042, just two blocks away from the original location on the ground level of Holy trinity Lutheran Church.

Building Blocks Day School offers a quality full day program within a school environment. Our focus is on the development of the “whole child” through offering experiences to foster the social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs of children. Our mission is to combine the very best child care and early learning experiences within a loving environment. We follow the philosophy of a developmental program and respect that children learn through playful, enjoyable, meaningful and enriching experiences.

Language development flourishes in the early years. We incorporate English, Spanish Immersion and American Sign Language exposure and experiences.

LICENSING:

Building Blocks Day School is licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a “Child Day Center” in accordance with the codes set forth by the Code of Virginia, Title 63.2.

AGES OF CHILDREN:

Our program serves children 3 months to 5 years of age. Building Blocks I serves children from 2 years old to 5, and Building Blocks II has an infant program and is able to accommodate children from 3 months old to 5 years.

DAYS & HOURS:

Our hours are from 7:30 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Most children attend five days.

We have an open-door policy for custodial parents to visit the school throughout the day.

CURRICULUM:

Building Blocks Day School follows a developmental approach to curriculum. Developmental appropriateness encompasses (1) age appropriateness – knowledge of typical developmental stages and (2) individual appropriateness – seeing each child as an individual.

In the book *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8*, the National Association for the Education of Young Children states: “A developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children is planned to be appropriate for the age span of the children within the group and is implemented with attention to the different needs, interests, and developmental levels of those individual children.” This approach to curriculum is further outlined whereas:

- A. Developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, and cognitive through an integrated approach.
- B. Appropriate curriculum planning is based on teachers' observations and recordings of each child's special interests and developmental progress.
- C. Curriculum planning emphasizes learning as an interactive process. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials.
- D. Learning activities and materials should be concrete, real, and relevant to the lives of young children.
- E. Programs provide for a wider range of developmental interests and abilities than the chronological age range of the group would suggest.
- F. Teachers provide a variety of activities and materials: teachers increase the difficulty, complexity, and challenge of an activity as children are involved with it and as children develop understanding and skills.

Typical activities include stories, songs, finger-plays, art activities, fine and gross motor experiences, sensory experiences and language enrichment. Academic skills are integrated into the curriculum at levels appropriate for each age group and each child. Children learn through play and hands-on activities. Learning experiences are enjoyable and relevant to the child's world. Some of the materials children have access to include:

- Blocks and building sets
- Sensory table with water, rice, sand, dirt, etc...
- Play-doh or clay
- Paint (finger paint, easel painting, and water colors)
- Housekeeping and dramatic play
- Puzzles and other manipulatives for developing small motor skills and eye-hand coordination
- Counting, sorting, and graphing games and activities
- Science exploration
- Books, puppets and flannel board stories
- Art materials (both open-ended and directed art projects will be planned)
- Computers (for 4 & 5 year olds)

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION & HOLIDAYS:

Building Blocks Day School and Building Blocks II are both located in church settings but are not directly affiliated with the church. We are a Christian based program, not affiliated with any one religion. The children say grace before meals, talk about prayer and thanksgiving, are read age-appropriate Bible stories and sing songs of faith.

Holidays are celebrated through both secular and religious activities, songs and stories. We invite you to share a tradition or story with your child's class. If you would like more information on how or what specific holidays are celebrated, please do not hesitate to ask us!

SCHOOL CALENDAR:

We are a year-round (12 month) program. We are closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, January 1
Inauguration Day
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
Presidents' Day (Teacher Staff Development)
Memorial Day
Independence Day, July 4
Labor Day
Indigenous People's Day (Teacher Staff Development Day)
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Break (Thursday & Friday)
Christmas Break (between Christmas and New Year's Eve)

Easter Break (Holy Week - the week before Easter) no tuition is charged for this week

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN:

Parents are responsible for transporting or arranging the transportation of their children to and from the facility. There is a small parking lot by the playground and a large parking lot next to the church.

Arrival: Parents should use the designated entry door on the side of the church, by the playground. Children should be accompanied to the classroom by their parents or guardians. The parent or person bringing the child to school must **SIGN IN** before leaving the child with the teacher.

Pickup: Children should be picked by 6:00 p.m. Children MUST be **SIGN OUT** by a parent/guardian or person designated by the parent on the **Pick-Up Permission** form before leaving. Once a child is signed out, it is the receiving adult's responsibility to monitor the child in the building and on the grounds. If someone other than yourself (or regular pickup person) is to come for your child, you must inform the administrator or director of the school in writing. We will not release your child to someone without your permission.

Late pickup fee: If you pick your child up from school after 6:00 p.m., you will be assessed a late charge of **\$5.00**. For every minute after 6:05 p.m. an additional \$1.00 per minute will be charged. In case of emergency or unavoidable delay, **please call the school**. If we have not heard from you by 6:30 p.m. we will begin calling the contacts you have listed on your emergency contact list. If we cannot reach anyone to pick up your child by 7:00 p.m., the Fairfax County Police will be notified.

WHAT TO BRING & APPROPRIATE DRESS:

Diapers: If your child is not potty trained, please make sure that you bring 4 disposable diapers daily or a whole package. (labeled with your child's name).

Change of Clothing: Please bring a complete change of clothing to be kept at the school. This includes underwear, pants, shirt, and socks. If your child has an extra pair of shoes, you may wish to include them. Please label all clothing with your child's name. As the weather changes, please replace the extra clothes with ones appropriate for the climate.

Sheet & Blanket: Each child has his/her own assigned cot. BBDS sales the cot linens (cot sheet and small blanket). Linens will be sent home each Friday to be washed and returned on Monday.

Appropriate dress: Please dress your child appropriately for school and for the weather. Very fancy dresses, non-washable clothing, and dress shoes are not appropriate for school. Please make sure that your child is wearing closed toes shoes and is not wearing flip flops if possible. Water shoes will be requested by your children's teachers during water play days in the summer. Your child may spill paint, drip food, or get dirty on the playground. Please dress your child in play clothes and rubber-soled, closed toe shoes. Warm coats, hats, and gloves are necessary in cold weather. We go outside to play every day, unless it is extremely cold, raining, snowing or icy.

****TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE:***

- 7:30 - 9:00 Children arrive (free-play and individual time)
- 9:00 - 9:20 Circle Time (songs, calendar, weather and daily overview)
- 9:20 – 10:20 Educational games and activities (language, science, art, etc.)
- 10:20 – 10:30 Toileting/Wash Hands
- 10:30 - 10:45 Morning Snack
- 10:45 - 11:30 Playground or other gross-motor games or activities
- 11:30 - 11:45 Toileting/Wash Hands
- 11:45 - 12:00 Story Time
- 12:00 - 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 - 12:45 Wash Hands/Brush Teeth
- 12:45 - 2:45 Nap/Rest Time
- 2:45 - 3:00 Toileting/Wash Hands
- 3:00 - 3:15 Afternoon Snack
- 3:15 - 3:45 Language Instruction or Daily Review
- 3:45 - 4:45 Playground or Movement Activities
- 4:45 - 5:30 Centers, Manipulatives, Games, Free Choice Time
- 5:30 - 6:00 Clean Up; Books and Puzzles

*This depicts a typical schedule, but varies according to the different age groups and activities.

In very hot, rainy, snowy, or extremely cold weather, children will not go out on the playground. We do have indoor play equipment and a multi-purpose room for gross motor play on inclement days.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

Building Blocks Day School follows **Falls Church City Public Schools** for school delays and closures. For example:

If Falls Church City Public Schools are closed, we are closed. In rare situations may choose to open even if the school district is closed. Parents should monitor Falls Church City school closures for closures and delays. In the event Falls Church City is closed then Building Blocks **will be closed** and when Falls Church City has a delayed opening, we will open **at 9:00 am**. In the cases where we decide to open when Falls Church City has closed the schools, we will communicate that to parents through an email and by leaving a message at the following number: **571-282-3124**

If it is threatening to snow and/or begins snowing during the school day and Falls Church City Public Schools announce early dismissal, we will abide by the early closure. Please monitor announcements and be prepared to pick up early if Falls Church City Public Schools announce early release for weather-related conditions.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

When a child displays behavior that is inappropriate, the staff will use the following strategies:

- redirection (substituting a positive behavior for a negative one)
- distraction (change the focus of the activity)
- communication (help the child express wants and needs, explain appropriate behavior)
- removal from the area or the classroom if necessary, for safety or for the child to calm down to re-enter the group

Building Blocks Day School prohibits the use of corporal or shaming methods of punishment. Children will not be subjected to rough handling or forcing. Food will not to be used as a means of reward or punishment.

If a child has a continued behavior problem (which may include biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, etc.), a meeting will be held with the director, teacher and parents to develop a behavior management plan in which the parents and the school will work together to help the child correct the inappropriate behavior. ***Building Blocks Day School*** reserves the right to give parents notice to remove their child from our program if we are unable to meet a child's individual needs.

CHILD ABUSE:

Building Blocks Day School teachers and staff shall and **must** report any suspected incidence of child abuse. This is in accordance with Virginia code 632-1509.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS:

We will send periodic newsletters and announcements to parents via e-mail. Please let us know if your e-mail addresses changes or if you want hard copies of school communications. Important notices will be posted near the classroom doors and on the bulletin board. Teachers will send home a monthly overview of the themes and activities.

Twice a year, you will receive a written Developmental Review concerning your child. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in February and September. However, you may request a conference at any time. To request a conference with your child's teacher or discuss a concern, please call the school office at 571-282-3124 or e-mail: mespinoza@buildingblocksdayschool.com

STUDENT HEALTH POLICY:

Your child must be kept home if he exhibits any of the following symptoms **within 24 hours of a school day: fever over 100 degrees F; diarrhea; vomiting; persistent coughing** (except when due to allergy); **undiagnosed or contagious skin rashes or sores; continuous nasal discharge; eye redness or discharge** (except when due to allergy); **persistent itching or scratching; unusually lethargic; or has nits or hair lice present.**

If your child becomes ill or exhibits any of the above symptoms while at school, we will do all we can do to make him comfortable until you can come to pick him up. If we cannot reach you, we will call the next number on your emergency contact list. It is very important for you to keep this list up to date. Please let us know of any changes in phone numbers for you or your emergency contacts. Also, let us know if you will be at a number different than those you have provided.

You will be asked to update your child's physical exam and immunizations annually. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in termination of services. If you are religiously exempt from immunizing your children, you must submit written documentation.

MEDICATION POLICY:

Medication is only administered by staff certified in Medication Administration Training. All administered medication will be recorded by staff in the Medication Log in the office.

Over-the-Counter

Minimum standards for licensed child care centers require that no medication, including non-prescription drugs such as Tylenol and Benadryl, be given **ONLY** with the parent's or guardian's written authorization and be consistent with the manufacturer's instructions for age, duration and dosage. You must fill out a Medication Consent Form in the office and leave the medication in its original container, including the package insert, with office staff to be kept in a locked container. Long term use (more than 10 days) of over the counter medications will require a doctor's prescription.

Prescription

Prescription drugs will be given to the child **ONLY** with the parent's or guardian's written authorization and the prescription drug must be in the original container with the pharmacy label and directions intact. Medication must have specific instructions for administration, not "as needed," or "PRN", unless it is an asthma inhaler. Prescription medication label requirements:

- ✓ Child's first and last name
- ✓ Authorized prescriber's name
- ✓ Pharmacy name and telephone number
- ✓ Date prescription was filled
- ✓ Name of medication
- ✓ Route of administration
- ✓ Dosage of the medication
- ✓ How often to give the medication
- ✓ Date the medication is to be discontinued **or** length of time, in days, the medication is to be given. **6**

The written authorization shall expire or be renewed after 10 work days. Long term or emergency use of prescription medication (such as Epi-pens or inhalers) must have written authorization from the child's physician as well as parent authorization.

Diaper Ointment, Sun Screen and Insect Repellent

Diaper ointment, sun screen and insect repellent must be in the original container and labeled with the child's first and last name. A Medication Consent Form must be filled out properly. Diaper Ointment, sunscreen and insect repellent do **not** require a physician's consent. However, they can only be applied in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Sun screen must be hypo-allergenic and contain an SPF of 15 or higher. We will ask for a new completed form and a new bottle/can of sunscreen and insect repellent of your choice at the beginning of every summer.

FOOD POLICY:

We provide a mid-morning snack, hot lunch and afternoon snack. The menu is posted on the bulletin board each month. Please let us know if your child has any dietary restrictions.

Celebrating birthdays: We encourage children to celebrate their birthdays with their class. Please inform your child's teacher before bringing special birthday treats to school. If your child has allergies, please bring cupcakes to keep in the freezer at school for class parties. Label them with your child's name.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Injury to a Child

If a child is injured or ill, and in the opinion of the staff on site at the time, needs emergency treatment, the rescue squad (911) will be called. Parents will then be notified. If a child must be transported to the hospital by ambulance, a staff member will take the Emergency Form containing authorization and will accompany the child to the hospital.

Building Blocks Day School staff is trained in First Aid and CPR to respond in the event of an emergency. For less serious injuries, parents will be notified by phone call or in writing at the end of the day.

Local or National Emergency

In case of a local or national emergency, we have an emergency plan that will be implemented if necessary. This plan covers different kinds of emergencies:

1. **Emergency in which the school needs to be evacuated:** The only time we will evacuate our building will be due to **an unsafe building situation**. If the emergency in the building is at Iglesia de Santa Maria/Building Blocks I, we will evacuate to (1) the church parking lot, or (2) Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Holy Trinity is located at 3022 Woodlawn Avenue (one block west of Iglesia de Santa Maria & Building Blocks). If the emergency is in the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Building Blocks II, we will evacuate to 7000 Arlington Blvd, Iglesia de Santa Maria/Building Blocks I. The phone number for Building Blocks I is: 703-533-9220 and the phone number for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Building Blocks II is 703-532-6617. We will notify you of our location and post the location on the door (if possible). We will keep the children calm, comfortable, and occupied until you arrive. **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Make sure that your emergency information form is kept up to date with current contact numbers, both for you and for your backup contacts. Keep your cell phone on and charged, and try to be accessible so that we can reach you in the event of an emergency.

2. **Shelter-in-place emergency:** When the community is notified that there is an emergency which requires shelter-in-place, we will execute our shelter-in-place plan for the children and staff. We

will keep the children calm, comfortable, and occupied. We will feed the children and take care of their needs. We will listen to the radio and follow emergency instructions given for the community. **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If someone other than yourself or regular pick-up person is coming for your child, be sure to notify the school either by phone or note. We will require picture ID if we are not sure of a person's identity. We will not release a child to anyone who is not authorized by the parent. Make sure that your "Pick Up Permission" contacts are current.

3. Emergency in which a lockdown is required for security reasons due to a situation in the community: All children will be kept inside the school, and all outside doors kept locked. **WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Cooperate with us by not coming to the school until authorities have lifted the lockdown order. Do not call the school, since incoming calls will impede our ability to contact parents. Keep your child's emergency information form up to date.

Things you need to know:

*Our staff is trained in first aid/CPR and dealing with emergencies.

*We have food and emergency supplies.

*We conduct regular fire and emergency drills, as required by the state of VA.

*Shelter-in-place is a short-term measure (minutes or hours, not days) designed to use a facility and its indoor atmosphere to temporarily separate people from a hazardous outdoor environment.

*Useful websites include: www.fccps.org

You may keep informed about emergency situations by listening radio station 1700AM or 103.5 FM.

TUITION AND FEES: *Please see the attached list for current costs.*

Registration Fee: The registration fee \$150.00 is non-refundable.

Annual Art Fee: \$ 150.00 – to be paid at the start of each school year (September)

Deposit: The amount of one week's tuition (\$315.00) deposit is retained. This amount will be credited to your child's last week, providing two weeks' notice of withdrawal is given.

Tuition: Tuition (\$315.00 per week) is due each Friday for the next week. You are welcome to pay monthly if you wish. Please do not send the check to school in your child's lunchbox or backpack! If it is more convenient for you, you may mail your payment to: Building Blocks Day School, 7000 Arlington Boulevard, Falls Church, VA 22042. Invoices will be provided upon request.

Full tuition is due each week even if you have a planned vacation, your child is sick; it is a Federal Holiday, or a weather or emergency closing. If your child is absent for an extended period of time and you have not paid tuition, your child's place may be forfeited. **No tuition is due the week the school is closed for Easter break.**

Tuition refund: If you wish to withdraw your child, we request two weeks' notice. Notice must be given in writing and must include the anticipated last date of attendance. If we do not have a notice of two weeks, you will forfeit your deposit.

We look forward to working with you and your family. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Building Blocks Day School

PARENT HANDBOOK

Child(ren)'s Name(s):

I, _____ acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook
Printed Name
and agree to abide by the policies set forth therein.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Return this page to the office

Thank you