



FAITH ACADEMY

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Our Mission:

At Faith Academy, it is our goal to provide excellent childcare for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. We are committed to provide opportunities for learning and spiritual growth in a safe, God-honoring atmosphere. We will provide a place to meet the emotional, physical, social and intellectual developmental needs of each individual child. We are a PLAY-BASED, PRAYER LED and PROTECTED early childhood education center.

Our Values:

We value every child regardless of their background, behavior, or life situation. It is our desire to help every child reach his/her full potential in life by providing cognitive, physical, emotional, social and spiritual learning environments.

At Faith Academy, we treat children with the dignity and respect they deserve as human beings, help give them attention, affection and care by teaching, guiding, and modeling for each child in a loving way.

We believe all children can learn. We believe children learn best through relevant, active, play-based learning experiences. We value the importance of creative expression within safe guidelines.

At Faith Academy, we provide a variety of hands-on learning experiences to foster each child's development. We encourage children to investigate, discover and inquire about their surroundings.

We believe parents hold the sacred responsibility for raising children to honor the Lord, His creation, His Word, and others. Faith Academy seeks to partner with, not replace, parents to help grow their children into the people God created them to be.

We believe the greatest influence in the life of a child is the example that others set before him/her. We believe the character of our staff and attitude of Faith Academy needs to be positive, dependable, and morally excellent.

At Faith Academy, we strive to maintain a spirit of excellence in our facilities, curriculum and staff. We will always remain open-minded to suggestions on how we can improve the quality of our care.

In accordance with the National Association of the Education of Young Children, at Faith Academy we strive to:

- *Work in partnership with families, establishing and maintaining regular, ongoing, two-way communication

- *Share information with families about classroom rules, expectations, and routines not only at enrollment but also as needed throughout the year.

- *Foster children's emotional well-being by demonstrating respect for children and creating a positive emotional climate as reflected in behaviors such as frequent social conversations, joint laughter, and affection.

- *Encourage children's appropriate expression of emotions, both positive (e.g., joy, pleasure, excitement) and negative (e.g., anger, frustration, sadness).

- *Anticipate and take steps to prevent potential behavior problems.

- *Promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children.

- *Help individual children learn socially appropriate behavior by providing guidance that is consistent with the child's level of development.

- *Modify strategies and materials to enhance children's learning.

- *Provide varied opportunities to develop skills for entering into social groups, developing friendships, learning to help, and other pro-social behavior.

- *Use materials that encourage children to discuss scientific, mathematical, artistic, language and Bible concepts in everyday conversation.

- *Encourage families to raise concerns and work collaboratively with them to find mutually satisfying solutions that teachers can then incorporate into classroom practice.

Licensure:

Faith Academy Early Childhood Center has passed inspections by the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services to operate as a license-exempt childcare center as an auxiliary enterprise of Faith Church St. Louis. Many of the Academy's policies and procedures stem from these standards, which are designed to protect and provide a safe environment for children. Faith Academy is a non-profit organization

owned and operated by Faith Church St. Louis. The Board President and Co-Pastor is Nicole Crank, 13001 Gravois Road, Sunset Hills, MO 63127, (314) 635-2000. The Director at Sunset Hills is Jasmine Potter, (314) 635-2111; the Director at Earth City is Latoya Black, (314) 635-2152 and the Director at Weldon Spring is Kristin Skebo, (314) 635-2103.

Nondiscriminatory Policy:

Faith Academy Early Childhood Education Center, Inc. admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

Locations:

Faith Academy has two locations: 3590 Rider Trail, Earth City, MO; 13001 Gravois Rd., Sunset Hills, MO and 300 Siedentop Road, Weldon Spring, MO 63304. Each location features 6 classrooms, an outdoor playground and a full kitchen.

Curriculum:

Students ages 2 and up will experience phonics-based preschool curriculum and all ages will experience our own Letter-of-the-Week curriculum which includes a Bible story of the week.

The curriculum is designed to:

- *develop safe and healthy habits in young children
- *foster positive self-esteem
- *provide opportunities for creative expression
- *support the development of social skills such as sharing, cooperation, generosity and empathy
- *stimulate cognitive problem-solving skills with emphasis on language, numbers, shapes, colors, patterning, cause and effect, ordering.
- *strengthen communication skills necessary for listening, reading, writing, and speaking
- *enhance fine motor and gross motor skills
- *support spiritual growth by making Biblical lessons available

Children will have daily opportunities for reading, indoor/outdoor play, music, creative arts, sensory exploration, pretend play, academic advancement.

Hours of Operation:

Faith Academy is licensed for 14 infants, 15 toddlers, and 72 preschoolers. The Academy is open from 6am-6pm Monday through Friday. We are open 12 months except for holidays outlined in this handbook. The Academy provides care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

Holidays:

Faith Academy will be closed on the following days during the 2020-21 school year: Labor Day, Monday, September 7, 2020; Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 26 & Friday, November 27, 2020; Wednesday, December 24, 2020; Thursday, December 25, 2020; New Year's Day, Thursday, January 1, 2021; Memorial Day, Monday, May 31, 2021; Independence Day, observed Monday, July 5, 2021.

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the holiday will be taken on the preceding Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be taken on the following Monday. Tuition will remain the same for any week that includes a holiday. Vacation days cannot be used for holidays so that our teachers may receive the benefit of holiday pay.

Admission Policy:

Faith Academy does not discriminate against any child based on the child's race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disabilities. Reasonable accommodation will be made to provide services to persons with disabilities. All children are accepted on a probationary basis for thirty days. The staff and parents will assess the child's needs to insure that the program is able to meet the needs of your child.

Faith Academy is open to children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. Classes are limited by state ratios (1:10 for children age 2 and up, and 1:4 for children under the age of 2.). If a class is full, children will be placed on a waiting list until space becomes available to maintain our ratios.

Registration Requirements:

To register for Faith Academy, please submit the following:

*registration fee, \$75 (per family)

*registration application

*signed agreement to adhere to policies and procedures of Faith Academy

*immunization record for each child (can be faxed to us at 314-635-2299)

*medical exam report signed by a doctor (can be faxed to us at 314-635-2299)

Immunizations:

All children enrolled must present documentation of up-to-date immunizations. Parent/guardian and medical exemptions are allowed if accompanied by appropriate exemption card. Unvaccinated children may be excluded from class if an outbreak occurs. Parents/guardians have the right to be informed if there are any children enrolled who have an immunization exemption on file.

Class Information:

Faith Academy will operate 6 classrooms for children ages 6 wks to 5 years. Classes will be staffed by qualified teachers and teacher assistants. Each room will post a daily schedule which will include: circle time, music time, snack time, reading times, craft time, Bible story, outdoor play for gross motor development, center time for fine motor development, naptime and seatwork. Additional opportunities will be available during the year such as sign language, Spanish and fitness.

Tuition: *includes breakfast, lunch, and one snack

FULL TIME – 5 days a week

Ages 6 wks to 24 months..... \$250/week (August 2020)

Ages 2-3 years\$230/week (August 2020)

Ages 3 and up..... \$170/week (August 2020)

Tuition Policies:

Tuition rates are calculated on a weekly rate. The first week's tuition must be paid upon admission. Tuition is due on Friday in order to secure services on Monday. If Faith Academy is closed on Friday, the tuition is due the last day of the week that the Academy is open. A late fee of \$25.00 per week will be assessed until the account is current. *There are no discounts or credits for days missed due to illness, absences or the Academy being closed for holidays.*

Tuition must be paid weekly by depositing a payment in the black box in the check-in area. Charges for the week/month are based on how many days your child is scheduled to attend Faith Academy, not on how many days he/she actually does attend.

If a payment is returned, a fee of \$30 will be charged. If your account is up-to-date, in January, you will receive a tuition statement for the previous year for your tax purposes.

A one-time registration fee of \$75.00 per family is due upon enrollment. The registration fee covers accident insurance, curriculum and individual supplies. It is not refundable.

To manage increasing costs for food and employee benefits, a tuition increase will automatically be implemented on the second Monday of August every year. The amount of the increase will be communicated to parents in February of each year.

Payments:

Payments may be made by credit card, ACH or check. If an account is more than 2 weeks behind, parents will be required to provide bank information to set up ACH (automatic withdrawal) payments. Credit card or ACH payments may also be made using the Smartcare app.

Discounts:

Members of Faith Church will receive a 10% discount on their tuition bill. In order to receive the discount, members must be in good standing which is defined as having completed Growth Track, tithing consistently, and serving consistently. The discount will apply after these 3 requirements have been validated. A review of membership will be conducted annually.

Faith Academy is also pleased to offer a multi-child discount. Your family will receive \$25 off the full-time tuition of a second child enrolled, and \$15 off the part-time tuition of a second child enrolled.

Discounts do not apply to the \$75 registration fee.

Faith Academy offers tuition discounts of 20 percent for Faith Church and Faith Academy employees wishing to enroll their child or children in Faith Academy. Under applicable tax law, the discount is nontaxable. The remainder of the tuition obligation will be paid from after-tax wages by salary reduction.

Withdrawal:

If a child needs to withdraw from Faith Academy, parents should submit written notice of intent to withdraw to the Director at least two weeks in advance. If proper notification is not given, the full tuition commitment will be required.

Vacation:

Each family enrolled at Faith Academy has the opportunity to take vacation time during the school year on days when the child will be absent. If a child is registered for 5 days a week, the family will have 5 days during the school year when tuition is not charged. (If a child is registered for 3 days, then 3 days are available during the school year when tuition is not charged. If a child is registered for 2 days a week, then 2 days during the school year are available when tuition will not be charged.)

Please email your vacation request to the director two weeks in advance so that staff schedules can be adjusted. *(Vacation days do not apply to holidays or sick days.)* Once your vacation time has been used, any other absences will still be charged to you.

During the summer (June and July), each family will receive 2, 3 or 5 vacation days depending on their enrollment. If a family chooses to un-enroll during the summer, they will be required to re-enroll for school year attendance by paying the Registration fee (\$75) again to hold their spot for the school year.

Drop-Off/Pick-Up:

Each family will receive two key cards for entry into the building and into Faith Academy. If a key card is lost or stolen, please inform the Director so that we can deactivate the card. A replacement card is \$10. All keys must be returned to Faith Academy upon withdrawal. Each key card not returned to Faith Academy will be charged \$10. The replacement fee for key cards may increase if key cards are continually lost and need to be replaced repeatedly.

Each child will be checked in and checked out with an approved adult listed on their enrollment application. Children will be admitted at 6am and must be picked up by 6pm. A warning will be issued for the first late pick up, and thereafter a fee of \$1 per minute will be charged if pick up is after 6pm. For families who have more than 3 late pick up charges, the late pick up fee will increase to \$5/per minute. In the event of an emergency, please call Faith Academy at 314-635-2100 (Earth City) or 314-635-2111 (Sunset Hills) or 314-635-2103 (Weldon Spring) to make arrangements.

Parents are welcome to drop children off any time after 6:00am. However, group time, chapel and classroom projects will begin around 8:30am. Breakfast is served at 8am.

At the time of registration, you will be asked to provide names and emergency contact information for individuals authorized to pick up your child. No child will be permitted to leave with an unauthorized adult. If someone other than a parent whom our staff is familiar with will be picking up your child, please call Faith Academy to inform us of this

change. Authorized individuals should be prepared to show photo ID before a child will be released into their care. Thank you for your help in keeping your children safe.

Inclement Weather:

In the case of bad weather which may cause Faith Academy to close, please watch tv channels KSDK, Fox2, KMOV, ABC30 where “Faith Academy-Earth City” or “Faith Academy-Sunset Hills” or “Faith Academy-Weldon Spring” will be listed if closed. Weather announcements will also be communicated through Smartcare, Facebook and email.

Tuition will be refunded for any day the Academy is closed due to inclement weather. On days when the Academy opens late or closes early due to inclement weather, tuition will not be refunded.

Sample Daily Schedule of Activities:

6am-7:45am	Arrival, free play
8:00am	Breakfast (children arriving after 8:00am will not be served breakfast)
8:30am	Chapel
9:00am	Morning Meeting, Circle Time
9:30am	Centers
10:00am	Bible Story/Craft
10:45am	Outdoor play
11:30am	Bathroom break
11:45am	Lunch
12:15	Movie/Music
1:00	Rest/Nap
2:30	Snack
3:15	Music/Centers
4:00	Outdoor play
5:15	Table Activities
6:00	Pick Up

Rest/Nap:

All children at Faith Academy are required to have a rest time after lunch. Even if your child does not normally sleep in the afternoon, he/she will be expected to lie quietly on a cot to rest. Infants will sleep according to their individual schedules in cribs or playpens. Children ages 1-5 will rest on individual cots. Children are asked to bring a blanket, crib sheet and small pillow to use on their cot. All items brought from home must fit inside the cubby or diaper bag. The linens may stay at Faith Academy during the week, and will be sent home on Friday to be laundered.

Diapering:

Children who wear diapers or pull-ups should bring an adequate supply of disposable diapers each day they attend Faith Academy. We will let you know when your diaper

supply is getting low. If your child has a diaper rash or any other condition that requires an ointment or medication, written permission must be submitted before our staff can administer the treatment.

Discipline Policy:

It is the policy of Faith Academy to partner with parents to use consistent and positive guidance as discipline issues arise. Please discuss with your child's teacher specific guidance techniques that work best with your child. Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at Faith Academy. Time Out, Redirection, Removal of Privileges, Rewards and Modeling are the primary discipline measures used at Faith Academy. Corporal punishment and threats of corporal punishment are strictly prohibited. Children will be placed in Time Out for the equivalent of one minute for each year of their age: 3 year old = 3 minutes. In addition, teachers will encourage children to apologize for wrongdoing, and pray with children who are having difficulties.

If inappropriate or harmful behavior occurs, the child will receive a warning from the director and have an opportunity to make a better choice. If aggressive or harmful behavior continues to occur, the teacher and director will contact the parents to discuss alternative solutions. Faith Academy reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment with no refund of weekly tuition if dangerous discipline issues occur.

Biting:

As childcare workers, we understand that biting is a distressful behavior for parents and children. Biting is a painful and dangerous behavior; however, it is common. We are committed to understanding the reason for the behavior and seeking to help parents correct it. When biting occurs, we will follow the following procedures: 1) the child who was bitten will receive immediate attention and care; 2) the child who bit will receive instruction on unacceptable behavior and attempt to understand the reason for biting; 3) Teachers will complete an "INCIDENT REPORT"; 4) Teachers will observe closely the children involved as to prevent repeat incidents and to discover the reason for the behavior.

If biting or other aggressive behavior continues to be a problem, and there is no improvement then Faith Academy will present an Action Plan to parents to include warnings, redirection, and removal from the classroom. Faith Academy reserves the right to dismiss the child who exhibits aggression until the behavior is under control.

Property Damage:

Parents or Guardians will be held responsible for damage their child causes to Faith Academy property as a result of dangerous or negligent behavior (example: smashing

a window or purposely breaking equipment.) This does not include normal wear and tear caused by playing with toys and manipulatives.

Visitors:

Faith Academy encourages parents and family members to visit children during lunch and special events. Approved visitors who do not have a key card will need to contact the office to enter the building, and to have their ID checked. Please remember, children behave better when they are able to follow a regular schedule. A special guest may cause abnormal behavior or become a distraction to the other students. Please be mindful of this and allow teachers to do their job in caring for all the children in the classroom.

Meals/Snacks:

Faith Academy will provide breakfast (8:00am), lunch (11:30-noon), and afternoon snack (2:30-3pm) for all students at Faith Academy. Meals and snacks are served on time. If a child arrives after 8:00am breakfast will not be available. A menu for the upcoming month will be sent home at the end of each month. If you choose to send lunch in with your child, please pack it in a labeled waterproof container/lunch bag with an ice pack. If you choose to bring in a special snack for birthday celebrations, only pre-packaged, store-bought items may be shared. We prefer cookies or cupcakes that have white icing. (Colorful pigmented icing causes stains on clothing and skin.) Please discuss arrangements with your child's teacher.

What To Bring:

Children should bring a backpack each day packed with an extra set of clothes (including socks and underwear). We will go outside to play if the temperature is 40 degrees or above. Please send a jacket or coat during chilly days. Children who are not potty-trained should send in a backpack or diaper bag including extra diapers or pull-ups. Children will have a cubby where they are welcome to store a small blanket, crib sheet and small pillow for use during rest time. Blankets and pillows will be sent home each week to be laundered. Items should be able to fit in a backpack or cubby. ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE LABELED.

Please do not bring: candy, gum, toys from home, electronic tablets, oversized pillows or stuffed animals, unlabeled clothing or unlabeled backpacks. *If your child's items are not labeled – we will label the tag with the child's name or initials.*

If Your Child Is Sick:

If your child becomes ill while at Faith Academy, the child must be isolated from other children in care and the parent will be called immediately to pick up the child within the hour. (Parent will be contacted when fever is 100 degrees or more, when child has had 2 diarrhea diapers, or when any other questionable symptom is exhibited.)

If your child has exhibited any of the following symptoms, we ask you to refrain from attending Faith Academy until the child has been symptom-free for 24 hours:

- *fever of 100 degrees or more, taken with a digital thermometer
- *rash/poison ivy/chicken pox
- *vomiting
- *diarrhea
- *strep diagnosis (must be on an antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to Faith Academy)
- *pink eye/conjunctivitis

If a child is sent to Faith Academy with any of the above symptoms, parents or emergency contacts will be contacted so that the child can be picked up. According to state regulations, children who exhibit any of the above symptoms should be picked up within one hour of being notified. If your doctor determines that your child has a contagious illness, please notify the Director of Faith Academy so that we can inform other parents. According to state regulations, we are obligated to disclose this information. In order to return to Faith Academy after being diagnosed with a contagious illness, we **must** receive a note from your doctor releasing your child back into our care. The Director has the right to refuse admittance to any child exhibiting sick symptoms.

Injury/Medication:

In case of minor injury, teachers and the director will administer basic first aid care and parents will receive an injury report that day. If the injury is serious and requires the services of a doctor, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Call parent or guardian.
2. Call one of the persons listed as an emergency contact.
3. Call the child's physician for his/her advice.
4. If the above three fail, we will call an ambulance or paramedic to transport the child to a hospital. A staff member from Faith Academy will accompany the child in the ambulance. Any expenses incurred as a result of emergency care will be the responsibility of the child's family or guardian.

If an injury or condition is life threatening, 911 will be called immediately and parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible.

If your child requires medication to be administered at Faith Academy, parents must sign the Medical Authorization form. Medication must be in labeled container, must not be expired, and must only be given to the child whose name is on the container. Sunscreen, insect repellent and diaper rash ointments are considered medications and we must receive written permission to administer these to children at Faith Academy.

Fire Drills/Tornado Drills:

Faith Academy will follow the Missouri state fire regulations by conducting quarterly fire drills and tornado drills. For fire drills, children will exit and gather on the playground. During a tornado drill or warning, children will gather in the restrooms or the basement located in Faith Academy or Faith Church.

COVID19/Pandemic Response:

In the spring of 2020, when the Coronavirus caused the state of Missouri to implement school closings and a shelter in place order, Faith Academy remained open to provide care for children of essential workers. In response to this unprecedented event, we offered 3 tuition options to parents: 1) continue attending and continue paying as usual, 2) unenroll, do not pay weekly tuition, and re-register when the time comes (no guarantee a spot would be available) or 3) partially unenroll, continue paying half the tuition rate to guarantee a spot when the family is ready to return.

In addition, our centers adjusted the hours of operation from 6a-6pm to 8a-4pm or 7am-5pm, in order for teachers to spend an extra hour each day cleaning and sanitizing.

Photos:

You will be asked to sign a waiver giving permission for your child's photo to be used for class projects and on our private Facebook group. If you do not wish to have your child's photo used for these purposes, please submit that request in writing to the Director. Omitting your signature from the photo waiver on the registration form is not sufficient notification. Please submit a separate request in writing.

Grievances:

Good communication and interpersonal relationships are vital to the success of your experience at Faith Academy. We are honored to serve your family, and make every effort to conduct business in a professional manner. In the event of misunderstandings, personality conflicts, or specific complaints against the Academy staff or about our policies; parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director to remedy such issues. Complaints may also be submitted in writing to the Faith Academy Board of Directors, 13001 Gravois Rd, Sunset Hills MO 63127.