



**AGAPÉ EMBASSY
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

**Parent-Student Handbook
2022 – 2023**

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5775 Barclay Drive, Suite 9, Alexandria, VA 22315

Let's Go to School!

Welcome to Agapé Embassy Christian Academy (AECA). Preschool is an exciting and fantastic time for everyone! Our teachers are excited to receive your preschoolers! We will provide a warm and nurturing preschool experience for your children. There may be a little separation anxiety but trust everything will be fine. If they shed a few tears, it is okay; if you shed a few tears remember that is okay too. Adjustments will be made in no time.

Parents, students, and teachers alike enjoy the wonderful atmosphere of a preschool classroom. Learning is at an all-time high. Your child's mind is ready to learn, and we are here to teach them.

OUR PROGRAM

For children three through five years of age, our program integrates the Classical Model of teaching and Christian education. Our curriculum uses active learning to promote cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. Children are taught to observe and live with Christian morals and values, always placing God in the center of every activity.

Christ Centered – In all levels of teaching and nurturing AECA will:

- Teach all subjects, activities, programs with Christ as an integral part of all activities.
2Tim 3:16-17
- Encourage every student and point them in a direction where they can begin to develop a relationship with God the Father at a young age.
Matt 11:25, Matt 28:18-20, 19:13-15
- Provide a clear model of the biblical Christian life through our staff and board members.
Matt 22:37-40

Classical – In all levels of teaching and nurturing AECA will:

- Emphasize grammar, logic, and rhetoric in all subjects (definitions below).
 - **Grammar:** The fundamental facts and rules of each subject
 - **Logic:** The ordered relationship of particulars in each subject
 - **Rhetoric:** How the grammar and logic of each subject may be clearly expressed
- Encourage each student to develop a love for learning and live up to his/her academic potential.
- Provide an orderly atmosphere constructive to the attainment of the above goals.

Preschoolers are generally excited about learning and discovering new things. They want to touch, taste, feel, smell, and see. Imaginative and creative play is a must. At this age guided discovery is encouraged. We will sing, play games, and enjoy songs and stories. A sampling of methods used to instruct our pre-grammar students includes the use of manipulatives, short creative projects, body movement and creative play. Our students begin to learn the fundamentals of math, reading, writing and social studies. At this pre-grammar age a child's mind is ready and capable of retaining a myriad of information.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Although most Christian schools would agree on certain fundamentals, it is imperative that parents scrutinize the foundational beliefs of any school in which they may enroll their child(ren).

Therefore, below are the most important elements that we at AECA believe distinguish our unique approach to education.

- We believe that the Bible clearly instructs parents, not the church or state, to "bring children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) Therefore, we seek to teach and discipline in a manner consistent with the Bible and a godly home environment.
- We believe that God's character is revealed not only in His Word, but also in every facet of Creation. Therefore, we teach that all knowledge is interrelated and instructs us about God Himself.
- God wants us to love Him with our hearts, minds, souls and strength (Mat. 22:37). Therefore, we seek to individually challenge children at all levels and teach them how to learn, through the century's old classical method, including instruction in Latin.
- We want to help parents teach their children that all they do should be done "heartily, as unto the Lord." (Colossians 3:23) Therefore, we seek to encourage quality academic work and maintain high standards of conduct. This includes biblical disciplinary principles.

Above all, our highest goal is to provide a rigorous educational environment that challenges our students to live and think from a Christian worldview.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

AECA is a non-denominational school which does not teach a specific denominational set of beliefs. The following is the foundation of beliefs on which AECA is based. They are also the key elements of Christianity that will be taught uncompromised in various ways. The substance of these statements is that which will be considered primary doctrine at AECA.

We believe:

- the Holy Scriptures, as they were given to the Holy Prophets of old, are the infallible Word of God. It is our only authoritative rule for faith and practice (II Tim 3:16, II Pet 1:20, 21, I Thess 2:13).
- that there is one God, who gives life to everything and is eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient (Mark 3:16; 17, 28:19; Luke 3:21, 22; Gen 1:1; John 10:30, 37, 38).
- in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust; those who are saved to the resurrection of life, and those who are lost to the resurrection of eternal damnation (John 5:28-29).
- the good news is, that the Kingdom is ready for us to enter, when we change the way we think (Matt. 4:17,23; 24:14).
- that baptism by immersion is a requirement for every believer in the body of Christ (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:28; 19:3-5).
- that being filled with the Holy Spirit is necessary and the evidence is speaking in tongues and/or prophesying (Acts 1:8; 2:4, 38, 39; 8:14-17; 19:1-6; John 14:16, 17).

PURPOSE

AECA exists for the purpose of educating the next generation and developing in them a Christ-centered worldview. We are assisting parents with the task of bringing up children who put Christ first in all their endeavors. Spiritual and moral truths are taught through academics. The teacher is an imparter of knowledge, according to each child's needs. We educate so that children will be equipped with proper tools to make a positive difference for Christ in the world and so that God can move them into a place of spiritual maturity at a young age.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

AECA will admit students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of admissions policies, educational programs, and other school-administered programs.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

1. **School Tour** – Prospective parents and students are welcome to visit our school for a tour of the facilities. This visit needs to be scheduled through the school office. A member of our staff will provide answers to some initial questions and will provide an admission packet with further information.
2. **Application** – Application for Admission forms, including a signed Statement of Belief and Parent Agreement form, must be submitted before a student can be considered for admission. A birth certificate is required for all applicants. The application and all required forms and fees must be submitted to the school office. Date of application is only one factor in the admission process and does not determine an applicant's place on the waiting list.
3. **Interview** – An interview appointment is made with the parents. This is an opportunity for us to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have.
4. **Acceptance & Registration** – Official acceptance (or non-acceptance) is communicated to parents in writing only if all admissions forms have been completed and submitted for review. Payment of the first month's tuition is required to hold the student's place upon receipt of your acceptance letter. The signed letter of acceptance along with the first month's tuition payment must be Submitted to the school office.
5. **Fully-Potty Trained** – The independence of a "fully potty-trained" child is a *prerequisite* for acceptance for all AECA students. Independence means that the child must have the awareness to use the bathroom without reminders, be able to manage clothing without help and can wipe or clean themselves appropriately to maintain clean hygiene.
6. **Probation** – Students are accepted on a nine-week probationary period. Our priority is to minister to the needs of the child and family. A conference with the parents will be scheduled to determine the suitability of the student's continued enrollment. If the administration determines after nine weeks that the student or family would have greater success in a different program, the parents will be required to withdraw the child.
7. **Health Record** – Health information forms and immunization record must be submitted. A student entering our school for the first time must submit a Virginia physical Exam Form completed by a licensed physician within the last year. This form will be mailed with your acceptance letter.
8. **Payment of Tuition & Fees** – Several payment plans are available for paying tuition. AECA offers a year around program with an on-going rolling enrollment. The school year begins the 3rd week in August and ends the 2nd week in June; a total of 36 weeks. AECA offers a 6-week Summer Bridge program designed to enrich our students by helping them to retain what is learned during the school year and maintain a learning routine throughout the summer.

Policies and procedures regarding fees for AECA are subject to change anytime during the school year upon posted and written notice.

9. **Calendar, Supplies, & Uniform** – Parents will receive a list of school supplies needed, a calendar of events for the school year, and information regarding school uniforms.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Non-Refundable Registration Fees

AECA Registration/Book/Activity & Supply Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$300 for new student \$270 each additional child
Summer Bridge Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$75 Currently Enrolled AECA Student \$125 Non-enrolled AECA Student

Tuition

Weekly	Yearly	Program	Total Weeks
\$270	\$11,880	School Year	44
\$270	\$1,620	Summer Bridge	6
TOTAL	\$13,500	Full Program	50

- Families with more than one child enrolled in AECA will receive a 10% discount for each additional child.
- Fees are not refunded when a child is kept home from school for illness, holiday, vacation, snow closing, etc.
- Other fees that may be incurred during the school year for things such as school pictures and field trips.

Before and After Care Fees

Monthly	Yearly	Program	Total Weeks
\$100	\$1,200	Before Care	50
\$167	\$2,004	After Care	50
\$267	\$3,204	Before & After	50

Tuition Payment Plans

Enrolling in a tuition payment plan allows you to select a payment option that best suits your financial needs. Available options are:

School Tuition Payment Options	Due By
a. Full Tuition Payment	August 15
b. Monthly	15th of each month
c. Bi-Weekly	Mondays by 5:00PM

Summer Bridge Payment Options	Due By
a. Full Tuition Payment	One week prior to the start date of Summer Bridge
b. Weekly	Mondays by 5:00PM

Payment Methods

Payment methods offered are credit card, debit cards, e-check or automatic bank draft that can be processed through our online Procure Child Care System. All payments must be received on or before the due date. Teachers are not allowed to accept payments.

Notes:

- Payments made using a credit card are assessed a **2.75%** processing fee.
- A student will not be allowed to attend class if an account is delinquent, and arrangements have not been made with the school office.

Parents enrolled in Before and After Care are billed monthly. A late fee of **\$2** will be charged for **each minute** you are late picking up your child.

Returned and Delinquent Payments

- \$50 fee will be assessed for all returned payments.
- \$50 fee will be assessed for all delinquent accounts.

Tuition payments and fees are non-refundable.

Enrollment Withdrawal

If for some unforeseen reason a student must withdraw, a parent or guardian is responsible for notifying the school office by means of an **Intent Not to Return Form**. AECA requires a minimum **30 days notice** of this intent. The student's account will be billed, and a parent or guardian held responsible for the amount equal to one month's tuition. If an Intent Not to Return Form is not submitted to the office, the parent/guardian will be billed and held accountable for any tuition fees.

VIRGINIA SCHOOL HEALTH ENTRANCE FORM

Each child is required to have a current physical examination (within the past 12 months) signed by a physician, and an up-to-date certificate of immunization prior to attending school. If your child has a known medical condition (such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.), please notify the administrator verbally and in writing. Please notify the administrator if there are any special instructions or procedures for the care of your child.

We depend on the parent's assessment of their child's health before sending him/her to school. Germs can spread quickly in childcare environments. **Listed below are guidelines for AECA:**

- Parents must keep their child home if there has been a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within 24 hours of a school day.
- If a child has a fever of 100° or higher, the child must stay home until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- If the child develops a fever of 100° or higher or becomes ill at preschool, the child will be separated from the group and cared for in a quiet area, and the parents/guardians contacted to pick up the child.
- Parents will be notified immediately when a serious illness or injury occurs.
- Accidents of any kind will be reported verbally and in writing to families.
- Parents must contact the AECA Administrator or Teacher if their child acquires a contagious condition so staff and other families can be notified.
- If there is an occurrence of a communicable disease, a notice will be posted outside the main entrance door of AECA. The notice will include the communicable condition, the symptoms associated with the condition and the period of communicability.
- If a child has head lice, scabies, impetigo, ring worm, pink eye, etc., the child cannot return to preschool until 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Throughout the year it is important that AECA staff be informed of illnesses, injuries, allergies, changes in family situations and any other information that will help make the child's preschool experience a positive and beneficial one.

MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

A Medical Release Form must be on file giving AECA permission to seek medical attention on the behalf of your child if a situation occurs requiring immediate medical attention, and the school is unable to reach the parent or guardian.

The release form does not allow staff to authorize treatment but only to seek emergency care. The staff will continue to try to contact the parent/guardian.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

Our staff does not administer medication whether it is prescribed or over the counter. If your child has a medical condition which requires medication, please try to adjust the child's medication schedule around school hours. We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause.

***Exception:** Prescription medication will be administered only with the diagnosis of a chronic disease or illness. Chronic conditions: a medical condition that persists for more than three months and requires prescription medication. A doctor's note must accompany the medication. The doctor's note must be updated every three months. At the end of the three-month period medication will be returned to parents/guardians unless a new medical form is submitted.*

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS/FIRE SAFETY

Children and teachers will have practice fire drills once a month. Children and teachers will evacuate the building using the closest exit, keeping the proper distance from the building.

In the case of an actual emergency, emergency procedures will be acted upon, and parents will be called as soon as all staff members and students are out of harm's way. The staff and children wait in a safe place until families can pick up their children.

STUDENT FILES

To meet the guidelines for the Department of Human Services each child at AECA Preschool has a file containing the following information:

- Accident Reports
- Application Form
- Child Release Form (Pick up and drop off permission form)
- Emergency Contact/Medical Release Form
- Parent Statement of Faith Form
- Parent Volunteer Form
- Payment Plan Option Form
- Physical Health Form signed by a physician or public health official
- Proof of completed/up to date immunizations
- Proof of student's ID
- Signed Letter of Acceptance (signed by parent/legal guardian)

DRESS CODE

Uniforms are required for all students.

- **Girls:** Khaki and Navy skort or trousers, polo shirt, and solid color tennis shoes. Navy or khaki shorts may be worn during the warm seasons.
- **Boys:** Khaki and Navy trouser, polo shirt and solid color tennis shoes. Navy or khaki shorts may be worn during the warm seasons.
- Navy blue standard school sweaters may be purchased and worn over the polo shirt.
- Solid color tennis shoes. No sandals or open-toe shoes permitted. ***Tennis shoes only.***
 - If children wear boots during the winter weather or on rainy days, *please arrive at school early enough to help your child get into his/her tennis shoes before the school day begins.*

Dress code violations will result in a note or telephone call to the parent/guardian. After the *second* uniform violation the child's parent/guardian will be called and asked to immediately pick-up their child and/or correct the uniform infraction.

SUMMER BRIDGE DRESS CODE

- Summer Bridge T-shirt with shorts or trousers, and solid color tennis shoes.
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DISCIPLINE

Discipline is viewed as a process of learning self-control, respect for others, and responsibility. To help children learn this process, the following guidelines are in place at AECA:

- Teachers redirect inappropriate behaviors.
- Teachers remind children of expectations, rules, and limits.
- Teachers help children use words to express anger, resolve conflicts, and express needs and desires.
- Teachers will assist children in the conflict resolution process.
- Teachers may remove a child from an activity if inappropriate behaviors persist. The teacher will help the child to find an appropriate activity to engage in.
- If a child physically hurts another child, he/she will be removed from the activity, the hurt child will be comforted, and the children will then be assisted with the conflict resolution process. The parents will be informed at the end of the school day by written note or verbal communication.
- If a child needs an opportunity to regain control of his/her emotions or is demonstrating inappropriate behaviors, they may be asked to sit in the Self-control Chair. Using the Self-control Chair removes the child from the moment and allows them time to regain control. At AECA, our end goal is to move our students to being self-managed with the help of Holy Spirit, as they receive instructions from the teachers to help them learn how to master their impulses.
- A conference will be held with parents if serious inappropriate behaviors continue.

DISMISSAL FROM PRESCHOOL

AECA reserves the right to dismiss a child from preschool if we cannot meet the needs of the child. Before dismissal, all attempts will be made to work with your child to meet his/her needs. A problem-solving meeting will be held with the administrator and parents to help develop a plan to resolve the issue.

If the problem cannot be resolved and the child's needs are not being met, the child will be removed from AECA Preschool.

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Parents must sign their child in and out daily. A child will only be released to the parent, guardian, or persons listed on the **Authorized Release Form**. Additional names may be added to the list at any time during the school year by notifying the school administrator of any changes.

If there is an occasional change in persons picking up or dropping off your child, please notify the preschool teacher in writing, giving the name and date the person will be picking up or dropping off your child.

This person must present photo identification during afternoon/evening pick up. The administrator must be informed in writing with the proper supporting documentation of any court orders regarding visitation or pick up.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

As a convenience to parents, we offer **Before** and **After Care** for our students for a fee. The before and after care program is **not** a drop-in program. Students must be registered to participate. If your child is in the before or after care program, please pack an extra snack in their backpack.

- **Before Care Hours:** 7:15am – 8:45am
- **After Care Hours:** 3:15pm – 6:15pm

Late Pickup: If you are going to be late, please notify the school. A **\$2 per minute** late fee will be assessed to your account for every minute beyond the **6:15 pm** pickup time.

If your is not enrolled in the AECA After Care Program and you fail to pick them up by 3:15PM, you will incur the After Care fee, plus a \$25 late fee.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

AECA follows the policy of Fairfax County’s School System. Listen to your local news station for updates. If Fairfax County Schools close because of weather related issues, AECA will close also. If at all uncertain, please call the school to verify closing.

NON-WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

There are occasions when it is in the best interest and personal safety of the staff and students for the office to be closed. Such circumstances will include man-made failures, loss of heat or power, etc. Communication will be initiated through the Procure System.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Your involvement helps to make great things possible at AECA!

As with everything we do at AECA, the way we view parental involvement is based on our comprehensive philosophy of education, grounded in the Word of God. Therefore, we reiterate our school’s educational philosophy below:

*We believe that the Bible clearly instructs **parents**, not the Church or State, to “bring up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The church’s commission is essentially to spread the Gospel and train believers (Matt 28:18-20). The State has been directed to enforce God’s laws and protect the innocent (Romans13). The Church trains parents and the State protects families. The **family** raises and educates children (Eph 6:1-4). Therefore, under the **delegation of the family**, we seek to teach and discipline in a manner consistent with the Bible and a godly home environment.*

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

Why a Parent Service Program?

Parents provide valuable service to our school and an opportunity for parents to meet each other and build community. Additionally, AECA gains access to the talents and abilities of our parents to enhance the learning environment of our students.

What are the requirements?

Participation in the Parent Service Program requires a minimum of **16 hours** of service **per school year** from **each** family in a **two-parent** household and **8 hours** for **single parent** and **senior households** (parent or guardian over age 65). Participation is a condition of attendance in the school. Volunteer activities include things inside the school as well as things which can be done at home.

NOTE: *Parents who fail to meet their annual volunteer requirements will be assessed \$150 at the end of the school year.*

Who may perform the service hours?

Only parents or guardians may serve hours for the family.

Who keeps track of service hours?

Volunteer hours will be tracked using the Procure Child Care Management Software System. Parents are encouraged to keep track of volunteer hours served.

Parent Service Opportunities

Opportunities are frequently listed in the electronic school newsletter. In addition, there are standard areas that can always use a helping hand. Please sign up for the following at any time:

- Art Helper
- Art Preparation
- Computer
- Hot Lunch Program
- Library
- Memory Verse Recitation
- Photocopy
- Recess Helper
- Science Helper
- Picture Taking Day
- Picnic Planning Team
- Lunch Helper
- And more!

Please contact the school administrator or classroom teacher to schedule volunteer hours.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled by appointment. Progress reports and progress folios are sent home to show each child's growth and development during the school year. The school staff and families work together as a team to make the preschool experience beneficial for the child. We are happy to schedule meetings at any time upon family request.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Families will access AECA's monthly newsletter on the school website. Please take time to read it. It will contain important information about curriculum activities, upcoming events, field trips and important dates. The school administration as well as the classroom teacher may communicate with our school families via text, email, and written correspondence.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance on a regular basis is expected of all students. If your child is going to be absent or late, please call the school office. A written note must be submitted to the office upon a student's return to school when an absence has taken place.

LUNCH AND FRUIT SNACK

Lunch and snack time are opportunities for children to share socially, practice manners, and experience a variety of nutritious foods. Families are to provide lunch and fruit snack for their child daily.

Snacks must be healthy—fruit or vegetable only. No cookies, candies, fruit snacks, fruit roll ups, etc. Acceptable fruit snacks are items such as carrot sticks, strawberries, applesauce and cut fruit.

Lunch and snacks must be in a form your child can handle on his/her own. Cut fruit, sandwiches, etc. in the proper portion size for your child.

AECA will offer a special hot lunch 1 time per month. The cost of lunch is \$8 per meal. A hot lunch form will be sent home to be completed and returned to your child's classroom teacher.

**We are unable to refrigerate lunches due to health regulations.
Please no glass items in lunch boxes.**

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays may be celebrated at school. Children may bring their favorite snack (cake, cupcakes, etc.) at that time. If the child's birthday falls outside the school calendar, a half-birthday may be celebrated. A half-birthday would be 6 months after your child's actual birthday. Please make the appropriate arrangements with your child's teacher before bringing your treat to class.

If your child is having a birthday celebration outside of school, please **do not** send invitations to school to be passed out by the classroom teacher or by your child. If invitations are brought to school, they will be sent back home with your child.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

ALL items brought into school should be labeled with permanent marker with the child's name. This includes backpacks, lunch boxes, supplies, extra clothes, show-and-tell items etc. This will ensure that all items can be identified, and lost/found items may easily be returned their rightful owner.

BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST



To Do

- Complete registration
- Get all recommended immunizations
- Purchase School Uniforms
- Meet the teacher
- Tour AECA
- Help your child memorize your home phone, work phone, and home address
- Arrange transportation and practice the route
- If carpooling, introduce your child to all carpool drivers prior to the start of school
- Arrange for Before/After Care, if needed if necessary
- Plan breakfasts, packed lunches, and after-school snacks
- Prepare a school calendar of important events
- Slip a note or photo into your child's bag for reassurance on his/her first day



SUPPLY LIST

- School Uniform
- Small Backpack
- Lunch Box
- Crayons (larger, chunky style)
- Washable Colored Markers
- Two-Pocket Folders (3) 1 – red, 1- blue, 1-yellow
- Pencil Box
- Glue Sticks (4)
- Safety scissors

12-inch Wooden Ruler

Art Cover-Up (an over-sized old shirt is fine)

Small Blanket (1)

Extra uniform (to be kept at school, send in a zip lock bag labeled with Child's name; include trousers, skort, shirt, undergarments, socks)