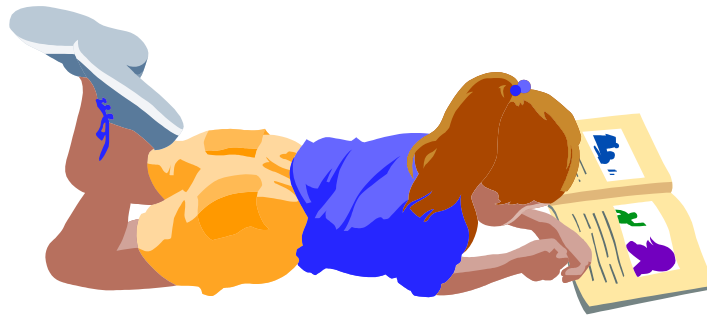
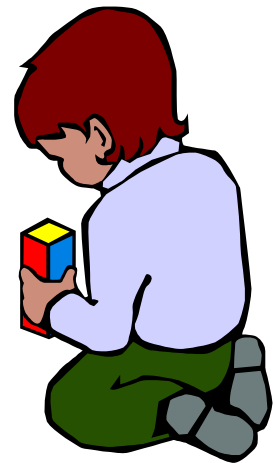


**VCEA**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD**  
**&**  
**EXTENDED DAY**  
**PROGRAMS**



**Revised 2008**

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# **VIRGINIA CATHOLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

## **DESIGN FOR EXCELLENCE**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

**The Catholic School of the future, rooted in the richness of the Catholic tradition, will be a Christ-centered learning environment, focused on cultivating the potential of children and adults within the faith community.**

**As an educational center where Gospel values are learned, embraced, and integrated by all members, the Catholic School will be a center for life-long learning, which both challenges and empowers persons to assess the present and to design the future.**

**The Catholic School will create an integrated curriculum that accommodates the diversity of learners in a global society.**

# **VIRGINIA CATHOLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

## **CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

**A Catholic childhood program develops a love of Jesus and knowledge of the presence of God in the lives of the children it serves. The children become aware of the truths of the Catholic faith through positive interactions with Christian adult role models. Within a Christian community they learn to appreciate and act on the values of kindness, love, joy and concern. A growing and learning experience is provided in a Christian community – beginning with the home and extending to the school – which helps the children relate positively to the world around them.**

**The childhood program interprets the general goals of childhood education as being primarily the development of the whole child. The curriculum must be dynamic, adapting to meet the unique developmental needs of each child. The curriculum should foster self-confidence by optimizing opportunities for success.**

**The childhood program seeks to provide an environment in which the teacher facilitates each child's learning. This is done through daily interactions with life experiences, responding to each child's innate curiosity, recognizing the child as an individual and fostering a creative approach to problems. In this light, the curriculum is active, experiential, and sensorial and addresses multiple learning modes.**

**The childhood program strives to build a strong relationship, based on effective communication, with parents/guardians recognizing that consistency between home and school provides a balanced, positive school experience. One of the program's goals is to provide children and their families with experiences that will associate pleasure with formal learning. The program seeks to be a resource to the family, thereby optimizing chances for the student's success.**

## CURRICULUM

**RATIONALE:** The curriculum is not just the goals of the program and the planned activities but also the daily schedule, the availability and use of materials, transitions between activities and the way in which routine tasks of living are implemented. Criteria for curriculum implementation reflect the knowledge that young children learn through active manipulation of the environment and concrete experiences that contribute to concept development.

*The program has a written statement of its philosophy and goals for children.*

*The program has written curriculum plans based on knowledge of child development and assessment of individual needs and interests. The learning environment and activities for children reflect the program's philosophy and goals.*

*Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs.*

*The daily schedule provides a balance of activities in consideration of the child's total daily experience (what happens before, during, and after the program) with attention to the following dimension of scheduling:*

- ◆ *All age groups play outdoors daily, weather permitting*
- ◆ *The schedule provides for altering periods of quiet time and active play.*
- ◆ *A balance of large muscle and small muscle activity is provided.*
- ◆ *More than one option for group activity (individual, small group, or large group) is available to children most of the day,*
- ◆ *A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity is provided. The amount of time spent in staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.*

*Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available to preschoolers and school age children. Materials and equipment that project heterogeneous, racial, gender, and age attributes are selected for use.*

*The use of media, such as television, films, videotapes and computers, is limited to developmentally appropriate programming that has been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available. No child is required to view or interact with the program; and the staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Technology is incorporated as an integral part of the day.*

*Staff provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials that are selected to emphasize concrete experiential learning and to achieve the following goals:*

- a. *foster positive self-concept*
- b. *foster spiritual development*
- c. *develop social skills*
- d. *encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment*
- e. *encourage language development*
- f. *enhance physical development and skills*
- g. *encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices*
- h. *encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts*
1. *respect cultural diversity*

*Staff provide materials and time for children to select their own activities during the day. Children choose from among several activities that the teacher has planned or the children initiate. Staff respect the child's right to choose not to participate at times.*

*Staff conduct smooth and unregimented transitions between activities. Children are not always required to move from one activity to another as a group. Transitions are planned as a vehicle for learning.*

*Staff are flexible enough to change planned or routine activities according to the needs or interests of children, and/or to cope with changes in weather or other situations that affect routines without unduly alarming children.*

*Routine tasks are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help, and social skills. Routines such as toileting, eating, dressing, and sleeping are handled in a relaxed, reassuring, and individualized manner, based on developmental needs. Staff plan with parents to make feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.*

**Taken from Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs**

## EARLY CHILDHOOD/EXTENDED DAY PERSONNEL

Given the principal/administrator is knowledgeable about quality childhood programs and is effective in explaining, organizing and implementing such, quality programs are staffed at all levels by persons who have specific training and experience in working with children beginning with age three (3). To this end, the administrator collaborates with other groups, programs and agencies in the community to provide all needed services for children and their families.

### STAFF POLICIES

#### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

##### EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The Administrator oversees the total operation of the program, insures that policies are adhered to, directly supervises the director, and coordinates the school program and the early childhood program. The Administrator of the early childhood program can be the school principal or a designated person. The Administrator is responsible for adherence to VCEA Early Childhood Guidelines and the Minimum Standards For Licensed Child Care Centers Serving Children.

The Director of the program is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the program in close communication with the administrator. The Director hires staff according to Diocesan policy with the approval of the principal/administrator. The director maintains a personnel record on all staff members, develops staff and parent handbooks in consultation with the administrator, supervises the staff, plans the snacks and meals, plans the activities, is responsible for overseeing and communicating with the book keeper concerning the collection of fees, and is responsible for communicating with the parents whose children are enrolled in the program. The Director is responsible for adherence to VCEA Accreditation process and the Minimum Standards For Licensed Child Care Centers Serving Children.

The teaching staff of the program is responsible to comply with the Director and operates under his/her guidance. The staff directly supervises the children enrolled in the program, provides instruction and performs other duties as assigned by the Director. A complete job description is provided by the director and is located in the Staff Handbook.

Teaching assistants assist staff in the supervision of children, but are not independently responsible for the supervision. A complete job description is provided by the director and is located in Staff Handbook.

Substitute staff must comply with regulations in the EARLY CHILDHOOD and EXTENDED DAY GUIDELINES.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS**

The **Administrator** of the Extended Day Program is the school principal. The Administrator oversees the total operation of the program, insures that policies are adhered to, directly supervises the director, and coordinates the programs of the school and extended day.

The **Director** of the Extended Day Program is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the program in close communication with the administrator. The Director hires staff with the approval of the principal/administrator, maintains a personnel record on all staff members, supervises the staff, plans the snacks and meals, approves plans of activities, is responsible for overseeing and communicating with the book keeper concerning the collection of fees, and is responsible for communicating with the parents whose children are enrolled in the program.

The **Staff** members (**Child Care Supervisors** and **Assistant Child Care Supervisors**) of the Extended Day Program are responsible to the Director and operate under his/her guidance. The Child Care Supervisors and Assistant Child Care Supervisors directly supervise the children enrolled in the program and perform other duties as assigned by the director.

The **Junior Assistants** are helpers at least 16 years of age. The Junior Assistants assist in the supervision of children, but are not independently responsible for the supervision. Junior Assistants are not counted in the staff-student ratio, but are acknowledged as valuable assets in the quality care given to the children.

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

### EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The qualifications of an administrator could be:

School Principal

Director Qualified

Special Exemption of the Office of Catholic Schools

The Director of an early childhood program must have a B.A. or B.S. degree or adequate coursework or appropriate experience in early childhood education *as required by the Virginia Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers*. This determination is made by the Administrator. The director must work toward acquiring Religion certification.

The teaching staff of the early childhood program must hold a B.A. or B.S. degree or C.D.A. Certificate and adequate experience in early childhood education. This determination is made by the Director. Teachers must work toward acquiring Religion certification.

The teaching assistants in the early childhood program must be at least 18 years of age, holding a high school diploma or equivalent.

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

### EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

The qualifications of a Catholic school principal are deemed appropriate for the qualifications of an Extended Day Administrator.

The Director of an Extended Day Program must have a B.A. or B.S. degree or adequate coursework or appropriate experience in school-age child care *as required by the Virginia Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers*. This determination is made by the Administrator.

The Child Care Supervisor and the Assistant Child Care Supervisor of the Extended Day Program must be at least 18 years of age, holding a high school diploma or equivalent, with adequate experience in school-age child care. This determination is made by the Director.

The Junior Assistant of the Extended Day Program must be at least 16 years of age and show an interest in working in a school-age child care setting. Additionally, all employees/employers are required by law to complete INS form I-9: Employment Eligibility Verification (see appendix A). This form becomes part of the employee's personnel file.

## **STAFF-STUDENT RATIO**

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

The minimum staff-student ratio is one staff member to every eight children age two. One staff member is required for every ten children ages three to the age of eligibility to attend public school, five years by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Each school should be responsible for compliance with Department of Social Services staff-student ratios. At least one staff member must be present with children at all times. Two staff members must be on the premises at all times when the program is in operation.

## **STAFF-STUDENT RATIO**

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS**

The minimum staff-student ratio is two staff members to every eighteen school-age children present through age eight; twenty children for ages nine through twelve. Each school should be responsible for compliance with local government staff-student ratios. At least one staff member must be present in each location within the program, for example inside and outdoors, in the homework room, and in the playroom, etc. Two staff members must be on the premises at all times when the program is in operation. Junior Assistants may be counted in the ratio – but may not be by themselves.

## **STAFF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

All teaching staff must receive twenty hours of staff development each school year, appropriate to the duties assigned and the particular program. Teaching assistants (Aides) must receive sixteen hours of staff development. Staff development activities must:

- ◆ Be related to children and the function of the center
- ◆ Consist of some sources outside the center which may include but not be limited to audio and visual tapes, conferences and workshops
- ◆ Be from someone with verifiable expertise or experience when conducted as in-service training
- ◆ Include annually the topics of safety for children, child development and discipline, and playground and outdoor supervision for staff
- ◆ Include first aid and CPR training
- ◆ Stress the spiritual development of the young child
  - ◆ Working toward acquiring Religion certification
  - ◆ Following Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations: Catechist Certification Guidelines (Diocese of Arlington)  
Handing on the Faith (Richmond)

## **Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations: Catechist Certification Guidelines**

Diocese of Arlington: Revised 2007

### LEVELS OF CERTIFICATION

The catechist, with assistance from the local and diocesan personnel, achieves first a **basic certification (50 hours)** then either an **advanced certification (100 hours = Basic Certification + 50 hours)** or a **renewal** of the basic certification (**10 hours**).

Local and diocesan courses, workshops, institutes, conferences and on-line (internet-based) classes will be offered to assist catechists in attaining certification. Courses and workshops should ideally take place in a community atmosphere with other catechists, so learning becomes experiential, and leads to a deeper personal spirituality. Through modern technological advances, other educational opportunities can be offered to meet the various needs of catechists, allowing for group experiences and interactive learning opportunities. Catechists should strive to attain Diocesan certification in a timely manner, in order to grow in their faith and best serve in their ministry.

All catechetical employees, e.g. teachers of religion in Diocesan schools, etc., must work towards certification from their time of employment. During the first year of employment, personnel must acquire 10 hours towards Basic Certification, starting with CAT 101: Catholic Education: What Every Teacher Needs to Know. During the second and third years of employment, another 20 hours each year must be acquired. Every catechetical employee has three years to attain Basic Certification.

When first applying for certification, up to twenty hours may be counted from the previous 15 years. Once Basic Certification is acquired, teachers are encouraged to work towards Advanced Certification, at a rate of 10 hours the first (fourth) year, and then 20 hours each for the second and third years (fifth and sixth years). Hours are not carried from one certificate to the next (the 50 Advanced Certification hours must be new hours attained from the time of the completion of the Basic Certification).

Once certification is acquired, renewal of certification is achieved with an additional 10 hours of instruction every five years. All hours are transferable between places of employment (e.g. from one school to the next) and certification requirements are not negated with transfer of employment (e.g. if you change schools in your second year, you still need to acquire Basic Certification within three years from your first year of employment in a Diocesan School). All certification records are maintained by the Diocese of Arlington, and will transfer with your personnel file.

## **STAFF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS**

**Each staff member must receive sixteen hours of in-service each school year, appropriate to the duties assigned and the particular program. New employees should receive an adequate orientation in close proximity to the time they are first employed. A record of in-service participation should be kept as part of the employee's personnel record.**

### **SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION OF STAFF**

**Supervision and evaluation are important components of staff development and are of benefit to both the employee and the program. Staff is to be supervised informally on a daily basis and formally at least twice a year. An evaluation instrument is contained in the appendix and should be completed for each employee at the close of the school year. A copy of the instrument should be retained in the employee's personnel record. A copy of the evaluation should be given to the employee.**

**Diocesan personnel policies are to be followed for application and hire. Refer to Personnel File Check List for appropriate documentation that must be on file for each staff member.**

## **PERSONNEL FILES**

**It is the responsibility of the principal/administrator to keep a current file for each of the staff members in the childhood program. This file should include:**

<b>_____ Application form *</b>	<b>Appendix A</b>
<b>_____ Emergency Contact Information (Updated annually) * +</b>	<b>Appendix B</b>
<b>_____ INS form I-9; (Must be maintained in a separate file) * +</b>	<b>Appendix C</b>
<b>_____ Current transcript of credits, if applicable</b>	
<b>_____ Copy of teaching certificate and/or license, if applicable</b>	
<b>_____ Copies of signed performance appraisals *</b>	<b>Appendix D</b>
<b>_____ Copy of contract/agreement *</b>	<b>Appendix E</b>
<b>_____ Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse Documentation *</b>	<b>Appendix F</b>
<b>_____ Reference/Recommendation Letters (At least three)</b>	
<b>_____ Confirmation of Receipt and Review of Policy Book *</b>	<b>Appendix G</b>
<b>_____ Criminal History Record Check *</b>	<b>Appendix H</b>
<b>_____ Sworn Disclosure Statement *</b>	<b>Appendix I</b>
<b>_____ Request for Search of Central Registry (CPS)</b>	<b>Appendix J</b>
<b>_____ Fingerprinting Documentation</b>	<b>Appendix K</b>
<b>_____ Personnel Action Change (Diocese of Arlington) *</b>	<b>Appendix L</b>
<b>_____ TB test record; (Renewed every two years)</b>	
<b>_____ First Aid Certification (Renewed every three years)</b>	
<b>_____ CPR Certification (Renewed every two years)</b>	
<b>_____ Cumulative sick leave record</b>	
<b>_____ Physician Certificate of Health (Annually for Religious Exemption) *</b>	<b>Appendix M</b>
<b>_____ Documentation of Orientation *</b>	<b>Appendix Mc</b>
<b>_____ Staff Development Activity Form *</b>	<b>Appendix N</b>
<b>_____ Hepatitis B Declination Statement, if applicable *</b>	<b>Appendix P</b>
<b>_____ OSHA Training (Reviewed Annually)</b>	<b>Appendix O</b>
<b>_____ Hazardous Material Training (Reviewed Annually)</b>	<b>Appendix Q</b>
<b>+ Maintained in separate file * Samples provided in the appendix</b>	<b>(Arlington)</b>

**BUSINESS MANAGER FILES**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Insurance Application or Waiver**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Federal W-4 Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ **State Tax Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Driver's License (Copy)**

**SCHOOL FILES**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fire Log**

**Appendix DD**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Health Certificate**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Insurance Certificate**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Asbestos Plan**

\_\_\_\_\_ **State License (Copy must be set to Office of Catholic Schools)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan (Copy must be sent to OCS)**

**(Arlington)**

## **STAFF HANDBOOKS**

**Handbooks are required for all staff members. The contents of the handbook should include but are not limited to the following topics:**

### **PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

- ◆ VCEA Vision Statement
- ◆ Mission statement
- ◆ VCEA Philosophy
- ◆ VCEA Accreditation Process

### **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- ◆ Job Descriptions
- ◆ Performance Appraisals
- ◆ Diocesan Policies and Guidelines
- ◆ Office Personnel Support

### **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- ◆ Schedules and Duties
  - ◆ Daily Schedule
  - ◆ Lesson Plans
  - ◆ Recording Attendance
  - ◆ Late Arrivals
  - ◆ Withdrawal Procedures
  - ◆ Duties pertaining to beginning and end of program year
- ◆ Procuring Supplies
- ◆ Personal Property (Valuables)
- ◆ Professionalism
  - ◆ Dress Code
  - ◆ Smoking
- ◆ Repair Needs
- ◆ Resources

### **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

- ◆ Religion Certification Requirements
- ◆ Child Abuse Reporting
- ◆ Staff Development Plan
  - ◆ Health and Safety
  - ◆ Child Growth and Development
  - ◆ Planning Learning Activities
  - ◆ Guidance and Discipline
  - ◆ Utilizing Community Services
  - ◆ Communication with Families
  - ◆ Professional Issues
  - ◆ Detecting /Reporting Abuse

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

- ◆ Crisis Situations
  - ◆ Bomb Threats
  - ◆ Strangers in Building (Code)
- ◆ Building Evacuation
- ◆ Evacuation Routes
- ◆ Fire Drill Procedures
- ◆ Lost Child Procedures
- ◆ Severe Weather Procedures
  - ◆ Hurricanes/Tornadoes

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

- ◆ Medication Policy
- ◆ Handling Allergies
- ◆ Injury Prevention
- ◆ Accident Reporting
- ◆ Location of children
  - ◆ During the day
  - ◆ During field trips
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Pool/Swimming Safety

### **ENVIRONMENT/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

- ◆ Room arrangement
- ◆ Discipline Policies
- ◆ Field Trip Policies
- ◆ Playground Policies
- ◆ Arrival and Departure Procedures
  - ◆ Late Pick-up Procedures
- ◆ Dress Code

### **COMMUNICATION**

- ◆ Confidentiality
- ◆ Staff meetings
- ◆ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Written/Oral Communication
- ◆ Absent Children
- ◆ Newsletter
- ◆ Bulletin Boards

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION/STUDENT POLICIES**

**Given quality programs readily accept the principle of being accountable, the administrator develops a plan for monitoring and regularly assessing the program to insure adherence to the developmental philosophy and curriculum. Schools will adhere to VCEA Early Childhood/Extended Day Guidelines and the Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers Serving Children. To this end, the administrator collaborates with the appropriate contingencies to provide all needed services for children and their families. Procedures governing student files and school policies are outlined in the parent handbook.**

### **STUDENT FILES**

**It is the responsibility of the principal/administrator to keep a current file for each of the students in the childhood program. This file should include:**

<b>_____ Registration Form *</b>	<b>Appendix Q</b>
<b>_____ Immunization Record * +</b>	<b>Appendix D</b>
<b>_____ Emergency Contact Information * + (Kept in triplicate/used for field trips)</b>	<b>Appendix T</b>
<b>_____ Parent Handbook Agreement Statement</b>	<b>Appendix F</b>
<b>_____ Child's Family Information Form for Teachers *</b>	<b>Appendix X</b>
<b>_____ Court Orders</b>	
<b>_____ Pick up Authorization Form *</b>	<b>Appendix Y</b>
<b>_____ Authorization to Administer Medication Form * +</b>	<b>Appendix D</b>
<b>_____ EPI-PEN and/or Inhaler (If applicable) +</b>	
<b>_____ Progress Reports</b>	
<b>_____ Release Information forms:</b>	
<b>_____ Educational projects utilizing photographs and tapes</b>	<b>Appendix AA</b>
<b>_____ Listing in Student Directories (Name, Address, Phone Numbers)</b>	

**\* Samples provided in the appendix section**

**+ Standard form required by State of Virginia and/or Diocese**

## **PARENT HANDBOOKS**

**Parent communication is a key to a successful school experience for the child, the parent and the staff. Each program should provide for parents/guardians a Parent Handbook. The handbook should contain pertinent information concerning the program. The contents of the handbook should include but are not limited to the following topics as listed in the outline. Each program is encouraged to hold a parent orientation session. Regular communication, both oral and written, to parents is essential.**

### **PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

- ◆ VCEA Vision Statement
- ◆ Mission statement
- ◆ VCEA Philosophy
- ◆ VCEA Accreditation Process

### **ADMISSION POLICIES**

#### **OPERATING INFORMATION**

- ◆ Enrollment Eligibility
- ◆ Registration
- ◆ Tuition
- ◆ Withdrawal Procedures

### **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

- ◆ School calendar
- ◆ Class schedules
- ◆ Arrival/Departure Procedures
  - ◆ Late Pick-up Procedures
- ◆ Detecting /Reporting Abuse

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

- ◆ Emergency Procedure
- ◆ Handling Allergies
- ◆ Inclement Weather
- ◆ Insurance
- ◆ Medication
- ◆ Pool/Swimming Safety
- ◆ Transportation

### **ENVIRONMENT/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

- ◆ Discipline Policies
- ◆ Dress Code
- ◆ Field Trip Policies
- ◆ Food Policy
- ◆ Home Activities/Projects
- ◆ Playground Policies
- ◆ Snacks
- ◆ Toys

### **COMMUNICATION**

- ◆ Newsletter
- ◆ Oral/Written Communication
- ◆ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Progress Reports
- ◆ Reporting Absent Children
- ◆ Tax Information

