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Characteristics of a **QUALITY CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL**



**FREDERICKSBURG
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

Educating Christian Leaders for Life

We understand how important **your child's education** is to **you** and **their future**.



You want to ensure that your child is learning in a healthy, educational environment. Choosing a quality Christian preschool for your child's care and education gives them the best opportunity for mental, physical, and spiritual growth during these critical years.

Here are eleven things to consider when discovering the best option for your child.





1

Christian Worldview

Finding a school that shares the same values and beliefs as your family should be your first and most important part of this decision.

Your child should learn about a loving and patient God and how to be patient with others in an enriching, positive environment. You want a program that is dedicated to helping your child flourish in their love for God as they grow and learn beyond basic academics.

2

Developing Emotional Skills

By the time your child begins preschool, their personality, likes, and dislikes have already become very clear. But at this age, your child has yet to fully learn how to express their emotions in an appropriate manner. Preschool children might try to snatch a toy from another child, hit, bite, and sometimes resort to tantrums.

With the help of highly qualified teachers, your child should be learning how to identify and manage their emotions. They should be learning how to express their feelings in a socially appropriate manner and:

- *Play well with others*
- *Share toys*
- *Take turns helping others*
- *Listen while others are speaking*
- *Spend time trying to complete a difficult task*
- *Be aware of other's feelings*
- *Better understand the difference between right and wrong*



3

Developing Cognitive and Motor Skills

When it comes to the cognitive skills your child's preschool should focus on, a basic list includes:

- *Memory*
- *Reasoning*
- *Logic*
- *Critical thinking*
- *Decision making*
- *Problem solving*
- *Spatial reasoning*



Each of these will lay part of the foundation for both their kindergarten readiness and their future academic success. Ask teachers and administrators to help you see how their curriculum fosters strong cognitive growth.

Fine and gross motor skill development are some of the other most important developmental milestones during a child's preschool years. Fine motor skills include:

- *Writing*
- *Zippering*
- *Turning knobs and dials*
- *Completing jigsaw puzzles*



Ideally, your child will be developing and refining these skills through fun activities like playing with blocks, painting, and using scissors. Outdoor play will strengthen gross motors skills with activities including everything from skipping to kicking a ball and hopping on one foot, along with independent and organized play.



4

Developing Language and Reading Skills

The language and reading skills children develop in preschool are some of the central academic markers of kindergarten readiness. Parental involvement at home will be one of the most important factors in your child cultivating a love of reading and all the literacy skills that go along with it. Your preschool program can have a tremendous impact on your child's desire to read and develop their language skills. A strong program will be structured to help them achieve the following:

- *Talking in full sentences that include more than two ideas*
- *An ability to follow two-step instructions*
- *Expressing ideas and communicating effectively*
- *Recognition of rhyming words*
- *Recognition of some upper and lower case letters, as well as letter sounds*

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Developing Pre-Math Skills

A good preschool foundation for future math success will focus on teaching concepts such as:

- *Size comparisons and understanding more / less / same as*
- *Size order and how to arrange things from big to small and small to big*
- *Identification and drawing shapes like circles, squares, and triangles*
- *Differentiation between numbers and letters*

6

Comprehensive Curriculum

Educational experts agree that a balance among skills acquisition, academics, and child-driven play is essential to your child's future success. Look for preschools that offer your child a wide range of learning opportunities in a variety of settings.

When it comes to evaluating a program's curriculum, it must meet goals for social, cognitive, literacy, emotional, and physical development skills. Ask if a prospective program has well-defined:

- *Child-driven activities*
- *Teacher-directed activities*
- *Large and small group activities*
- *Individual activities*



A strong curriculum combined with teachers actively partnering with parents are keys to creating a healthy, successful learning experience.

Biblical Values as Part of Daily Teaching

Growing with God should be an integral part of the teaching each day at a quality Christian preschool. Are a school's core values truly infused in the curriculum? If your child is learning about animals, are they also learning about the creation of those animals? Everything about their program should be reinforcing the Christian worldview your family shares at home.

7

School Transparency

It is hard to overstate the importance of school transparency when evaluating a preschool program. You should ask, and get clear answers, to things like:

- *How the environment is managed?*
- *What kind of experience and qualifications do the teachers have?*
- *What are the beliefs and values of your child's teachers?*
- *What is the school's educational philosophy?*
- *What is the school's discipline policy? How do teachers enforce it?*



8

Encouraging Parental Involvement

Preschools should encourage and maintain close relationships among the school, teachers, and parents to give your child the best chance for success in early education.

Together, your partnership is building a foundation that will hopefully foster your child's acceptance and foundation in Christian values that will help them throughout their entire academic career and in life.

9

A Structured Environment

Preschool will likely be one of your child's first experiences with a structured environment outside of your home. Their experience with social structure, academic structure, and more will play a significant part in how they like or don't like school for the rest of their life. That structure should provide your child with the solid educational foundation they will need in kindergarten.



10

Nurturing Socialization

Guiding the social development of a classroom full of children is no easy task, but it's one of the most critical roles your child's prospective teacher will take on. They will be helping your child learn the importance of sharing, following instructions, respecting and helping others, and additional fundamental social skills.


Pay particular attention to how the children are encouraged to play together. This is a significant area where these skills are taught and developed through age-appropriate activities.

11

Balance

Any quality Christian preschool understands the importance of balance among the three main preschool activities: play, skill development, and academics. It will value play, imagination, and creativity just as much as academics. Above everything they do, the right school for your child will protect a nurturing environment immersed with biblical values and God's word in daily teaching. When you're looking at prospective preschools it can be easy to focus on one area or another, so don't forget to look at the big picture and how a program balances all of your child's needs for growth and development!





Fredericksburg Christian School understands the importance of the journey you are on to find the right preschool. We hope this e-book is helpful and encouraging as you think about this decision.

Please don't hesitate to give us a call or schedule a visit to explore our preschool program.

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