

Parent Handbook

Flanders Valley Country Day School 6 Bartley Chester Road, Flanders, NJ 07836 Phone 973.927.7372 Fax 973.927.7310 www.FlandersValleyCountryDaySchool.com

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Welcome to the **Flanders Valley Country Day School**. We are excited about your interest in our center and are pleased that you are considering our program for your child(ren). We hope this booklet will answer your questions.

School Philosophy¹

The Early Childhood years are a period of significant growth and development in a child's life. Here at Flanders Valley Country Day School, we are dedicated to meeting the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical needs of young children at each stage of their development. We recognize that every child is unique, and strive to create a warm, caring environment that nurtures each child's self-esteem, confidence, imagination, and desire to learn. We believe that this is the foundation on which future growth and development takes place. To accomplish this, our school provides activities that foster the development of each child.

History of Flanders Valley

Flanders Valley Country Day School is a for – profit corporation, founded in March, 2005, by Aimee Krewinski. Miss Aimee started Flanders Valley in order to provide parents with a childcare facility that they could trust and feel secure about the care their child is receiving. Flanders Valley Country Day School is continuously being evaluated and improved. Our program is committed to continual program improvement.

Location

Flanders Valley Country Day School is located on Bartley-Chester Rd. Flanders, New Jersey.

Facilities

Flanders Valley Country Day School occupies a building that has spacious, well-lit rooms for children's activities and play. It has separate rooms for each age group, yet space for combined activities for various ages, allowing siblings/friends to spend time together.

Each room allows for group play as well as private space for individualized activities.

<u>Hours</u>

Flanders Valley Country Day School opens daily at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 6:30 p.m. If you are going to be later than 6:30 p.m., please notify Flanders Valley so your child and the caretaker are aware of the delay. The childcare worker will not leave Flanders Valley until a parent arrives to pick up the child.

Staff/Child Ratios²

Flanders Valley follows state mandate ratios as follows.

6 weeks-18 months	1:4
	1.4
$18 \text{mo} - 2\frac{1}{2}$ year olds	1:6
2 ¹ / ₂ - 3 year olds	1:10
4 years	1:12
5 years and older	1:15



Security Keys

6 Bartley Chester Road, Flanders, NJ 07836 Phone 973.927.7372 Fax 973.927.7310 www.FlandersValleyCountryDaySchool.com



We have a state of the art security system. It requires a special key for entry. There is a \$25.00 deposit for the key. This deposit will be returned when the key is handed in. There is a \$25.00 replacement charge for any lost keys.

Equipment

There is a large array of equipment available for indoor and outdoor play. The indoor play equipment includes items to help a child with hand-eye coordination, small and large muscle usage, as well as exploring the world through his/her senses. The outdoor equipment includes a jungle gym with two slides for all ages. There is also an indoor jungle gym for our children ages 18 months through Pre K 4's.

Programs Available

Flanders Valley offers childcare for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years old. We also offer a summer camp program for children up to 12 years of age. Our school year consists of nursery school programs, which are developmentally appropriate for two year olds, three year olds, and four year olds. (See nursery school curriculum packet for more information). We also offer Before/After School care. Children of Mountain View School and Tinc Road School are bused by Mount Olive Township. Flanders Valley offers busing from The Chester M. Stephens and Cucinella Schools, for an additional fee. In the afternoon, the children are divided into groups: the "Big Kid's" which includes six to twelve year olds, 3-5 year olds, a toddler group and infants. Each group follows their own schedules and activities.

<u>Staff</u>

When hiring staff, the director meets with each applicant and conducts a complete interview. During this extensive and thorough process, the applicant is asked his/her feelings and values toward children, discipline, and the role an adult plays in a child's life. The applicant is hired only after a second interview, which includes planning and teaching a lesson, this allows the director to observe the candidate's interaction with children.

All references are contacted to validate information given on the application during the interview process. The director is interested in the applicants experience with children, work ethic and character.

The amount of experience and education expected by a hired staff member depends on the position available and mandated by state guidelines. Flanders Valley follows the NJ state mandates, which require child abuse and criminal background checks.

The entire staff meets for on-sight training workshops four times each year. Group teachers and nursery school teachers are required to attend workshops and/or classes off the school premises, as well as visit other centers to get new ideas and keep on top of what's happening in childcare. All staff is certified annually in CPR as well as first aid.

Health and Safety of Children

All teachers and childcare workers are trained in handling minor cuts, bumps, and bruises. All workers are also trained to wash their hands often throughout the day in order to reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases. We also have the children wash their hands often for this reason.

We have a shoe free infant room which helps to keep the environment as sterile as possible. Gloves are also used for any cleanup of bodily fluids.





We will not allow a child who has a fever (101.5°F) to remain at Flanders Valley. If a fever develops during the day, we will separate him/her from the other children and call the parent/guardian to come and pick up the child within an agreed time period. This is for the sick child's sake as well as the health of the other children attending Flanders Valley.

If your child is sick with a communicable disease, please keep him/her home and call us at once so we may let other parents know. Children with fevers must remain home 24 hours post fever without medication before returning to school.

Pride is taken in the cleanliness of our school. It is cleaned daily to help reduce spreading germs.

Sick Children Policy ³

10:122-7.1 Illnesses/communicable diseases

The following provisions relate to illness and/or symptoms of illness:

- A center serving well children shall not permit a child who has any of the illnesses or symptoms of illness specified below to be admitted to the center on a given day unless medical diagnosis from a health care provider, which has been communicated to the center in writing, or verbally with a written follow-up, indicates that the child poses no serious health risk to himself or herself or to other children. Such illnesses or symptoms of illness shall include, but not be limited to, any of the following:
 - Severe pain or discomfort;
 - Acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours, or bloody diarrhea;
 - Two or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of 24 hours;
 - Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over or axillary temperature of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over in conjunction with behavior changes;
 - Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness;
 - Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin;
 - Red eyes with discharge;
 - Infected, untreated skin patches;
 - Difficult rapid breathing or severe coughing;
 - Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes;
 - Weeping or bleeding skin lesions that have not been treated by a health care provider;
 - Mouth sores with drooling; or
 - Stiff neck.

We, at Flanders Valley, abide by this law. We ask that if your child shows any of these symptoms while at home, you keep him/her there. If we send your child home with any of the above symptoms, they are not to return to school until they are <u>without the symptom for 24 hours</u> or you bring a doctor's note stating the child can be admitted back to school. For example, if at 3:00 p.m. your child is reported as having a 102°F temperature and you bring him/her back the next morning at 9:00 a.m., we cannot accept him/her because your child has not been without a fever for 24 hours. This policy is to protect all children enrolled at our center.

³ 10D01A, 5A04





Excludable Communicable Disease

We at Flanders Valley cannot permit a child or staff member with an excludable communicable disease, as set forth in the Department of Health's Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide, revised July 2011, available at

<u>http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf</u>. The following provisions are for excludable communicable diseases:

- (a) A note from the child's or staff member's health care provider states that the child or staff member, respectively, has been diagnosed and presents no risk to himself, herself or to others.
- (b) The center has contacted the Communicable Disease Program in the State Department of Health, or the local health department pediatric health consultant, and is told the child or staff member poses no health risk to others: or
- (c) If the child or staff member has chicken pox, the center obtains a note from the parent or staff member stating that all sores have dried and crusted.

If your child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, you will be notified in writing.⁴

Medication⁵

We will dispense any medication for your child but only if you fill out the appropriate form on the day you bring the medication in. Besides completing the form, you must make sure the medicine is in its original container with your child's name on it. The medication must then be given to authorized staff member who will store it out of the children's reach. If the medication is not a prescription, make sure it is age appropriate and you label the bottle with your child's name.

Our method of dispensing medication is as follows: The director, assistant director or authorized staff administers medication.

Emergencies

If a child is hurt and care is needed, we will:

- 1. Call 911 if hospital care is needed.
- 2. Do what we know is proper to help the child medically and emotionally.
- 3. Contact parent or emergency contact.
- 4. Call your child's doctor.
- 5. Make other necessary calls to assure that your child is cared for in the best way possible.

We cannot take a child in our own vehicles to the hospital or doctor. We will call the first aid squad if hospital care is needed. One of the staff will go with the ambulance if you cannot get to the school first.





<u>Fire Drills</u>

Each month, the school conducts a fire drill. All children are taught how and where to exit, and where to meet at the end of the drill. We vary the days and the time of day for these drills. The children are generally comfortable with the process though, a few need reassurances that there really is no fire. We need to practice in order to be safe.

Medical Forms

All children attending daycare or nursery school need to have a medical form filled out by their doctor with a copy of immunizations. The director furnishes the medical form which should be completed before first day of enrollment.

Other Forms/Policies

When you register your child in our nursery school and/or daycare program, you will be given a packet of forms to read and complete. The following policies are distributed during the application process and require parent/guardian signatures:

- 1. Information to Parents Document
- 2. Policy on the Release of Children
- 3. Philosophy of Discipline
- 4. Policy on the Management of Illness/Communicable Diseases
- 5. Policy on Expulsion 10:122-6.8

Confidential Information⁶

Our facility, as well as the State of New Jersey, requires that each child who is enrolled at Flanders Valley Country Day School must have confidential family and personal information on record at all times in our building. In this ever changing world we recognize how important it is that every individual's private, confidential information be kept as securely as humanly possible. All information supplied to Flanders Valley Country Day School will be kept under lock and key in the Owner/Director's secure office at all times.

Enrollment Interview

When you decide to enroll your child at Flanders Valley for either daycare or nursery school, you need to arrange an "enrollment interview" with the director. This interview is to ensure that state and school policies have been read and understood by you. The interview generally takes about 10 minutes.

Registration Fee

There is a one-time registration fee that must be paid when your child's application is submitted for either nursery school or daycare. This fee is non-refundable.

Security Deposit and Monthly Payments

Full payment may be made monthly and is due on the first day of each month. If payment is made after the 5th there will be a late fee of \$35.00 charged to your account. Payments may also be made weekly and due each Monday. After Monday a late fee of \$15.00 will be charged to your account.

A payment in the amount of two week's worth of tuition is required as a deposit and will be returned only if:





- 1. A two week notice of withdrawal is given;
- 2. The child has been enrolled for a four week period;
- 3. All tuition has been paid in full.

Payment Options:

Cash Payments

Anyone paying any fee in cash should receive a receipt. If a receipt is not offered, please ask for one, especially for large sums of money. If there is question about payment, you will need your receipt as proof.

Credit Card Payments

We are pleased to inform you that we accept Master Card, Visa and American Express. If you choose to use this method as payment, please review our payment policy.

We are also requesting that all parents have a credit card on file with Flanders Valley Country Day School. If your account falls behind, your credit card will be billed. Any service charges such as bounced checks or late fees will also be billed to your credit card.

Check Payments

You may make check payments for your child's care. If you pay by check and your check is returned to us from the bank for any reason, we will charge you \$35.00. You can issue a new check or pay cash. If this happens a second time within the same year, we will charge you an additional \$35.00 and you will have to pay cash for all future payments.

Late Fee After 6:30 P.M. - Closing Time

As a fully licensed program, the **Flanders Valley Country Day School** is required to have all parents who arrive after 6:30 p.m. to sign our Late Book. We do enjoy working with your little ones very much, but we also work long hours and have families waiting for us at home. Please pick up your children promptly by 6:30 p.m. After 6:30 p.m., a late fee will be assessed as follows: \$5.00 for the first fifteen minutes and an additional \$10.00 for any additional fifteen minute increments.

6:30 - 6:45	\$5.00
6:45 - 7:00	\$10.00 (total \$15.00)

If you do not call by 6:50 p.m. the childcare worker has been instructed to locate you by phone. If by 7:15 p.m. you still have not been located, the proper authorizes will be notified that your child is still in our care. This is in accordance with state law.

Special Circumstances

Due to state mandated child/staff ratios, our employee hours are scheduled to meet the needs of the children at their expected hours of attendance. We realize you may need to drop off or pick up your child before or after your normal hours or change your day. We are always willing to accommodate those special circumstances. There will be a \$10.00 service charge for switching days. Please provide us with 24-hour notice to ensure proper staffing.



Fundraisers

6 Bartley Chester Road, Flanders, NJ 07836 Phone 973.927.7372 Fax 973.927.7310 www.FlandersValleyCountryDaySchool.com



Throughout the year, Flanders Valley conducts fundraisers to purchase new toys or educational equipment. It is never used to pay bills, such as electricity, rent or payroll.

Many fundraisers are done with a specific goal in mind. For example, a book sale will allow parents to buy books for their child's pleasure, and the school directly filters such profits into the purchase of new books. We do not believe in raising money for paying for the daily operating costs of the center since we believe tuition only should be used for these expenses.

Parent Involvement⁷

We, the staff at Flanders Valley, feel very strongly about the importance of a child's relationship with his/her parent(s). We support this relationship in a variety of ways. First we have an open door policy that we would like parents to take advantage of. You may come and visit your child and the school any day, any time, without any announcement. Why not go into work late one day and come to nursery school for an hour, or leave work early and come play with your child and his friends on the playground? At the same time, you can observe the staff's interactions with the children and foster a comfort level in your child's school.

We also invite parents to inform us of any skill or talent you have that the children can learn from. For example, if you play an instrument or can draw cartoons, you can always be a great "show and tell" guest for your child!

We have special events throughout the year specifically designed for parent involvement. Some include helping with holiday parties and joining us on field trips. Each fall we have an informative Back to School Night. Each spring, on a Saturday afternoon, we have a Family Fun Day for the entire family.

Each year we ask parents to get involved with the Parent Advisory Board. The Board meets to help the administration in making policy and curriculum decisions. It is also called upon to bring problems to the attention of the administration as well as meeting to help solve these problems as they arise over the course of the year. The organization of social events, parent workshops, and communication between the center and parents are also concerns of the Board. It is the parents' formal opportunity to voice opinions and guide improvements towards their own values and children's needs. This should be done informally at any time, as a parent feels a need or becomes concerned. You do not have to wait for the advisory meeting to give advice. If you are interested in participating on the Board, please contact the Director.

Most importantly, you are very involved in the total development of your child. You are our link with the child's most important world- home. When we see changes in a child, we will approach you for guidance and input. We believe our role in your child's life can only be enhanced if both you and the staff communicate regularly and openly. We respect the relationship you have with your child and want only to add to that beautiful experience of parental love.

Forms of Communication

Each group teacher is encouraged and expected to communicate regularly with all of the parents of the children in his/her group. The infant /toddler and two year old teachers write a daily log to parents that include behavior







changes, as well as food consumed, diaper changes, and daily activities. Each day's activities and events are posted in each classroom for the parents of the older children to read daily. Also, the teachers of the older children are to talk to you regularly either in person or by telephone. If a particular problem or incident arises, the teacher will call or write a note home on that particular day.

Each month, the pre-school teacher sends home a class letter describing what lessons will be taught during the upcoming month. They will offer suggestions to parents on activities to extend the learning at home. This letter is really helpful for parents so they can ask specific questions about their child's day. Every other month, a school newsletter is distributed to all parents. This letter includes what is new at Flanders Valley, including policies, staff, and events. It is a fun publication because you get to read what is happening in all the age groups.

Parents are given a progress report each winter and spring. Classroom teachers use varied assessment tools to gather information about each child's developmental progress. The information is gathered in a confidential and non biased format. Each child is treated as an individual learner and is tracked from one classroom into the next. Previous work is found in each child's individual portfolio which moves with the child into each new classroom. Our teachers conduct conferences upon request; either the parent or teacher may request a conference to discuss their child's overall developmental progress.

Parent Education

We believe, in addition to caring for your child, we have a responsibility to help you grow and learn as a parent, as we grow and learn as teachers. We have a "Parents' Corner" lending library. It is located inside the office and is available to all parents with children enrolled at our school. The books are free to borrow for one month and are returned to the office.

Parking

Parents may park in the front of the building. Please do not leave the car running, or leave any children unattended while you are bringing your child in the building.

Recyclables Needed

A Daycare Center/Nursery School runs largely on their "junk" collection for art activities and games. We greatly appreciate donations when we request specific needs.

Toy Policy

Children often ask parents if they may bring toys from home to school. We request that you not bring in personal toys, unless your child is under two years old and needs a security toy for naptime.

Diapers⁸

Children who are still in diapers need to bring in their own supply of diapers and wipes. You can bring in a large box and replenish as needed, or you can bring in a diaper bag with a daily allotment in the bag. If you do not supply your diapers or you run out regularly, we will charge you \$2.00 for each diaper we use from our own backup supply.

⁸ 5A08a





Toilet Training Policy

After potty training has been initiated at home, we continue to reinforce the procedure at Flanders Valley until it is an independent process. We use an award system of stickers for each accomplishment. We take the child to the bathroom whenever he/she asks to go. If he/she does not make his/her request vocally, we take the child every hour to "try". We strive for child independence; to ask to go by him/herself, to pull down his/her own pants, wipe, flush, pull up his/her own pants, wash hands, and return to the classroom by him/herself. We ask the parents to bring many changes of clothing while the child is training, and then leave only one change of clothing once the child is successfully trained.

We do accept children in our two-year-old class in diapers. If a three-year-old is still in diapers we will work with him/her until trained, but will not take him/her on field trips unless a parent attends. Our goal is to have all children trained before they enter our four year old program.

We do not allow "pull-ups" to be used at the center unless your child is nearly always successful in using the toilet. It is much harder to change a child who uses pull-ups than one using regular diapers.

Clothing

You should dress your child for fun. Children get dirty, so please don't put on their best clothing for school. Allow them the freedom of exploring their environment without worrying about their clothes. All children are required to wear sneakers or other closed-toe shoes. For safety reasons, flip-flops and open-toed sandals are not allowed.

We strongly urge all children, regardless of age, to have a spare set of clothing at school in case of an accident. The younger your child is, the more changes he/she may need. A child prefers wearing his/her own clothing rather than borrowing clothes from Flanders Valley.

Labeling Children's Belongings

Your child needs his/her name on any article of clothing that gets removed each day such as hats, mittens, coats, boots, or sweaters. Anything else your child brings to school (such as bottles, Tupperware, lunch boxes, blankets, etc.) must also be labeled.

Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks⁹

Breakfast may be brought in and prepared for your children before 8:00 a.m. You provide lunch each day as well as eating utensils. You may send in something in Tupperware, to be heated in our microwave oven. Drinks are needed too. If your child uses a bottle, you must prepare them. A refrigerator is only available for infants, all others please use an ice pack if needed

You need to supply your own child's snacks. ¹⁰Please provide two nutritious snacks: one for the morning and one for the afternoon. FVCDS is a proud graduate of the Color Me Healthy Program. This program is geared at reducing early childhood overweight and obesity. Snacks should always be nutritious unless it is someone's birthday or we are celebrating a special holiday.



Nursing Mothers

6 Bartley Chester Road, Flanders, NJ 07836 Phone 973.927.7372 Fax 973.927.7310 www.FlandersValleyCountryDaySchool.com



All mothers are welcome to stop in to nurse their infants at any time. There is a gliding chair in the infant room that you are welcome to use. There is a refrigerator available for formula and breast milk.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special. They make a child feel important and unique. We encourage you to prepare a snack for the child's class on the day of their birthday or close to the actual date if it falls on a weekend. (cookies, cupcakes, etc.)

If you are planning a party outside of school, you may ask your child's teacher for help in listing the children your child plays with often. If you are not inviting the entire class to the party, we ask that you send the invitations through the mail so as to reduce the rejected feelings of peers.

School Holiday Closing

Flanders Valley Country Day School is closed for both day care and nursery school for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (Thursday & Friday), and a two day Christmas break.

Snow Days

Call the school's answering machine after 5:30 a.m. to see if school is closed. There are no refunds for snow days.

If during the day, a snowstorm should begin while you are at work and your child is in our care, we may have to close early. We will inform you of this event within 3-4 hours prior of our closing so you can make the necessary arrangements to pick up your child.

Attendance

Your child's attendance is not mandatory yet is necessary if the child is going to gain the most from his/her school experience. If your child is going to miss a day of school please call Flanders Valley so we can notify your child's teacher. Please note that there is a one-week vacation period free of charge. This free week may be used at any time. Please give a two-week notice to the director.

Signing In and Out

Attendance sign in/out sheets are located by the front door. It is imperative that this sheet is completed for your child daily upon entering the building and then again when leaving for the day. You will be required to post times along with your initials.

Drop Off and Pick Up of Your Child

When being dropped off, all children are to be walked into the building and into the classroom by the parent or an appropriate adult. When picking up, a parent or adult must come into the classroom to pick up the child. Your child will only be released to you, your spouse and the emergency people listed on your application. If someone different than these people are needed on a given day to assist you with picking up your child, we must have a signed note from you. This note must include the person's name, physical description, and a description of the car. If you forgot to bring in this note, you may fax in a note (973)927-7310 or give verbal





consent to the director; no other worker may accept verbal consent. Pick up person must have a Photo ID; this is for your child's safety.

Children's Required Supplies

All children will need:

- 1. A complete change of clothes, labeled and in a shoebox. * (correct season)¹¹
- 2. Two changes of underwear. *
- 3. Paint smock.
- 4. A crib or cot sheet and blanket for napping (labeled).
- 5. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal for naptime, they are welcome, but also must be labeled.
- 6. Lunch (lunch box is suggested labeled), snacks, drinks and utensils.
- 7. A package of diapers and baby wipes. *

*These items are to be kept at the school at all times and replaced when necessary.

Staff Babysitting

We take great care in hiring quality staff. We ask that you do not request our staff to baby-sit during Flanders Valley hours. They are committed to our center and philosophy and this does create a conflict.

Summer Camp

Each summer Flanders Valley sponsors a day camp for children ages 3 - 12 years old. It runs for ten weekly sessions. You can choose to send your child the entire ten weeks or only a few sessions during the summer. Once you select your weeks/days, you may not change your choice unless it is approved by the director. Each day the children enrolled in camp engage in a variety of activities, such as arts and crafts, games, outside play, water play, and a variety of other activities. We also follow weekly themes for added fun. The children are broken-down into three age groups, the 3-year-olds, the 4-5 year olds and the 6-12 year olds. The oldest group goes on three field trips every week while the younger groups go on one per month.

Summary

The staff at Flanders Valley wants you to know that we are here to assist and support you in any way that we can. We want you to be at peace about your child's care. We will strive to keep you informed about your child's progress and activities on a regular basis. If you ever need to get in touch with any teacher just ask and a message will be given to that teacher to call you as soon as possible. We are here to work with you. As you will soon experience, Flanders Valley staff truly does care and lives up to the school name.