



**VIRGINIA BEACH
FRIENDS SCHOOL**

Knowledge. Character. Community.

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

Revised 7/2022

ABOUT VIRGINIA BEACH FRIENDS SCHOOL

MISSION

Virginia Beach Friends School aims to educate the whole child, developing strong academic intellect and personal character, through recognition of each child's individual light and living the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Virginia Beach Friends School (VBFS or "Friends") is a Quaker co-educational independent day school serving students from toddler through grade 8. Small by design, Friends continues a 350-year tradition of Quaker educational principles committed to an inquiry-based curriculum and experiential learning.

ACCREDITATION

Virginia Beach Friends School is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS). It is a member of numerous national and regional associations including the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and Friends Council on Education (FCE).

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, and INCLUSION at VBFS

Virginia Beach Friends School, as a member of the Virginia Association of Independent Schools, Friends Council on Education, and National Association of Independent Schools is committed to providing an academic experience and community that recognizes diversity, equity, and inclusion at every level.

Guided by the Society of Friends Testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (*S.P.I.C.E.S.*): diversity, equity, and inclusion work are at the heart of our school's mission and ingrained into our school's curriculum through *S.P.I.C.E.S.*

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Virginia Beach Friends School is committed to maintaining an environment in which all people are respected and valued. To that end, discrimination in any form, such as that based on race, color, national origin, creed, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or other legally-protected status will not be tolerated. The School actively strives to recognize, respect, and celebrate the differences and commonalities that shape the individual and collective identities of its members. As a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, VBFS admits qualified students regardless of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The School does not discriminate on the basis of any legally protected classification in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

What does this mean to our students, families, and community members?

- As a school, we are committed *to asking, answering, and listening* to questions regarding issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels.
- As a school, we are committed *to recognizing* each individual's unique self.
- As a school, we are committed *to working* with families and students on the micro and macro issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This may range *from incorporating S.P.I.C.E.S* into a classroom discussion *to understanding* an individual's gender pronoun identifiers *to having discussions* on race at the local, state, national, or international levels.
- As a school, we are committed *to helping* students, families, and community members navigate the complexities of diversity, equity, and inclusion with an unbiased attitude and perspective.
- As a school, we are committed *to providing* a dedicated school counselor who provides a safe place to help address issues and questions surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion for students and families.

HISTORY

Virginia Beach Friends School was started in 1955 by Louise and Bob Wilson, both Quakers from North Carolina who were also instrumental in starting the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting in 1954. In her book, [A View from My Window](#), Louise Wilson outlines the history of the Meeting and school and how she and several fellow young Quakers and friends, notably Jane Waller, did everything, from driving the school bus to making lunches during the school's early months. The school maintains a strong relationship with the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting and members of the Meeting serving on the School Committee.

QUAKER HERITAGE

Quakerism began in England in the 1600s among people who were seeking a direct connection with God and religious community based on equality rather than hierarchy. Today, Quakerism continues to thrive in small but strong communities around the nation and the world, including people of Christian and non-Christian backgrounds. Quakers- also known as Friends, or members of the Religious Society of Friends- believe in the innate dignity or worth of every person, often referred to as their Inner Light, and in values such as community, non-violence, integrity, and respect for all persons. At the core of Quakers' spiritual practice is Meeting for Worship, an extended period of shared silence and reflection, that offers the opportunity for individuals to center themselves, to connect with the Inner Light, and possibly to share a heartfelt message thought to be important for the community. Quaker education strives to be socially responsible. Peace and war, racism and brotherhood, ignorance and poverty, injustice and law, violence and nonviolence – these are both subjects for study and issues for commitment for students as they seek to become effective citizens. Because Friends believe that faith requires action in the world, VBFS emphasizes the development of a caring community, peaceful resolution of conflict, and service to others. For two centuries these core beliefs and practices have formed the foundation of Quaker educational philosophy and have made Friends schools leaders in providing excellent and innovative education.

Quaker (or Friends') schools exist all over the country and the world and can differ greatly from each other in format and style. There are boarding, single-sex, college preparatory high schools as well as co-ed one-room-schoolhouse style elementary schools. While each Friends school is unique, there are some commonalities. Most Quaker schools are independent schools under the care of a "Friends Meeting" (Quaker

Church). VBFS is under the care of Virginia Beach Meeting, whose Meetinghouse is located at the front of the School's campus. Members of the meeting serve on various committees of the School and function as external support for our institution. Like all Quaker Schools, we too believe every person has an Inner Light, and through classes, Meeting for Worship, and our diverse school community we encourage every child to let their Light shine brightly. We teach students to treat one another with kindness and respect. We foster the daily practices of learning, reflection, service, and care for our school and world. And we welcome children from all faiths or no faith tradition, seeking to nurture them on their spiritual journey. Although the vast majority of students at the nation's Friends schools are not Quaker, the values and practices of Friends remain an essential part of Quaker schools. Families choose VBFS because of its history based on its Quaker heritage of providing students with a supportive educational environment that nurtures their individuality and gifts and provides a community for all its members.

SILENCE AND MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Silence is an integral part of the life of our school, and its use comes from the Quaker practice of silent worship, commonly called Meeting for Worship. In Meeting for Worship, there is no officiating clergy, and anyone who feels moved is welcome to speak. Most committee meetings begin and end with silence. Beginning with silence allows us to set aside preconceived ideas, prepare to listen to the thoughts of others, and become disposed to move forward as a group. The use of silence helps ease the transition between one activity and another. Sometimes during a meeting for business, silence is used to help refocus the meeting and ourselves. Much of the educational process is by nature busy and noisy. Teachers use silence as a balance to the busyness and rush, to provide a time to contemplate together. We hope that all students will learn to value and use silence in their lives.

Just as the spaces between notes – rests – are an essential part of music, periods of quiet time are an essential part of teaching and learning at VBFS. Every week we dim the lights, turn off the phones, close our classroom doors, and settle into silence for Meeting for Worship. In classrooms, children and teachers gather together. The developmental needs of children require different strategies to achieve a still place, both individually and as a group. Classroom teachers might read a poem or query, show a picture, or recall a specific current event. Children learn how to “center down” by counting their breaths or focusing on an object in the center of the circle. For some younger members of the community, sitting in silence might mean simply practicing being quiet. They might be given a ball of clay or soft objects to hold.

COMMUNITY

170+ students, 26 faculty, a 7-person staff, and many parents and family members comprise the Virginia Beach Friends School community. VBFS is made up of three unified divisions geared to the developmental abilities of its students (Early Childhood, Lower, and Middle Schools). VBFS fosters a spirit of sensitivity to, respect for, and celebration of all people. Students, faculty, staff, and administration take care to recognize and affirm the talents and abilities of the members of the community. VBFS nurtures the uniqueness of each individual and engages all constituents in the collaborative process of fostering students' growth and supporting their aspirations. The School promotes self-discovery, learning for its own sake, resourcefulness, conflict resolution, and compassion.

GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION

Virginia Beach Friends School is governed by a Board of Trustees whose job it is to secure the future of the School. The Board does so by setting basic policies, hiring and supporting the Head of School, undertaking strategic planning, evaluating the performance of the School, and leading in financial support of the School. The Board entrusts the daily operations of the School to the Head of School, who supervises all programs and personnel and

is the final arbiter of any disputes that may arise, including those involving parent issues or student disciplinary actions. The Board does not sit in review of administrative decisions.

Representatives to the School Committee

Representatives to the Virginia Beach Friends School Board of Trustees play a vital role in the overall short and long-term strategic vision of the school. Representatives do not play an active role in the consensus decision-making process that occurs around major strategic decisions. This is left to vetted and sitting members of the Board. However, Representatives on the Board share valuable feedback and insight concerning the constituents they represent. This feedback and insight are then considered by the Board as a whole during the consensus and strategic decision-making process.

Alumni Representative to the Board of Trustees - The Alumni Representative has an active role on the Advancement Committee working with the VBFS Director of Development to create an active VBFS alumni community. This activity is demonstrated through alumni participation at appropriate school events, by the percentage of alumni giving financially yearly, and those alumni who actively stay engaged with Friends School on multiple fronts. It's the job of the Alumni Representative to share thoughts and experiences based on his/her time at VBFS. It is these thoughts and experiences that help to shape and guide strategic insights into the school's long-term vision as a Friends School.

Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees- The job of the Faculty Representative to the Board is to regularly inform the Board about the overall health and well-being of the faculty beyond the perspective shared by the Head of School in the monthly Head of School Report. The Faculty Representative to the Board is selected by suggestions from the faculty to the head of school. The head of school then engages those faculty members who have been recommended by their colleagues to determine their willingness to participate as the Faculty Representative to the Board. Interested faculty have a discussion with the Head of School about roles, responsibilities, and time commitment. Based on a faculty member's experience, time at VBFS, and desire to participate during bi-monthly Board meetings and other Board ad-hoc sub-committees, the Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees is then selected.

Parent Representative to the Board of Trustees - The job of the Parent Representative to the Board is to regularly inform the Board about the overall health and well-being of the parent community beyond the perspective shared by the Head of School in the monthly Head of School Report. The Parent Representative to the Board also sits on the VBFS Parents' Association and conveys the happenings of the Parents' Association to the Board beyond what is already conveyed in the Head of School report.

Administrative Members to the Board of Trustees - The Head of School, Asst. Head of School/CFO, and Development Director are all ex-officio members of the Board. Ex-officio members of boards and committees, therefore, are persons who are members by virtue of some other office or position that they hold for the school.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Quaker education is globally recognized for academic excellence. The VBFS curriculum (like all Quaker schools) is guided by the Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (S.P.I.C.E.S). These testimonies are the foundation blocks for creating lifelong learners in the 21st Century. The Quaker

pedagogy translates to classrooms that are student-centered and inquiry-driven. For example, the English teacher uses the Socratic method to discuss a text and ensures all voices are heard, or the science teacher ensures each student has an extended lab period to have a hands-on experience of research and discovery. Friends School's values combined with a rigorous curriculum that in scope and sequence far exceeds the Common Core, allows its graduates to be academically prepared for higher education, but more importantly, Friends School's students are taught from little on up what it means to be kind people. Friends students immerse themselves in a warm and engaging community that inspires authentic inquiry, serious scholarship, and deep reflection. Our small class sizes and individualized instruction ultimately enable each student to grow academically but also to develop his or her sense of independence.

GIVING SUPPORT- MONETARY & TIME

Charitable giving and volunteerism are long-standing traditions at VBFS and are essential to the financial health and vitality of our school. The school that we have today was made possible by the vision and generosity of those who came before us. We are responsible for ensuring that VBFS remains a viable institution for those who come after us.

As is true with most independent schools, tuition does not cover the full cost of providing a private school education for a VBFS student. Charitable giving supplements revenue and helps meet and exceed our annual budget expenditures. The Development Director oversees all fundraising activities in concert with the Head of School, the School Committee, and the Assistant Head of School. The following questions and answers will introduce you to charitable giving at VBFS.

Q. What is the Annual Fund? The VBFS Annual Fund is the single most important fundraising initiative throughout the year and an important part of the operating budget. Gifts to the Annual Fund help to close the gap between the income received from tuition and the total cost of a VBFS education. Each year, the Annual Fund must increase to keep pace with inflation, enrollment growth, and the increased budget of the school. The Annual Fund supports academic programming, professional development, arts & enrichment programs, student financial assistance, experiential learning, campus enhancements & maintenance, and other areas of greatest need. The Annual Fund commences each July and is the cornerstone of the school's fundraising efforts throughout the year.

Q. Tuition is expensive. Why must VBFS ask for additional money? Tuition alone covers roughly 50% of the full cost of educating a VBFS student each year. Charitable contributions support our mission to provide a solid education and invaluable experience and help keep our school accessible through tuition assistance.

Q. How much should we give to the Annual Fund? VBFS needs and appreciates gifts of every size. We hope that parents and guardians will make VBFS their highest philanthropic priority while their children are students here. We encourage parents to give at a level that is proportionate to their financial ability while keeping in mind that all gifts are tax-deductible.

Q. Who supports the Annual Fund? Parents, alumni, grandparents, school committee, faculty and staff, members of Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, Quakers, and many other foundations and friends of VBFS give to the Annual Fund. The success of the Annual Fund depends on the participation of the entire community. With independent schools alike, Friends School relies on generous donors in helping us to support our offering of the best education and experience for every student. **Each family is asked to contribute to the fund as they are able and inspired to**

do so throughout the year. For accreditation purposes and support, the school seeks 100% participation from current parents.

Q. Does VBFS have any restricted funds? Yes, VBFS also raises funds for specially designated areas of interest. Please contact the Development Office for more information regarding restricted gifts.

Q. Does VBFS hold fundraising events? VBFS works with the Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) to plan and execute several fundraising events throughout the year. Family fundraising activities help strengthen our community while supporting VBFS. Participating in these activities is a great way to get involved in our community and to meet other families.

Q. What is the Make New Friends Capital Campaign? The Make New Friends Capital Campaign will fund the campus reorganization as well as the design and build of our new 18,000 square foot multipurpose building. A committee has been formed to raise \$7,000,000 over the coming years to fund this project. Giving to the Make New Friends Campaign is not to interfere with fundraising for the Annual Fund. Gifts made towards the Make New Friends Campaign will be substantial and are not to take away from any efforts of the Annual Fund.

Q. Do those who volunteer their time to VBFS also support the Annual Fund? Yes, we need both volunteers and financial contributions to thrive! Volunteerism is a vital part of our community, and parents give extraordinary gifts of time. Voluntary service is not a substitute for contributing to the Annual Fund, but VBFS is always interested in having parents become involved in the school. Volunteer support is encouraged since it helps reduce the operating costs of the school, bonds the family and the school, and assures that parental input will keep the school sensitive to its families. Parents interested in volunteer work should contact the school and/or the PTO. To volunteer at the school with children, parents will need to complete a background check. The background check needs to be conducted within 2 weeks, and we must receive clearance in advance of starting to volunteer with children. Anyone with a disqualifying conviction, for example, a volunteer driver who has had a DUI in the last 10 years, will be unable to drive students.

FRIENDS SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Friends School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) exists to build a strong sense of community and connect parents, faculty/staff, and external supporters to positively impact our students and their experiences.

The PTO is involved in several activities including:

- Special Events such as Trunk or Treating
- Faculty support, recognition, and appreciation
- Fundraising
- Community Service such as Spirit Rising initiatives

Members of PTO include parents, guardians, grandparents, alumni, teachers, members of the Virginia Beach Friends Meeting, and anyone in the larger community interested in contributing to the mission of the organization.

DAILY SCHOOL LIFE

Schedule

The School office and buildings are opened at 7:45 am for arriving students. The academic day begins promptly at 8 am and concludes at 3:00 pm. The main office is staffed from 7:45 am until 3:45 pm. Early Arrival begins each

day at 7:00 am and an extended day is offered each day until 6:00 pm.

Morning Drop-off

- We encourage all families to utilize curbside drop-off and pick-up throughout the school year.
- Parents of Cottage-age students **are required** to park and bring their children into the cottage. Priority parking will be given to Cottage parents along the fence that borders the traffic circle on the right, and in the mornings between the cones on the cottage side of the loop. Please use the crosswalk to cross the parking lot for safety purposes.
- Parents of Pre-Kindergarten and Early Kindergarten students may park and walk their children each morning. Please park along the fence circle and walk the children to their classes. Please use the crosswalk for safety purposes.
- At any time, if a parent feels the need to park and walk a child to Kindergarten or Lower School, please do so. Please park along the fence that borders the traffic circle on the right. Please use the crosswalk for safety purposes.

Afternoon Dismissal

Our students' safety is our primary concern, and we ask that everyone adhere to the following guidelines.

- All parents are encouraged to utilize curbside pick-up.
- Parents will be issued a laminated card with the child/children's last name on them. Please display the passenger side of your vehicle's dashboard so that the dismissal team can easily read it.
- Parents that have alternate pick-up arrangements with an authorized designee must have the necessary documentation on file. Please ask the authorized designee to make sure they have a government-issued photo ID ready to be displayed for verification purposes.
- All adults should pick students up by entering the Laskin Road entrance to the School.
- Parents of Cottage-age students are required to park along the fence that borders the traffic circle on the right and walk in to get their children.
- Adults picking students up may begin to arrive by 2:45 pm daily.
- All students will be dismissed starting at 3:00 pm. VBFS faculty will call students by name to the front of the school via walkie-talkie to waiting cars.
- Parents electing to park and walk in to pick their child up may do so. Please exercise caution when crossing the parking lot. Please park along the fence to the right of the traffic circle.
- Do not block the area near the faculty parking lot or the handicapped parking area.
- Do not double park on the circle or park in the fire lanes, designated by unbroken double lines.
- Parking is limited to the area in front of the Meeting House, along the fence, or under the pine trees on the west side of the driveway.
- Children are not permitted to cross the driveway unless accompanied by an adult.
- After 3:15 p.m., students who have not been picked up **must** be picked up in either the Main Office or the Library where they will be waiting unless they are assigned to go to late departures.

Special Notes: Please remember that the speed limit for the school's parking lots and driveways is **5 mph**. There will be designated staff members out along the driveways directing traffic during drop-off and pick-up times. We ask that all parents and authorized pick-up/drop off designees follow the directions of those staff members so that drop-off and pick-up go as smoothly as possible for everyone. If a parent has an immediate concern that they need

to address with a staff person or would like to chat with another parent after dropping off or picking up their child/children, please park along the wooden fence to the right of the traffic circle.

Recess

Early School and Lower schools will have 2 recesses a day. We recognize the importance of unstructured outdoor play and will seek to get the students outside as often as possible, which will be most days. Please be sure your child has weather-appropriate gear for sun, rain, and snow. We ask that you also send a labeled water bottle for your child to refill daily. All children will be expected to wear a coat for outdoor recess when the temperature is below 40 degrees.

Attendance & Absences

The single most important factor in ensuring academic success and successful socialization with one's peers is prompt and regular attendance. For this reason, absences from school for any reason are discouraged. The Office Manager, advisor, and class teacher keep attendance records for each student. **If a child will be missing school for any reason the parent needs to report the absence in PCR. If a child is sick or late to school the parent must call the office by 8:15 on the day of the absence or tardy.** Parents may be asked to provide medical documentation for absences. In some cases, students may be placed on probation and/or may forfeit privileges due to excessive absences or tardiness.

The school is aware that in extreme cases family commitments do not fit into school breaks. The occasional special trip is understandable. However, week-long ski trips, cruises, etc. during the regular school schedule or extending regular school vacations are highly disruptive to the planned curriculum. **Only the Head of School or designee can determine whether an absence or a tardy is excused or unexcused.**

Arriving Late or Leaving During the School Day

Children are expected to arrive at school on time. Repeated lateness can impact a child's academic and social participation at school and is often disruptive to the class that is already in session. Any student who arrives at school after 8:05 am must check into the Main Office upon arrival. Any student who needs to leave school for an appointment during the school day must report the pickup in PCR. When returning to campus from an appointment, parents/guardians of Early and Lower School students must sign the student in/out in the main office.

Absences and Tardies for Middle School

Parents report all absences in the PCR system. Students should check PCR for assignments and are responsible for communicating with teachers about needed make-up work as soon as they are able. Parents need to arrange for student work to be picked up during an extended absence. Students need to complete any missed assignments as soon as possible. All classwork and tests must be made up upon returning from the absence; after this, students may receive a 0 for assignments that have not been completed within the timeframe established by the teacher.

Being Sick or Becoming Sick at School

Any student who has a fever of 100.4 before attending school should not attend school this day. Any student who develops a fever of 100.4 during the academic day will be sent home. Students must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school.

Middle School Students are subject to the following policies

- Students who are absent more than 20% of classes in a semester will be lowered one academic grade. Subsequent absences beyond 20% can see further grade reduction or loss of full credit.
- Parents may make a written request with the Head of School or designee for extenuating circumstances; classroom teachers may not excuse excessive absences without prior approval on file.
- Students are expected to arrive for class on time. Students who are more than one minute late for class or advisory will be marked tardy. Three unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence.
- Students who are asked to leave a class because of inappropriate behavior will be sent to the VBFS School Counselor or main office to speak with the Academic Dean or Head of School.

Being on time for Advisory and Class

Advisory is an important part of the day for community building among students and ensuring the advisor or teacher has time to check in with the student and deliver news and announcements for the day. We expect all students to be in their advisory by 8 am. We also expect students to be in their class at the start of the period, so the teacher can begin teaching all students without disruption. There are 5 minutes of passing time between classes to ensure this is possible. Chronic lateness to advisory period may lead to disciplinary consequences.

Visitors

All visitors must have an appointment with the administration or a faculty member to enter any building on campus. All visitors must sign in at the Main Office and obtain a visitor pass. Please present a photo ID when signing in.

Volunteering

All parent volunteers who would be alone with, in control of or supervising students, must undergo a criminal history check and abuse and neglect check, as well as sign a sworn statement of affirmation. If a volunteer has been convicted of a barrier crime, as defined in Va. Code § 19.2-392.02, or has been the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect, they may not volunteer at Virginia Beach Friends School if they would otherwise be alone with, in control of or supervising students. Volunteers of Virginia Beach Friends School who may be alone with, in control of, or supervising students are required to consent to equivalent criminal history and abuse and neglect background checks for all states in which they have resided within the past 5 years. All volunteers of Virginia Beach Friends School must undergo both the criminal history check and the abuse and neglect check every 5 years. If parents would like to volunteer, please contact the Business Office to undergo the proper background checks before offering to volunteer.

Additionally, subject to narrow exceptions, anyone convicted of a sexually violent offense is prohibited from engaging in any volunteer activity at VBFS:

- During school hours and during school-related and school-sponsored activities, upon school property;
- On any school bus;
- Upon any property, public or private, during hours when such property is solely being used by the school for school-related or school-sponsored activity.

HEALTH & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Families are required to file all Student Information in PCR, giving telephone numbers where a parent can be

reached and providing authorization for emergency medical treatment as well as the names of doctors and hospitals preferred and insurance carried. Yearly physicals and Immunization records must be uploaded into PCR. These forms need to be updated each year. If there are any changes throughout the school year to emergency phone numbers or contacts, the parent must share this new information in writing to the school office. As of July 1, 2021, The Virginia Department of Health issued changes made to School requirements for Immunizations. Please look over these requirements and confer with your physician, to make sure your child is up to date with all shots:

Diphtheria, Tetanus, & Pertussis (DTaP, DTP, or Tdap) - A minimum of 4 properly spaced doses. A child must have at least one dose of DTaP or DTP vaccine on or after the fourth birthday. DT (Diphtheria, Tetanus) vaccine is required for children who are medically exempt from the pertussis-containing vaccine (DTaP or DTP). Adult Td is required for children 7 years of age and older who do not meet the minimum requirements for tetanus and diphtheria. Effective July 1, 2021, a booster dose of the Tdap vaccine is required for all children entering the 7th grade.

Meningococcal Conjugate (MenACWY) Vaccine - Effective July 1, 2021, a minimum of 2 doses of MenACWY vaccine. The first dose should be administered before entering 7th grade. The final dose should be administered before entering 12th grade.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine - Effective July 1, 2021, a complete series of 2 doses of HPV vaccine is required for students entering the 7th grade. The first dose shall be administered before the child enters the 7th grade. After reviewing educational materials approved by the Board of Health, the parent or guardian, at the parent's or guardian's sole discretion, may elect for the child not to receive the HPV vaccine.

Hepatitis B Vaccine - A complete series of 3 properly spaced doses of hepatitis B vaccine is required for all children. However, the FDA has approved a 2-dose schedule ONLY for adolescents 11-15 years of age AND ONLY when the Merck Brand (RECOMBIVAX HB) Adult Formulation Hepatitis B Vaccine is used. If the 2-dose schedule is used for adolescents 11-15 years of age it must be clearly documented on the school form.

Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR) Vaccine - A minimum of 2 measles, 2 mumps, and 1 rubella. (Most children receive 2 doses of each because the vaccine usually administered is the combination vaccine MMR). The first dose must be administered at age 12 months or older. The second dose of vaccine must be administered before entering kindergarten but can be administered at any time after the minimum interval between dose 1 and dose 2.

Haemophilus Influenzae Type b (Hib) Vaccine - This vaccine is required ONLY for children up to 60 months of age. A primary series consists of either 2 or 3 doses (depending on the manufacturer). However, the child's current age and not the number of prior doses received govern the number of doses required. Unvaccinated children between the ages of 15 and 60 months are only required to have one dose of vaccine.

Pneumococcal (PCV) Vaccine - This vaccine is required ONLY for children less than 60 months of age. One to four doses, dependent on age at first dose, of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, are required.

Rotavirus Vaccine - This vaccine is required ONLY for children less than 8 months of age. Effective July 1, 2021, 2 or 3 doses of Rotavirus Vaccine (dependent upon the manufacturer) are required.

Polio (IPV) Vaccine - A minimum of 4 doses of polio vaccine. One dose must be administered on or after the fourth birthday. See supplemental guidance document for additional information.

Varicella (Chickenpox) Vaccine - All children born on and after January 1, 1997, shall be required to have one dose of chickenpox vaccine administered at age 12 months or older. Effective March 3, 2010, a second dose must be administered before entering kindergarten but can be administered at any time after the minimum interval between dose 1 and dose 2.

Hepatitis A (HAV) Vaccine – Effective July 1, 2021, a minimum of 2 doses of Hepatitis A vaccine. The first dose should be administered at age 12 months or older.

If your child is exempt from immunizations, a Certificate of Religious exemption must be obtained, signed by a Notary Public and uploaded into SchoolCues, and kept on file.

Medication & Prescription Drugs

The administering of medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, requires written authorization from a doctor. The form is available in the main office. Students are to come to the office at the prescribed times to take the medication.

Accidents

First Aid supplies for minor injuries are available at the school. In the event of serious injury to a student, either the teacher or the office staff will notify the parents immediately, and 911 may be called if necessary. Families are reminded of the importance of carrying adequate medical coverage. The school does not carry health or accident coverage for students.

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found is located in the Sick Bay Room located behind the reception desk in the main office. Articles not claimed will be donated. Students are strongly encouraged to put their names on their clothing, lunch boxes, etc. for easy identification and return.

FIELD TRIPS

All classes are encouraged to take field trips that enhance student learning and enrich classroom experiences. The school will provide or arrange transportation on all field trips. When traveling in a school vehicle, please observe these guidelines:

- Food and drinks are not allowed in the van or bus.
- Law requires all passengers to wear a seatbelt on the 14-seat bus.
- Please use quiet voices at all times.
- Students are responsible for leaving the van or bus clean, neat and ready for the next group.

Students are representing Virginia Beach Friends School whenever they are on a field trip. Their behavior is expected to reflect positively on VBFS at all times. Teachers will advise students of dress requirements before the trip.

It is a policy that anyone – faculty or parent – driving students to or from a school-sponsored activity must have a

valid driver's license and proof of insurance on file in the business office. All parents volunteering on field trips or other activities throughout the school day must pass a background check. Please contact the Assistant Head of School for information on how to volunteer on campus and obtain the required documents.

At times, parent chaperones may be utilized to assist with school related field trips. Teachers will provide more information about how parents can assist with chaperone duties on field trips when trips are scheduled.

Smoking is not permitted. It is also school policy and state law that seat belts be used at all times by all passengers, and no Early or Lower School students should ride in seats with airbags.

In Middle School, Virginia Beach Friends School students participate in a number of overnight field trip experiences. Overnight field trips are wonderful opportunities for students to bond outside the traditional classroom setting while engaging in academic work that enhances their academic experience.

Prior to overnight trips, VBFS faculty will communicate trip expectations to students and parents. Typically, packing lists are provided depending on the parameters of the trip. The school understands that for many students, depending on age and grade level, an overnight Middle School Field Trip may be their first experience away from home. VBFS faculty and administration recognize this fact and take extra care to ensure each student has a wonderful overnight experience.

Students are only permitted to bring cellular devices on trips for photography purposes only. During overnight field trips, faculty chaperones collect cell phones and digital devices at night prior to students going to bed. Faculty members will allow students to call home each night they are away from home for parent check-ins if they want. After this call, cell phones will be collected again prior to students retiring for the night. This is to avoid any unsupervised cell phone use in bedrooms overnight. Each morning, students will receive phones for photography purposes during daily excursions.

During overnight trips, faculty and administration thoughtfully group students by gender for communal sleeping arrangements. When possible and space allows, a faculty chaperone of the same sex may stay in the students' room. An example of this is the Camp Silver Beach Trip. During the Middle School Camp Silver Beach Trip, one faculty member will stay in each student cabin.

During overnight trips that require hotel stays, students of the same sex are placed in groups of four students per room with two students sharing a bed. If a faculty member feels uncomfortable with students being alone in a room based on behavior, student health, or extenuating circumstances, the chaperone (male or female) may ask for a cot from the hotel and stay with the students.

In the event a student who uses a different pronoun beyond their pronoun assigned by birth requests sleeping arrangements that recognize their assigned pronoun, the school will engage in thoughtful conversations with the student and student's family to determine the most suitable sleeping arrangements.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are not required to purchase textbooks. All textbooks will be distributed and collected by classroom

teachers in the Lower and Middle Schools. Textbooks and CDs and school devices are the property of Friends School and are to be used by students for several years. Lower and Middle School students **MUST** return their textbooks, CDs, devices, and other books in good condition at the end of the year. If the books or devices have been lost or damaged, the student's family will be responsible for the cost of a new book or CD, or device.

COUNSELING AT VBFS

A counselor works with students, advisors, teachers, and parents to provide support in academic and social/emotional matters. Anyone can self-refer or refer others to the counselor. Please contact the School Counselor and the [website](#) for more information on services.

PERSONAL DEVICES

The academic day is designed to maximize student learning and community building. Upon arriving at VBFS, students should always be able to engage with other adults and classmates. To this end, all students upon arriving who are using a personal listening device should remove at least one earbud and acknowledge adults and classmates to show common courtesy. During the academic day, personal music, gaming, or similar electronic devices are not to interfere with learning and community-building objectives. However, the School understands that some students during free periods and study halls use personal devices to help them better focus and/or listen to audiobooks. Personal devices are to be used in classrooms and supervised study halls only with the permission of a teacher. If students bring any of these devices to school and abuse this privilege, the device(s) will be confiscated and returned to the parent.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are a part of daily life. VBFS encourages responsible use of mobile devices for all students, regardless of age.

- Lower and Middle School students may not have cell phones out during the academic day. If a student needs to contact their parents for an urgent matter during the school day they can ask their advisor for permission to use the school phone. Any Lower/Middle School student found to be using their cell phone during the day will be given a warning and told to put the device in their backpack or cubby. If a student is given a second warning, the cell phone will be confiscated by the teacher.
- The use of cell phones, including texting, is frowned upon during the academic day. Students should only do so in case of emergency. Students found texting or using cell phones during class without teacher permission will have his/her device confiscated.
- Any cell phone brought to school must be switched off or be placed on silent mode during class and community times.
- Cell phone use during class time is strictly prohibited without the permission of the instructor.

Cell phone violations will result in confiscation of the cell phone. It will be held in the School Office to be picked up at the end of the day from the Head of School or Academic Dean.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Website-General information about our school and a calendar of school activities are available on the School's

website.

PCR- Grades, attendance, and student contact information can be found in PCR. It provides a valuable link between the school and family and can be used to contact teachers. Please ensure you have a password to access the system. Parents should have a functioning account at all times. In Middle School, PCR is used for daily assignments and grading. While it is the student's responsibility to stay up to date with assignments through PCR and to achieve their academic success, parent access to PCR enables you to view your child's progress regularly.

PCR is the primary student information system where parents will report absences, tardies and submit required documents throughout the school year. Weekly emails from SchoolCues will be sent with updates from the week of school.

Phone Messages

To reach a teaching faculty member during the school day, please call the main office and the office manager will relay the message to the teacher. Non-teaching employees have a voice mail extension that is listed in the school directory. When the message is received, employees are expected to return phone calls by the end of the next business day.

Email

All employees have a school email account and are required to check it regularly. Email is an excellent way to communicate with teachers as class schedules rarely allow for teachers to return calls during the school day. Once the email is received, employees are expected to return email messages by the end of the next business day.

School Closing

Should it be necessary to close school for the day or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, announcements will be made on WTKR-TV 3, WAVY-TV 10, WVEC-TV 13, Facebook, and the School Website. You should also be notified by the automated telephone system from PCR. The school will use the contact numbers provided on the Student Information form submitted by parents; promptly notify the school of a change in your phone number. In all cases of inclement weather, parents should assess road conditions in their areas to determine if it is safe to drive.

RE-ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS

Student contracts are awarded on an annual basis. A contract may be withheld due to academic or citizenship probation or if financial accounts are not current. Additionally, the school reserves the right to suspend students from school if the account is in arrears for 90 days or more. For a contract to be considered accepted, it must be signed with an accompanying tuition payment plan (ie: FACTS), tuition fees (if applicable), and the enrollment deposit. Students will not be offered a contract for the next school year until all account balances have been paid.

Tuition Assistance

Need-based financial aid is available for all prospective and returning Virginia Beach Friends School families who apply, on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications for aid along with tax returns are to be submitted to FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment. However, the process cannot be completed until a signed contract is returned along with the deposit to Friends School. Please contact the Assistant Head of School for more information.

Parent Covenant

Virginia Beach Friends School believes that a positive and constructive partnership between the school and a student's parents or guardian is essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission. For this reason, Friends School reserves the right not to continue enrollment or not to re-enroll a student if, in the sole opinion of the school administration, the actions of the parent or guardian make such a positive, constructive relationship impossible or otherwise interfere with the school's accomplishment of its educational purposes.

INFORMATION FOR THE FAMILIES OF EARLY AND LOWER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Extended Day

The Before Care program for ALL students begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 8:00 a.m. Students from age 2.5 through 4th grade will check in with the Extended Care Specialist in the Pre-Kindergarten room of the Fox Building. **Parents are required to sign in all students who join the Early Arrivals program and may not drop them off to walk to the building alone.**

The Extended Day program for Early and Lower School students begins each afternoon at 3:00 when the classroom teacher delivers the child to extended care and ends at 6:00 p.m. In good weather, Late Departures will play on the front playground. During the hours of operation of the Extended Care program, the front playground is exclusively for use of this program. If the weather is inclement, Extended Care will be held indoors in the designated classrooms. Early School and Lower School students (cottage-4th) are expected to be picked up by 3:15 p.m or to have been registered for extended care to ensure our staff-to-student ratios. All Early School and Lower School students who have not been picked by 3:15 will be taken to aftercare and parents will be charged the daily fee and the late registration fee. If your child will not be attending extended care on a given day, please notify the school in advance so that we are able to ensure that all Extended Day students are properly accounted for. **ALL students must be signed out by a parent or guardian when leaving After Care. Parents will be charged \$10.00 every five minutes after 6:00 p.m.**

Notes on Extended Care

Electronic devices are STRICTLY prohibited during the Extended Care program unless the students are completing work on their school-issued Chromebook/computer or the Extended Care Specialist has elected to use electronic devices as part of the program that day. Students who are enrolled in the extended care program should be utilizing their time to complete homework, read a book, or enjoy the additional time with their friends. NON-electronic toys, games, activities, etc. that are sent to school with the child are permitted as long as they are able to be shared with other students while in the Extended Care program.

If a designated individual is picking up your child from extended care, the school must be notified in advance of pick up and the individual must bring a photo identification to show to extended day staff.

All students in the Extended Care program are REQUIRED to be pre-registered/enrolled. Failure to pre-register your student will result in late fees, in addition to the regular cost of the program (please see pricing options on the main website for more details).

If you have questions or need to talk about the Extended Care program beyond daily classroom issues, please contact our Director of Special programming, Sarah Combs via email at sarah@vbfschool.org.

Extended Day Middle School

Middle School students (5th-8th grade) are expected to leave or be picked up by 3:15 p.m. unless in a school-supervised activity. VBFS is not responsible for any Middle School students who remain on campus unsupervised or who leave campus and return. After 3:15 pm, students who have not been picked up MUST be picked up in either the main office or the Library where they will be waiting. **The safety of our students is of primary concern. ALL students must be signed out by a parent or guardian when leaving the VBFS campus.**

FOOD AT VBFS

Snack and Lunch for Lower School

All VBFS students bring their snacks and lunch and eat at the picnic tables on the playground or in classrooms when the weather does not permit eating outside. VBFS also partner's with YAY LUNCH! a local catering program that provides healthy lunches to our students from local restaurants.

When bringing their lunch to school, parents are asked to provide nutritious snacks that may include fruits, vegetables, crackers, cheese, popcorn, nuts, and yogurt. PLEASE, no sodas or candy for snacks or lunches. Depending on the students in a class or school there may be some restrictions placed on what foods can be brought to school- please check with your teacher at the beginning of the year.

VBFS is a peanut-free campus. Peanuts are not permitted on school property.

Lunch for Middle School

Middle School students must sit quietly and eat for the first 15 minutes of the lunch period. All Middle School students will then be dismissed by the teacher on Lunch Duty for a break outside or in a classroom during inclement weather. All students are responsible for cleaning up their lunch trash and washing the tables. Students bring their lunches or place an order from YAY LUNCH! No Middle School students may leave school at lunch. Microwaves are available in most of the classrooms. Food is not permitted during class time unless otherwise permitted by the classroom teacher.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Observing Religious Holidays

We want to support the spiritual development of all our students and recognize that observation of religious holidays may come in conflict with our school calendar. Any student who wants to observe a religious holiday and is unable to attend classes, practices, complete homework, or participate in an assessment on a particular day with written permission from a parent or guardian will be excused from any such requirement. The student will be provided an opportunity to make up such requirements within a reasonable timeline as established by the school

without any punitive effect. Since religious holidays are known in advance, we ask that students participate in the school's systems for alerting the teachers and coaches well in advance of the absence. We are committed to an environment where students are not penalized and do not suffer any adverse effects because of their religious beliefs or practices.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Guiding Principles

VBFS is committed to ensuring the safety of all students to live and learn in a healthy environment. Therefore, it is the policy of the school to hold each student responsible for the conduct of his/her behavior. The discipline system used at VBFS is based on restorative practices and has been developed to aid students in recognizing the necessity for controlling both their emotions and their behaviors, as well as for learning what is and what is not acceptable behavior. This outline is only intended to provide a general guideline for student discipline. Since each incident presents a unique set of circumstances, VBFS has the discretion to determine the ultimate level of discipline for each incident regardless of this general outline. However, the School intends for these guidelines to be followed to the extent practicable.

Discipline Procedures

VBFS expects that all students, regardless of age, will comport themselves using the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship as their guiding principles. In this regard, the failure of a student to do so may lead to disciplinary consequences ranging from a conversation with a teacher or administrator to dismissal.

Discipline issues in the **Early and Lower schools** will be managed by the classroom teacher and parents on a case-by-case basis. The Head of School or designee will intervene in cases of repeated problems. The main objective of the Early and Lower School discipline policy is to assist students in making positive behavioral choices. Established consequences will help students develop responsible citizenship. The progression of consequences may be overridden at any time by the severity of the behavior. Behavioral records will be reviewed at parent/teacher conferences.

In general, **Early and Lower School** students respond favorably to classroom reminders in the event of unacceptable behavior. The following courses of action are designed for students who need additional objective disciplinary guidelines and will be applied on a progressive basis.

- The student will work with the teacher/counselor to set and write goals.
- Parents must review and sign goals.
- A student's failure to improve behavior may result in a parent/teacher conference.
- A student's failure to improve behavior may result in disciplinary consequences that are in line with the student's offense.
- A student's continued failure to improve will result in a parent conference with the Head of School. Based on this conference, other expectations may be implemented to ensure a student's success at VBFS (i.e. counseling, outside professional evaluation, etc.)
- A student's continued failure to improve behavior may result in separation from the school and

ultimate dismissal.

Middle School Discipline

Discipline issues in **Middle School** are first dealt with by the classroom teacher. If a student does not respond to the direction of his/her classroom teacher, the teacher will involve the advisor and an administrator.

Behavior violations for Middle School students have a wide range. Depending on the age of the student and the severity of the discipline infraction, disciplinary consequences range from minor infractions to major infractions.

Every disciplinary situation is dealt with on a case-by-case basis addressing the situation at hand considering the age of the student involved along with any past disciplinary history the student may or may not have. All disciplinary decisions and ultimate consequences are made with students' best interests at heart with the ultimate goal of helping students grow from the experience.

Minor Infractions

- Ignoring or disobeying classroom expectations set by teachers- use of cell phone, eating in class when told not to, chewing gum, etc
- Inappropriate hallway behavior- too noisy, disrespectful language
- Classroom disruption
- Late to class (more than five minutes)
- Unexcused absence
- Unexcused presence (loitering on the campus/not reporting to an appropriate extended day facilitator)

Concerning lateness to class and unexcused absences, three unexcused tardies to class and one unexcused absence will lead to a Disciplinary Study Period (DSP). DSP will be served after school on Wednesdays from 3:00 pm to 3:45 pm in the VBFS library.

Some behavior violations are more severe: theft; academic dishonesty; fighting; being under the influence of or possessing alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs or associated paraphernalia during the academic day (whether on or off campus) or at a school-sponsored event; possession of a weapon or a replica of a weapon; harassment or verbal or electronic abusive behavior toward a teacher or student; or any conduct on or off-campus that brings discredit to the school are examples but are not an all-inclusive list. These types of infractions will be referred to the Head of School or designee. Appropriate consequences will be determined and may include suspension, limitation of campus privileges, expulsion, or other consequences.

Major Infractions

- Disrespectful behavior
- Academic dishonesty (including plagiarism, cheating on a test, etc.)
- Dishonesty
- Misuse of technology
- Vandalism
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Drug or Alcohol use while on VBFS grounds

- Theft
- Bullying or Harassing Behavior at VBFS or online outside of school hours
- Violence toward another student or adult on campus
- Egregious behavior not in line with Virginia Beach Friends School philosophy

Bullying Policy

Virginia Beach Friends School Social Cruelty Response Program – VBFS believes that every student has the right to learn in a supportive environment free from bullying.

VBFS does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying, harassment, or discrimination based on sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Such misconduct is prohibited on the school's campus, on the school vehicle, and at school-sponsored events, activities, and off-campus trips. Additionally, such online misconduct is prohibited. VBFS seeks to provide all students, including transgender, non-binary, gay, lesbian, and/or bi-sexual students with a safe school environment and promptly address complaints of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

To create a climate in which all students can be free from bullying, VBFS has the following procedures and protocols in place to address such issues.

If a student or parent feels an incident of bullying has occurred, or if you believe that your child is engaging in bullying behavior or being bullied:

First, please speak to your child's teacher promptly. At any time, a student can confidently speak to a teacher, the Academic Dean, or the Head of School about a perceived incident of bullying.

Second, a parent/student may fill out a Bullying Incident Form found in the VBFS Main Office. This will allow the school to fully investigate any accusations of bullying.

Last, after a full investigation by VBFS, the school will follow up, as necessary, with all parties involved and written documentation will be mailed home summarizing the school's conclusions concerning the investigation and allegations.

Outcomes. Virginia Beach Friends School's response to confirmed acts of bullying includes a set of escalating consequences administered by the Assistant Head of School with collaboration from the classroom teacher shall include, but not be limited to: warnings and admonitions, reflective writing, parent notification, and meetings, loss of school privileges, detention, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension.

A demonstrated pattern of bullying will lead to a meeting with the Head of School and ultimately, dismissal from school may be a consequence for students who engage in bullying behavior.

Bullying as defined by the state of Virginia

"Bullying means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim, and is

repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. ‘Bullying’ includes cyberbullying. ‘Bullying’ does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.”

Bullying is characterized by the following:

- Intentionally aggressive behavior designed to inflict harm;
- Repetitive behavior planned into the future;
- Interpersonal relationships, marked by an imbalance of power.

Bullying behavior often occurs without apparent provocation and is considered a form of abuse (i.e., peer abuse). Such peer abuse may be manifested both openly and directly or subtly and indirectly. Bullying may be communicated directly, in person, or via other communication methods, including via technology (cyberbullying). Bullying may be physical or emotional. Physical bullying includes: hitting, punching, poking, shoving, pinching, jabbing, kicking, choking, unwanted touching, blocking, chasing and cornering, tripping, vandalizing, stealing, and writing graffiti (on both public and private property and by use of computers or other technological devices).

Emotional bullying includes name-calling; threatening; taunting; malicious and incessant teasing; spreading rumors; mocking; public humiliation; stalking; making faces or obscene gestures; making offensive racial, religious, or sexual comments; ganging up on others; belittling; persistently excluding others from a group or activity (shunning); ignoring and lying. Bullying also encompasses...

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Intentional false reporting of bullying or harassment is considered retaliation.
2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with the intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm by a. inciting, goading, or coercing, b. accessing, or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to, data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the school division’s system, and c. acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying, e.g., hazing.

Bullying is of concern for a school division when an incident occurs at any time during an education program or activity conducted a. at any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity; b. on a school bus or chartered transportation for school-sponsored activities and other means of transportation funded by public schools; c. in any community setting where the behavior or interaction of students extended beyond the school environment but has a negative impact on the academic setting; 2 or d. through a communication device, computer system, or computer network in a school or off-campus which poses a reasonable forecast of substantial disruption of school activities.

The expression, physical act, or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual or by and other distinguishing characteristics.

Cyberbullying as defined by the state of Virginia: Cyberbullying refers to any threats by one student toward another typically through emails or on Websites (e.g., blogs, social networking sites). Electronic communication

that supports deliberate, hostile, hurtful messages intended to harm others is a form of bullying. Cyberbullying includes such things as sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive, private information about another person; pretending to be someone else to make that person look bad; defamatory online personal polling Websites.

The complete Statewide Bullying policy can be found in the VBFS Office or online at the website address listed below.

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/bullying/model_policy_to_address_bullying_in_va_schools.pdf

Again, if you believe that your child is engaging in bullying behavior or being bullied, please speak to your child’s teacher or the appropriate administrator promptly.

The school seeks to incorporate sexual orientation, gender diversity, transgender, and gender non-conforming education into its curriculum, anti-bullying, and non-discrimination programming, and faculty and staff professional development to help promote a safe and supportive school environment.

Additionally, hazing any student, so as to cause bodily injury is illegal, and any person convicted is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, punishable by up to 12 months in jail, and a fine of up to \$2,500.

DIVERSITY AT VIRGINIA BEACH FRIENDS SCHOOL

Guidelines

To create and promote a safe and supportive educational environment, VBFS adopts these guidelines to address the needs of gender diverse and/or gay, lesbian, or bisexual students.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination related to Diversity

VBFS does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying, harassment, or discrimination based on sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Such misconduct is prohibited on the school’s campus, on the school vehicle, and at school-sponsored events, activities, and off-campus trips. Additionally, such online misconduct is prohibited. VBFS seeks to provide all students, including transgender, non-binary, gay, lesbian, and/or bi-sexual students with a safe school environment and promptly address complaints of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

Affirmation of Gender Identity

VBFS recognizes that the responsibility for determining a student’s gender identity rests with the student. VBFS honors a student’s assertion of gender identity.

Names/Pronouns

VBFS strives to honor students’ sincerely-held gender identities by addressing students with their chosen name and pronoun. The school does not require students to undergo a legal name or pronoun change to recognize such requests. The school may communicate with a student’s family about a request to use a chosen name or pronoun at school.

The school will ask community members to honor students' requests to be addressed with a chosen name and pronoun. While inadvertent slips or honest mistakes in the use of chosen names or pronouns may occur, VBFS will not tolerate intentional and persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity by using the wrong name and/or pronoun. When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender or non-binary student, VBFS will strive to adhere to the student's preferences regarding name and pronoun use for such communications.

Student Privacy

VBFS seeks to ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to all students, including transgender, non-binary students, gay, lesbian, and/or bisexual is treated confidentially per applicable laws and the school's policies. In the rare instance that VBFS needs to disclose a student's transgender, and/or sexual orientation status, the school may provide the student an opportunity to make that disclosure first.

School Records

VBFS maintains official student records. If a student requests that a chosen name and/or gender be used on school documents and records, VBFS will strive to comply with that request. This may include, but is not limited to, updating school transcripts, schedules, attendance records, class rosters, school IDs, recommendation letters, and diplomas.

Specific to gender pronouns and birth names, Virginia Beach Friends School recognizes that a community member's gender pronoun and birth name are unique and personal identifiers recognizing an individual's identity. VBFS is committed to working with students and families when a student asks to be recognized by a different pronoun or name beyond what was assigned at birth."

VBFS is sensitive to the private nature of discussions and documentation regarding students' names and/or gender and is committed to protecting students' confidentiality by restricting the use of, and access to, this information per applicable law.

Access to Gender-Specific Areas

VBFS may maintain gender-specific facilities. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy will have access to a single-stall, gender-neutral restroom. No student is to use gender-segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

Dress Code as Related to Gender Identity

Students may dress following their gender identity and expression, within the constraints of VBFS's dress code policy.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Upon request, VBFS allows students to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

Community Training and Education

The school seeks to incorporate sexual orientation, gender diversity, transgender, and gender non-conforming education into its curriculum, anti-bullying, and non-discrimination programming, and faculty and staff professional development to help promote a safe and supportive school environment.

Transitioning

While some students may come to VBFS after they have affirmed their gender identity, others may transition while attending school. Students who transition during their educational pursuits at VBFS can expect the school's support. VBFS may also work with a student's family to help support the student's social and emotional development at school.

VBFS recognizes that each individual has a unique process for transitioning. Students ready to socially transition should initiate a process with the school. VBFS will work with each transitioning student and, as appropriate, the student's family to create an individualized transition plan and help promote a successful, safe, and supportive environment for the student's transition. Transition plans may include, but are not limited to:

- The date the transition will officially and formally occur (i.e., the date that the student will change their gender expression, name, and pronouns, and/or begin using the restroom and locker room associated with their gender identity);
- How, and in what format, the transitioning student's teachers and fellow students will be made aware of the student's transition;
- What, if any, information will be shared with the transitioning student's fellow students and/or teachers regarding that student's transition; and/or
- What updates may be made to the transitioning student's records, and when they will be made.

If students or their families have any questions about creating a transition plan, they should contact the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Important Terminology and Definitions Related to Diversity and Inclusion at VBFS

Gender - Attitudes, feelings, characteristics, and behaviors that a given culture associates with being male or female and that is often labeled as "masculine" or "feminine."

Gender Identity - A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender which can include being male, female, another gender, or no gender at all. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the gender assigned at birth. The responsibility for determining an individual's gender identity rests with the individual.

Gender Expression - How a person represents or expresses socially defined gender to others, often through behavior, social interactions, clothing, hairstyles, activities, speech, or mannerisms.

Gender Non-Conforming - This term describes people who have, or are perceived to have, gender characteristics and/or behaviors that do not conform to traditional or societal expectations.

Non-Binary - A person with a gender identity other than male or female. Other terms that can have similar meanings include gender diverse, gender fluid, or gender expansive.

Sex - The designation of a person at birth as either “male” or “female” based on their anatomy and/or biology.

Sexual Orientation - A person’s physical, romantic, emotional, and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Common terms used to describe sexual orientation include but are not limited to, heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, gay, asexual, and bisexual. Sexual orientation is distinct from sex, gender identity, and gender expression.

Transgender - An adjective describing a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with an assigned sex at birth. It can also be used to describe a broad range of identities and experiences that fall outside of traditional notions of gender.

- A person whose sex assigned at birth was female but who identifies as male is a transgender man (also known as female-to-male transgender person, or FTM).
- A person whose sex assigned at birth was male but who identifies as female is a transgender woman (also known as male-to-female transgender person, or MTF).
- Some people described by this definition may identify simply as a man, woman, or non-binary, or may otherwise not identify as transgender.

Transition - The process that a person goes through as the person changes their gender expression and/or physical appearance to align with their gender identity. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal, or physical changes. There is no one step or set of steps that an individual must undergo to have their gender identity affirmed and respected. This concept is very broad and varies depending on the person. For some transgender individuals, this process involves primarily a social transition, such as changing an individual’s first name, pronouns, clothing, and appearance, rather than any medical treatment.

VBFS DRESS CODE

As a “Friends” school, VBFS works to foster the Inner Light of every student and to empower students to make good choices for themselves, this includes deciding what to wear to school. Our dress code seeks to balance the importance of students’ self-expression through clothing and our identity as a place of learning. It is grounded in the principles of simplicity, equality, and enforceability.

We expect students to choose clothing that will allow them to move freely and comfortably at school and fully and safely participate in all activities, i.e. experiments, art and music class, and field trips.

Students may dress in accordance with their gender identity and expression, within the constraints of VBFS’s dress code policy.

Dress Code Policy Clothing that contains any of the following is prohibited:

- expletives

- references to drugs, alcohol, violence, or weapons
- offensive images or text including derogatory references to race, religion, sex, ability or disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or national origin

Clothing should provide coverage for the student's **midsection, including the abdomen, low back, and buttocks.**

Hats are allowed on campus and in buildings. Classroom teachers may ask students to remove their hats during class. Hats will be removed during Meeting for Worship and other assemblies.

Footwear must be worn at all times. Early and Lower School students cannot wear flip-flops. All students must have appropriate footwear for PE at all times.

Dress Code Enforcement

We encourage students and parents to continually discuss the best dress choices for school and to adhere to the dress code. Faculty share the responsibility of monitoring students' dress. If a faculty member deems a student's dress to violate the dress code, the protocol below will result.

- The faculty member will talk with the student about their dress choice and notify the student's advisor and head of school about the conversation.
- Students with repetitive dress code violations will face further consequences including a meeting with their advisor, the head of school, and their parents.

(With gratitude to Moses Brown School for their inspiration and work on this dress code policy that we too have adopted)

HOMEWORK POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Early and Lower School

At VBFS we have reflected on current trends and best practices toward homework, as well as considered our history and mission as a Friends School when it comes to homework. The Lower School faculty and administration agree that family time, independent exploration, and learning out of doors are important to the development of the whole child. We also know that to create lifelong learners research supports that some homework; reading in particular is an important element in reaching learning goals now and in the future. As a result of our discussions and reflection, the school has come up with the following shared understandings of homework in the Early and Lower schools for VBFS.

- Cottage, Pre-Kindergarten, and Early Kindergarten students will not have homework.
- Kindergarteners should not have homework but might have an occasional project or game to play, and optional homework will be given.
- Lower School students in grades 1st through 4th will have homework that recognizes their age and ability, along with appropriate reinforcement for academic skill development. Homework assignments in these grades may include practicing spelling words, working on memorization of math facts, nightly reading assignments, simple writing assignments, and working on extended-length project-based learning assignments.

- Reading nightly is a goal for all of Friends School students, with family or by themselves!
- Math review, games, and journal prompts that allow for simple rehearsal of previously learned skills are valuable in terms of committing skills and facts to memory.
- We hope projects and homework will be an impetus for students to learn with and from their families
- As students get older, they can handle an increase in homework responsibility but this should be an extension of the learning in the classroom.
- Optional means optional, so parents need to honor this as well and not treat an “optional” piece of homework as a must.
- **Homework at the elementary level should be fairly simple rather than frustrating or challenging.**

Teachers will talk about how much homework time is expected at your child’s grade level at Back to School Night in September. We increase homework slightly as students rise in grades, and we want to honor that children need downtime, free of academic work or scheduled activities. We believe our homework expectations allow students ample time to engage in their many passions, as well as have family time too.

Middle School

Friends School recognizes the importance of homework and preparing students to become independent learners through their high school careers and beyond.

As educators, we strongly believe that students need to have independent practice time to hone the skills and concepts they learn in school. It is also a time to develop as readers, through independent reading. The amount of time set aside for this work will vary in any group. The purpose of homework is to give students time to work through and practice what they have been taught without close adult supervision. Students feel a sense of accomplishment when they can work on their own. As students mature, longer reading assignments and responses are part of daily and weekly homework.

We recognize that time spent on each child’s homework will vary depending on the student’s ability, effort, and time management. However, there are some general expectations for homework. In Middle School, students can expect to have 15 minutes - 20 minutes in each core academic subject each night.

ACADEMICS, ASSESSMENTS, GRADES, AND REPORT CARDS

Student work and performances are graded to communicate current competence and skill level. In the Early and Lower Schools student evaluations reflect a more developmental approach and do not include letter grades. Starting in Middle School, students will receive a letter and numerical grades on assessments. They are also expected to submit assignments when due. Individual teachers have their systems for dealing with late assignments. A student may not take a zero in place of turning in an assignment that a teacher considers essential to the course.

Students in Early and Lower School will receive a full report card with skills and knowledge assessments as well as comments from their teachers twice a year- at the end of the first and second semesters. At the end of the first and third quarters, parents will receive an informal verbal update on the student’s progress in school with their classroom teacher in a parent-teacher conference. Parents and teachers are always welcome to schedule a conference to communicate about a child’s progress when they feel it is necessary throughout the year.

Students in Middle School will receive a progress report with grades and comments at the end of the first and third quarters. This will be followed by a mandatory parent-teacher conference with the advisor at this time to talk about the student’s academic progress. At the end of the first and second semesters, the student will receive first and second-semester grades. These are the grades that will then appear on the student’s official transcript.

Grading

Student work and performances are graded to communicate current competence and skill level.

Cottage, Pre-Kindergarten, and Early Kindergarten Card Assessments:

- A- Always
- S- Sometimes
- R- Rarely
- NY- Not Yet
- NA- Not Assessed

Kindergarten and 1st-4th grade Report Card Assessments:

- 4-Advanced Proficient- Consistently demonstrates proficiency; grasps applies and extends key concepts, processes, and skills
- 3-Proficient- regularly grasps and applies key concepts, processes, and skills with limited errors
- 2-Developing Proficiency- beginning to grasp key concepts, processes, and skills
- 1-Novice- Not making expected progress towards proficiency
- NA- Not assessed

Middle School Report Card Assessments:

A (Outstanding or Excellent) The student demonstrates significant growth in his/her ability to apply course concepts and terminology to new problems to produce convincing and interesting solutions.

B (Commendable) The student consistently demonstrates comprehension of course concepts and terminology. The student’s work reflects a greater degree of discipline and sophistication than is expected of students in general at the given grade level. The student displays an ability to apply concepts and terminology to new problems.

C (Adequate) The student is progressing at an acceptable rate, given his or her grade level and the instructor’s expectations. The student usually comprehends the concepts and terminology of the course and has a foundation on which to build.

D (Inadequate) The student achieves below minimum expectations and does not have a sufficient foundation on which to build. The teacher will comment on specific weaknesses when recording the grade.

F (Failure) The student’s effort and performance are so far below expectations that the school cannot grant credit. The teacher will write a commentary on the student’s performance.

The grade for the marking period consists of grades for classwork, assignments, quizzes, tests, and extra credit. Averaging the marking period grades with the semester exam derives the semester grade. The weighting of semester exams may vary from class to class. Only final grades appear on a student’s transcript.

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	GPA
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A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.7
F	59 & Below, Failing	0
P	Pass	N/A
I	Incomplete	N/A
W	Withdraw	N/A

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is computed for students in 5th through 8th grades each semester. Honor Roll students will be recognized with a special honorary breakfast at the end of the first semester and with academic distinction at the end-of-year Academic Awards Ceremony.

Honor Roll criteria for Middle School are as follows:

- A student must have at least a B in all classes during the marking period.
- Students who are on probation for matters of honesty are ineligible for Honor Roll consideration.

Students who have been suspended for any reason during a semester are ineligible for Honor Roll consideration during that marking period.

Final Exams

Middle School students may have cumulative exams/projects at the end of the year. Middle School students begin with a gradual increase in the number of final exams and projects and exam week is a mix of review, exams, and fun end-of-year activities.

Standardized Testing

To allow the School to assess its program and to review the progress of individual students, achievement tests are given to students.

Friends School students take the following standardized tests:

- Students in the 3rd through 8th Grade take the *Educational Records Bureau (ERBs)* assessments.
- Dates for standardized tests will appear on the school calendar. The results of standardized tests will be shared with parents.

Testing accommodations may be arranged for students with a learning difference in Lower and Middle School if the school counselor is presented with a current psychological evaluation documenting the learning difference or with a current I.E.P. from the public schools.

Learning Center

The Learning Center is located in the main Academic Building and will be staffed by our learning specialist. The learning specialist will provide academic support to students with learning differences and challenges of any age. Often these differences are documented after testing when the School Counselor will develop a Personalized Education Plan (PEP) for the student. The School Counselor will work with both the learning specialist and classroom teacher to support any necessary accommodations. Educational support may include organizational assistance and instructional strategies for success in school. The Learning Center helps learners of all abilities achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency. The Learning Specialist is not a private tutor for particular subject areas. If your child needs a tutor she can make recommendations.

Some of the services the specialist provides are:

- Individual evaluation and assessment
- Measurable goals and objectives tailored to individual needs
- Organizational skills
- One-on-one instructional support
- Comprehension skills
- Content area assistant and instructional support
- Individual reports on student progress
- Visual and auditory processing skills
- Remediation of essential academic skills
- Student advocacy

For additional information or to enroll in the Learning Center, please contact the learning specialist or school counselor directly.

Academic Probation

Students in grades 5th through 8th who earn two Ds or one F in a marking period will be placed on academic probation. If a student's grades meet the above criteria at the end of a quarter, the student and parent will be notified by the Academic Dean that they have been placed on probation. In consultation with the parents, the advisor, and teachers, the Academic Dean will determine an expected course of action. At a minimum, this plan will include a system for receiving extra help or tutoring. **Students on academic probation will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until their grades have improved.** If a student has not been removed from probation after a second quarter, families will be notified that the third quarter of academic probation could lead to academic dismissal. A student on probation for more than two consecutive semesters may face the possibility of dismissal.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Athletics

Friends School emphasizes participation at all levels and has a "no-cut" policy... Students or parents may direct sports-related questions to the coaches or the Athletic Director.

Friends School expects its players and spectators to demonstrate good sportsmanship. During athletic events, Friends School will not tolerate any spectator, student, or adult, whose behavior is disrespectful towards players, officials, coaches, or other spectators. Nor will Friends School permit any type of spectator behavior that either detracts from the proper conduct of the game or disadvantages a player or team. The ideal is to cheer for one's team and to applaud good play by both teams. **Taunting and jeering the officials or opposition has no place at Friends School.** If opposing teams or their fans practice poor sportsmanship, do not respond in kind. The Athletic Director or other members of the school administration will handle such incidents. Middle School students unable to maintain passing grades in all classes while on an athletic team may be removed from the team until his/her grades improve.

Upon request, VBFS allows students to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

Extra-Curricular Activities

After-school activities may include groups that focus on recreational and non-traditional sports, visual and performing arts, STEAM, yearbook club, student government, or any other activity that may garner interest from the student body.

Advisory Program

In the tradition of independent education, Friends School faculty members also function as advisors to students. Advisors serve as student advocates and assist students who need help organizing priorities, developing a study schedule, reviewing study habits, handling relationships with teachers and other students, etc. Each student is assigned an advisor who will meet with students daily and parents at least twice a year.

The advisor does not supplant the classroom instructor. The classroom teacher has first-hand knowledge of a student's progress and is the logical person to contact about classroom problems. The advisor serves in a broader capacity, monitoring situations that cross over several academic disciplines or into the personal realm.

Community Service

Quakers believe that “there is that of God in everyone,” an “Inner Light” that connects us all and which shines brightest through living the Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship. One of the Friends School components which demonstrates many of these testimonies is community service. Middle School students are required to complete annual community service hours. Through community service, our volunteers deepen their understanding of how all living beings are connected, discover their gifts and the gifts of others, and delve into the real meaning of the Quaker testimonies upon which the school is founded. Through community service, our volunteers learn to let their lives speak.

Our requirements

- **5th and 6th graders complete 10 hours per year**
- **7th and 8th graders complete 15 hours per year,**

Hours are counted for the school year runs from June 1 2021-June 1, 2022. Students must submit signed service completion forms to their advisors.

Students can participate in service that benefits four different types of people or organizations:

- 1) service that benefits Friends Community,
- 2) service that benefits Virginia Beach,
- 3) service that benefits the student’s home community,
- 4) service that benefits the world.

Study Halls

Study Halls are designed to allow students to have time during the day to complete homework assignments that they may not have time for outside the school day because of athletic practices, lessons, work, etc. In that regard, the following guidelines apply to all students.

- In study halls, students may read, study, do homework, make up missed assignments, use the library, seek extra help from another teacher or use a computer for research or word processing.
- Students are expected to be on time and remain for the entire period. The study hall teacher will keep attendance records.
- Students should come to study hall prepared with their Chromebook/laptop and book assignments. Those who come to study hall without work will be sent back to their cubbies to get work and will be considered tardy.
- Students may not use it as an excuse to say “I have no work.” Students can always use the time for independent reading or study even if they are all caught up on written homework.
- Watching movies and playing games is not permitted.
- Listening to music quietly in earbuds while doing work is allowed if the student is focused and not distracted.
- No eating in the library.

RECORD KEEPING

Transcripts

To comply with federal law, the school must have a signed release before forwarding student records to

individuals. Release forms are available from the Main Office. **Transcripts and/or records will not be released if the student has outstanding books or if there is a tuition balance due.**

There is no charge for regular mail delivery, and transcript requests are normally processed within 3 business days of receipt. Official transcripts will be sent directly to an institution, agency, employer, or other third parties. Official transcripts may also be issued to students, for inclusion in admission packages, in sealed envelopes with a signature across the seal. Unofficial (no signatures or school seal) transcripts will be released directly to students/parents for personal use.

Records

After a student graduates or withdraws from Virginia Beach Friends School, the school will keep on file the final transcript, standardized test scores such as the College Boards, and the school's official recommendation.

VBFS maintains official student records. If a student requests that a chosen name and/or gender be used on school documents and records, VBFS will strive to comply with that request. This may include, but is not limited to, updating school transcripts, schedules, attendance records, class rosters, school IDs, recommendation letters, and diplomas.

VBFS is sensitive to the private nature of discussions and documentation regarding students' names and/or gender and is committed to protecting students' confidentiality by restricting the use of, and access to, this information per applicable law.

VBFS seeks to ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to all students, including transgender, non-binary students, gay, lesbian, and/or bisexual is treated confidentially per applicable laws and the school's policies. In the rare instance that VBFS needs to disclose a student's transgender, and/or sexual orientation status, the school may provide the student an opportunity to make that disclosure first.

COMMUNICATION

Virginia Beach Friends School students are best served when parents are aware of what is happening in school and when the school is aware of major developments at home. To this end, both teachers and parents are strongly encouraged to initiate contact about any important questions. Contacts between teachers and parents are not restricted to the end of a grading period.

Regular communication between home and school is vital. The Jupiter portal is invaluable in keeping up to date with student progress. Please refer to the school calendar for parent/teacher conferences, this can be found on the website. In addition, teachers will be in contact with parents if more frequent communication is necessary, and parents may get in touch with teachers at any time to discuss their child.

From time to time parents have questions or concerns about a particular class or assignment. Faculty members always appreciate the opportunity to talk with parents directly about such matters, and they are in the best position to give accurate information about activities in their classes. Therefore, the following steps are recommended as issues emerge:

- Parents and students are encouraged to talk first with classroom teachers.
- Advisors should be included in conferences involving more than one of the student's teachers.

- If a resolution has not been reached, a conference will be scheduled with the Academic Dean or the Head of School.

In cases of parental divorce, the school will include both parents in all communication and hold joint conferences provided there are no court orders to the contrary and each parent wants to be included. The custodial parent is asked to advise the school about special arrangements if any and to provide a mailing address and phone number for the non-custodial parent.