

# GFS

*Early Childhood*



[WWW.GERMANTOWNFRIENDS.ORG/EC](http://WWW.GERMANTOWNFRIENDS.ORG/EC)



**GFS Early Childhood has the great honor of being the first stop on the educational journey of our youngest friends.**

We take pride in creating rich and engaging experiences that expand each student’s mind. We aim to foster curiosity and confidence through exposure to new ideas. We seek to build social and emotional skills through play and collaboration. And throughout many aspects of our program, we offer opportunities for our students to develop coordination and mind-body connections.

Quaker values are at the heart of the GFS experience, serving as our moral compass, driving our interactions with one another, and teaching us to honor the Light in each member of our community.

Perhaps most importantly, we provide an environment that encourages children to become creative thinkers and lifelong learners. Come for a visit and you will see students engaged in joyful learning.

Sincerely,

*Sarah*

**Sarah McMenamin, Ed.D**  
Director of Early Childhood



# THE PROGRAM



Guided by Quaker principles, our multidisciplinary curriculum is taught through a combination of structured activities and free exploration, which fosters children's natural curiosity while providing them with the foundation needed for success in Kindergarten—and beyond.

Classes delve into topics of group interest, and critical thinking is woven into every activity as children make observations, discuss them, problem-solve, and begin to understand how similarities and differences enhance the classroom community. Fostering a strong sense of self among our youngest learners reinforces positive self-esteem and respect for one another.

We value a child's ability to express his or her feelings and ideas in appropriate ways, and nurture our students' capacity to listen and take turns. We model peaceful conflict resolution and the importance of being a responsible and engaged member of the group.

The Early Childhood curriculum addresses the developmental skills that lead to Kindergarten readiness. This includes helping children sit and listen, focus, make thoughtful choices, interact with one another respectfully, follow multistep directions, and self-regulate. We strive to work together, communicate often, and share our insights with parents and caregivers.





# AREAS OF FOCUS



## *Emergent Literacy Concepts*

Reader's Workshop, Writer's Workshop, storytime, creative dramatics, rhyming, and independent reading build a foundation for early literacy.

## *Emergent Math Concepts*

Math Workshop, puzzles, sand, water, blocks, patterning, sorting, and cooking activities help to develop early math concepts.



## *Scientific Exploration*

Children's inherent curiosity is fostered through observations of nature and planned experiments, such as sinking and floating or freezing and melting, and engineering activities, such as blocks, weights, and pulleys.

## *Artistic Exploration*

Creative expression is encouraged daily. Children can be found painting, drawing, and crafting with found objects, playdough, and other materials.





# INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING



**MUSIC** Children learn about instrumental melodies, song, rhythm, tempo, dance, and expression through singing, movement, and playing instruments with our music teacher.



**LIBRARY** Children have story time, which includes a special read-aloud by our librarian and time for browsing library books. At the end of each visit, every child selects a book to check out for the classroom library.

## MOVEMENT

Movement focuses on locomotion, balance, and sense of self in space. The children are exposed to a variety of physical activities, such as yoga, dance, parachute play, and obstacle courses. Movement helps develop a positive attitude and appreciation for a lifetime of participation in regular physical activity.



**ART** Studio time is both structured and open-ended, with an emphasis on process and art history. Each week the children explore and discover different media and ways of making art, often through the lens of a well-known artist's work. Focusing on the basic elements of art provides children with the skills and language to create and discuss art forms well beyond their Early Childhood years.



## QUAKERISM AND MEETING FOR WORSHIP

We are a Friends school, under the care of Germantown Monthly Meeting. Together, love and respect for each individual are at the heart of all we do. Children in Early Childhood attend Meeting for Worship weekly on their respective campus. In addition, students from both locations gather together once a month in the historic Meetinghouse on Main Campus. The classes come together to share a story or poem, then sit quietly and reflect on the message of the reading for a few minutes. Children may share their thoughts with the group if they are so moved. We close each Meeting by shaking hands. Additionally, EC students attend GFS' annual all-school Meeting for Worship.



**SCHEDULE** The Early Childhood day begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Children may enter the classroom at 7:45 a.m. and Extended Day is available until 6 p.m. Preschool children may attend four days per week. PreK children attend five days per week.



# Applying to GFS for Fall 2020?

*Here's everything you need to know.*

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**September 2019** | Family tours, playdates, and readiness assessments commence. Please submit an application before scheduling appointments.

*Children must be at least 2 years, 7 months old by September 1, 2020, to enroll for the 2020-21 school year.*

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**December 6, 2019** | Families must submit the application by December 6, 2019, to be considered for first-round review. Thereafter, applications are considered on a rolling basis as they become complete. Please submit your application online at [www.germantownfriends.org/admissions](http://www.germantownfriends.org/admissions).

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**January 6, 2020** | All additional components of the application process must be completed by January 6, 2020, in order to be considered for first-round review.

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**February 1, 2020** | Families with fully completed applications by January 6, 2020, will be included in the first-round review, and will be notified in writing of the admissions decision by February 1, 2020.

*Please note: GFS admissions decisions are made by the admissions committee and Quaker consensus; we give each and every applicant file a complete and thorough review, which takes time. If another school lets you know of an acceptance decision before GFS does, please do not interpret this as a lack of enthusiasm on our part regarding your child's candidacy.*

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**March 1, 2020** | By common agreement among most area independent schools, families whose children receive an offer of admission by February 1, 2020, have until March 1, 2020, to accept or decline the offer. To enroll your child, you must return the enrollment contract with a non-refundable deposit of \$750 per child by March 1. This is the first payment of the tuition bill. All payment plans will be billed and administered by the FACTS Management Company.

*Please note: Financial aid is not offered for children entering preschool or PreK; financial aid eligibility at GFS begins in the Kindergarten year.*

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## WE WELCOME YOUR APPLICATION.

We want every GFS student to be successful, so we seek applicants and families for whom our program and school philosophy are a good match. Children applying to GFS Early Childhood participate in an admissions process that is designed to align with their cognitive and socioemotional development. We aim to get to know your family and your child individually and in a group, in ways that maximize engagement for your child and minimize stress for your family. Our admissions committee take great care in reviewing all information submitted for each applicant.

The application process may begin as early as the September before a student enters GFS. We typically receive many more applications than we have available spaces, so it is important (and to your benefit) to apply and schedule appointments early.



# ADMISSIONS 101



## Application Checklist

### □ APPLICATION & FEE

\$45 for all grades

Please submit your application online at [www.germantownfriends.org/admissions](http://www.germantownfriends.org/admissions).

### □ FAMILY TOUR & PARENT INTERVIEW

Please call 215-951-2345 to schedule a tour for either Main Campus or our Center City location. We ask both parents to attend when possible. Please indicate campus of interest when scheduling appointments.

#### Applicants to Preschool

- > 2 years, 7 months old by September 1, 2020
- > Born between September 1, 2016, and January 31, 2018
- > *Children accompany their parents on the tour and parent interview*

#### Applicants to PreK

- > 4 years old by September 1, 2020
- > Born between September 1, 2015, and August 31, 2016
- > *Children need not accompany their parents for the tour and interview*

### □ PLAYDATE

The next step is to arrange a playdate for your child to spend part of a morning participating in classroom activities along with current students. Playdates typically take place in the morning and should occur *after* the family tour and parent interview. Families must complete an online previsit form prior to the playdate.

For **applicants to PreK**, a brief readiness assessment, conducted by the Director of Early Childhood and Kindergarten Admissions, will be a part of the playdate.

Please call the Admissions Office at 215-951-2345 to schedule your playdate.

### APPLY TODAY

#### Main Campus

Germantown  
31 W. Coulter Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19144

#### Center City

The Curtis Center  
601 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

### QUESTIONS?

Please do not hesitate to contact the Admissions Office at 215-951-2345 or [admissions@germantownfriends.org](mailto:admissions@germantownfriends.org).

**GFS**

**GERMANTOWN  
FRIENDS SCHOOL**

31 West Coulter Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19144

**TEL:** 215.951.2300

*[www.germantownfriends.org](http://www.germantownfriends.org)*

