

Fair Garden
Family Community Center
PreK Program



PARENT HANDBOOK
2017-2018

*Discipline isn't something you do to children, it something you
develop within them.*

Becky Bailey

"Excellence Each Day In PreK!"

Fair Garden Family Community Center

400 Fern Street, Knoxville, TN 37914
Phone (865) 594-1320 • Fax (865) 594-1155

Tiffany Watkins, Principal

Dear Families,

We are excited that you are a part of our Fair Garden Family this year. We are looking forward to working alongside you as we build our School Family. Our School Family consists of all the stakeholders with invested interests in the success of our students. With a heavy emphasis on safety, our School Family will help reinforce **Safe Actions For Everyone**. As adults, it is our responsibility to be safe keepers for each of our students. We will be safe with our words and safe with our actions. We encourage you to be heavily involved in this educational journey of our students as they develop their social, emotional, and academic skills.

This Parent Handbook contains information about the operations of our school, along with our school's expectations. We encourage you to read this handbook in its entirety. You can also view our handbook on our website at knoxschools.org/fairgarden. Make sure to utilize our school's brochure. It highlights some of the information in this handbook in a condensed format giving you quick access to pertinent information.

If you have any questions, concerns, ideas and/or words of encouragement, please contact our school office at 865-594-1320 or e-mail me at tiffany.watkins@knoxschools.org. We look forward to working alongside you this year.

Thank you,

Tiffany Watkins
Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to...

- Serve Children
- Empower Parents
- Strengthen Families
- Support Communities

VISION STATEMENT

The staff of Fair Garden Family Community Center strives to serve our children by meeting their physical, social, and emotional needs and empowering the parents of our students to do the same so that our children become productive citizens in our community.

OUR BELIEFS

- All children can learn.
- Preschool students learn through play, conversations and interactions
- Parents are their child's first teachers.
- Positive self-esteem is critical to success.
- Parents and teachers working together are important elements in promoting student success.
- Professional development is for everyone who affects student learning.
- The community is vital to our school's success.

SCHOOL HOURS

Office hours are from 7:10 until 3:15 Monday through Friday. The day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 1:15 p.m. for all students. Children may begin arriving at 7:10 a.m., as supervision will be provided at this time.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Each morning before 7:35 a.m., parents will come inside to sign their child/children into school for the day. Parents will then escort their child/children to the gym, where they will stay until the students' classroom teachers take them to their classroom. If it is after 7:35 a.m., parents will sign in and escort their child/children to their classroom instead of the gym.

PARKING

Please park in the parking spaces provided in the parking lot. Refrain from parking along the curb, as that should be opened for school buses, emergency vehicles, etc. There is no parking allowed directly in front of the building on the Fern Street side as it may uphold traffic and block the sidewalk. For those entering the front of the building on Fern Street, you can park across the street and use the crosswalk to walk towards the front entrance of the building.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

We are aiming for our school to have a high attendance rate of 95% or above, which is an expectant attendance rate for every school in the state of Tennessee. Chronic absenteeism is when a student's absences exceed 17 in one school year (counting excused and unexcused absences). When students are absent from school, they miss a great deal of their daily instruction, which can hinder their learning process. A student's absence will be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal Illness
2. Death in the family
3. Recognized religious holiday
4. Verifiable family emergency

A written excuse for any of the above conditions is a requirement and must be provided to the teacher on the first day back to school. If the written excuse is not received within 5 days of the student's return, the absence will be reported as unexcused. A maximum of 10 parent notes are allowed each year for absences without medical documentation. Our school's Social Worker along with the classroom teachers will monitor student attendance and tardies so all students have access to a high quality education.

ATTENDANCE POLICY (cont.)

Students with five unexcused absences will be sent home an "excessive absence" letter. Students with ten unexcused absences will receive a letter of concern from "Knox County Schools". Parents of students with 17 unexcused absences must attend a conference with the child's teacher and the school administration to discuss the child's absences, which could possibly endanger your child's placement status at Fair Garden Family Community Center. Parents of students with 10-15 unexcused absences must also attend a time management workshop to avoid the "chronic" status of absences.

TARDY POLICY

School begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. Any student arriving to class after the bell rings is considered tardy. Please call the office if your child will be arriving later than 8:00 a.m. Parents must accompany their child to the office and sign him/her in after this time. If it is after 8:00 a.m., parents must accompany his/her child to the cafeteria to eat breakfast. Afterwards, parents must escort his/her child to his/her classroom.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Dismissal is at 1:15 p.m. If you need to pick up your child before the dismissal time, you must come into the office and present photo identification. Try to avoid scheduling appointments for your child during school hours as much as possible. To protect classroom instructional time, we ask for parents to pick up their child/children no earlier than 1:00 p.m. The early distraction can hinder students' learning progress.

For security reasons, any time a student changes his/her regular way of leaving school, a written note from the parent or guardian is required. We are sorry that we cannot accept phone calls for this purpose, as we cannot identify callers over the phone.

Individuals not listed on your child's emergency card will not be permitted to pick up your child during dismissal. It must be in writing or directly communicated (face to face) to the teacher and/or office staff whenever your child is going home with an individual other than his/her parent or guardian.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The emergency/enrollment sheets are kept on file in the office and in the classroom. These forms are our links to parents or guardians in case of an emergency. It is vital that we always have correct phone numbers for parents, both at home and at work. Phone numbers of neighbors or friends are also important if we are unable to reach you. **Please help us by providing several contact numbers and keeping numbers up to date.** We regard all phone numbers and addresses as confidential and do not give out this information. For security purposes, we ask that any changes to the emergency cards/enrollment sheets be presented in writing. Any person who is not listed on the emergency card may not check out students. Photo identification must be presented before students can be checked out.

COMMUNICATION

Teachers communicate daily and weekly through the Home and School folders and newsletters/announcements. **It is important to read the information daily, as this is our most frequent form of communication.** We encourage you to contact your child's classroom teacher directly by email or phone if you have any questions or concerns. We have a web page <https://www.knoxschools.org/fairgarden> that is continuously updated with current school information and an electronic school messenger system for reminders of important events. We also have a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/fairgardenprek/>. Please join our page to see additional school happenings at Fair Garden.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

With the implementation of Conscious Discipline and PBIS (Preventive Behavior Intervention Support) we have established school wide expectations for each student, staff member, and parent to follow throughout the school year. These expectations will be met by teaching students step by step routines in the following areas: Classroom, Cafeteria, Hallway, Playground and Gym/Gross Motor Room. These routines will be taught heavily during the first 3 weeks of school. A more detail explanation of our school wide expectations will be sent home.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS (cont.)

We expect students, teachers, parents and staff to display safe actions.

Safe

Actions

For

Everyone

At Fair Garden, we are safe with our words (refrain from using foul language, hurtful words, sarcasm, name calling, etc.) and safe with our actions (respectful towards others, respectful of school and others' properties, refraining from physical activities that cause bodily injuries to self and others, etc.).

Parents of a student displaying behaviors that endangers others and/or himself/herself will be called immediately to help either coach the child through his/her problems or sent home for the remainder of the day. Students displaying disruptive behaviors that may endanger himself/herself or others must have their parent accompany them on field trips. This is to ensure the child's safety while away from school.

Parents of students with chronic tier 3 behavior (behaviors endangering themselves and/or others) must attend a parent conference and/or behavior workshop with the teachers and administrators to discuss and develop an action plan for the student.

BULLYING

Knox County Schools prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and cyber-bullying. Though bullying is not developed in children 3 and 4 years of age, we must be aware of signs that could lead to a student becoming a bully. Parents of students displaying bullying-like behaviors will be contacted to attend a family conference to discuss the students' behavior and create a plan to address those behaviors.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are encouraged to keep parents informed of their child's progress. Your child's teacher will send information concerning your conference time. You may also schedule appointments at other times during the year to discuss students' progress. You may e-mail or call teachers directly to schedule appointments.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES (cont.)

Please be mindful to contact your child's teacher via phone, text, or email before arriving unannounced for an extended conversation. Unexpected visits from parents wanting an extended conversation with their child's teacher during arrival times and dismissal times of students are especially difficult. Please respect the importance of uninterrupted teaching time and do not "drop in" on teachers. We want to make sure that you and your child's teacher discuss matters with fewer interruptions to best address any concerns in a thorough manner. Therefore, conferences with teachers should not be held without an appointment.

If you have an emergency and you cannot wait for the teacher to call you back, or if your phone call is not returned within 24 hours, you may call the school office and ask to talk with an administrator.

UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY

Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-11(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Brian Hartsell at 594-1502.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter under state law. Any person with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected must, under the law, immediately report to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services or to local law enforcement. Failure to report abuse is a violation of the law and a Class A misdemeanor, carrying a sentence of up to three months imprisonment, a fine or both. Those who report and "act in good faith" are immune from any civil or criminal charges which may result. The reporter has the right to remain confidential and anonymous. To make a report, call 1-877-237-0004.

SCHOOL CLOSING

The Superintendent makes the decision to close school because of inclement weather or disaster. Local television and radio stations will broadcast school closings or early dismissal just as soon as the decisions are made at the Central Office. Please listen to the news media for information concerning school closings. Updated school closing information is also posted on the Knox County Schools' Website, <http://knoxschools.org>. In previous years, inclement winter weather has necessitated the early dismissal of all students in Knox County Schools.

Daycare buses may or may not run if school is dismissed early. Check with your child's daycare about the site's early dismissal policy due to school closings.

SCHOOL MESSENGER SYSTEM

An automated telephone system helps us send you information and reminders electronically in a timely manner. This system will also notify you of school closings and other pertinent information. Please keep your telephone numbers updated! In Knox County Schools, updates to the TCPA law **will now require all parents and employees to "opt in" to receive automated communications on their mobile device** - this means parents and employees must provide permission to receive automated calls and SMS text messages on their mobile device(s). This link will take you to the site to opt in to receive school messages.

<http://www.knoxschools.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&ModuleInstanceID=34504&ViewID=047E6BE3-6D87-4130-8424-D8E4E9ED6C2A&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=29991&PageID=1>

MEDICATION

As a general policy, medicines including over the counter products are not administered to children at school. However, in special circumstances, parents can obtain Physician Form for Administration of Medication from the school office. Once completed by the physician's office, the form should be returned to the school office and arrangements will be made to administer the indicated medication. **New policies also include that once the office has the appropriate physician forms, medication must be unopened when presented to the school. If the package, box, etc. is opened, we cannot administer the medicine. For the safety of the students, all medication must be delivered or picked up by a parent or guardian.**

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

This school year, all students in 52 Knox County schools will benefit from breakfast and lunch at no charge through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a nationwide program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Through the CEP program, all students enrolled at the qualifying schools receive meals free of charge each day, regardless of the students' economic status. Fair Garden Family Community Center is one of those schools! The USDA determines the criteria to assess schools that qualify. The program does not require funding from the Knox County Schools. The CEP will be available throughout the 2017-2018 school year with potential for extension into future years.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM (cont.)

In addition to providing the benefit of meals at no charge, the Community Eligibility Provision also reduces paperwork for schools and families. Parents are not required to complete applications, and schools no longer must certify student eligibility.

If parents or any other adults choose to eat meals at school, they must pay the price of the meals. Below are the prices:

Breakfast:

Adult (Visitor)	\$2.25
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Lunch:

Adult (Visitor)	\$3.75
Milk	.50¢

Children may bring lunches from home, but please do not send in carbonated drinks, as these could cause a mess in the cafeteria. Parents are welcome to eat breakfast or lunch at school with their children. Due to limited cafeteria space for each classroom's assigned area, parents eating lunch with their children must sit in the overflow area located in the back of the cafeteria. Lunch reservations should be made through the child's teacher for the day you would like to eat in the cafeteria. We ask that you refrain from bringing food from area restaurants. This creates competition with our lunch program and possibly our school's nutrition guidelines.

FOOD ALLERGIES/SNACKS

If your child has allergies to particular foods, please let your child's teacher, the office staff, and the school nurse know so they can work with you to provide an alternative food item for lunch, snacks, classroom parties or any other school activities. It is also important that you provide the necessary doctor forms explaining your child's allergies if medication may be needed at school. Because we are working to create a healthy environment, we are recommending that homemade snacks like cookies, cakes etc. be not brought from home to give to students in your child's class. You may of course send anything you wish for your child to eat at lunch.

PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS

According to Knox County Schools Policy, students are allowed two parties a year. At other times students may have small celebrations to recognize special accomplishments. When planning parties, teachers refer to the Coordinated School Health guidelines to plan menus. Acceptable food items include: crackers, fruit, fruit snacks, yogurt, cereal bars, cereal, popcorn, vegetables, etc. A complete list of acceptable food items is available on our school's web page or you may talk to your child's teacher. Cupcakes, cookies, ice cream, etc. are not allowed for individual celebrations like students' birthdays. Due to the time it will take to distribute the items and clean up, it will cut into the instructional school day, which is our primary reason at school. Pre-packaged nutritional items are allowed for such celebration, but must be distributed at the classroom teachers' discretion.

DELIVERIES

We apologize that we are unable to allow deliveries of flowers, balloons, or similar items at school for students. These items cause distractions in the classrooms, and the transporting of such items home often poses a safety issue. Please find another way to recognize your child on special days.

VISTORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Parents, volunteers, and other visitors are welcomed in our school. For the safety of our students, all visitors must sign in at the school office upon arrival. You will receive a visitor's pass that indicates to our staff and students that you have approval to be in the building. In addition, we ask that you carry photo identification with you at all times. Please remember to contact your child's teacher to schedule times to volunteer in the classroom. This will also give the teacher time to plan and give you clear expectations on what to do as you help with the students.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

The school administrator reserves the right to determine whether a student's attire is acceptable. The principal may allow exceptions for school-wide programs or special classroom activities.

Students must keep an extra pair of clothes (top, bottom, underclothes, and socks) at school at all times in case their clothes become soiled or unable to wear.

Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor activity. For safety, students will not be allowed on the gym floor or playgrounds without tennis shoes. Students may wear other shoes on picture day or special occasions such as WinterFest, but they should bring a pair of tennis shoes in their backpack to change. If your child wears other footwear such as boots or ballet slippers, make sure they have tennis shoes in his/her backpacks for physical activities.

You may call the school office if you are unable to afford appropriate clothing or footwear for your child. We have a social worker and many community organizations that can help.

VIDEO POLICY

Teachers will show educational videos to supplement the skills they are teaching. Ask your child's teacher for a list of videos that may be shown during the school year.

ILLEGAL ITEMS

Students may not have in his/her possession at school such items as medicine of any type, tobacco, matches, lighters, knives, guns or any other item judged capable of inflicting harm to themselves or others, or causing property damage. Any illegal items will be viewed by our School Officer, in which parents will be contacted. Offenders are subject to suspension. CD players, electronic games, radios, toys, trading cards, or games of any kind are not to be brought to school except with written teacher's permission on special days.

Students are not permitted to use cell phones. It is best to leave cell phones at home; however, if your child must bring a cell phone to school, it must remain turned off and in your child's backpack. Violations will result in the item being confiscated by the principal to be picked up by a parent. Weapons will not be returned.

NO SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on campus, including the outer grounds.

TRANSFERS

When transferring from Fair Garden to another school, you should notify the school office prior to your child's last day in school. This will enable the school to complete the proper paperwork necessary to transfer the student's information to his/her new school.

TITLE I FUNDING

Fair Garden is a Title I School. Fair Garden is totally funded by federal dollars. The funds allow us to provide support services that promote academic excellence for all learners. We will continue to use Title I funds to increase professional development opportunities for teachers, increase opportunities for parent involvement and purchase programs and equipment to maintain and support each student's educational growth.

Our Story

Fair Garden Elementary School, a Knoxville City School, was built in 1916 to serve children grades K-8 in the East Knoxville Burlington Community. In its later years, Fair Garden became a K-5 school and continued as an elementary school. In 1987, Knoxville City and Knox County Schools Systems merged to become a single school district. It is now known as Knox County School System. With this merging, many changes followed, including the closing of Fair Garden Elementary School in 1990.

The building sat idle for a year before a Chapter 1 Visionary Committee was formed to help determine how best to utilize the facility. The group, composed of business and community leaders, parents, and educators, decided to develop a Family Community Resource Center. It was to be a "one stop shopping center" to meet the needs of the community. Renovations were made and completed in 1993 to bring the building into compliance with ADA standards and Department of Health Services licensing requirements. Fair Garden is presently licensed through the Tennessee Department of Education. Fair Garden Family and Community Service Center facility, a Title 1 Program, located at 400 Fern Street in East Knoxville, was designed to broaden the scope of services to accommodate the total family.

The program offers educational and supportive services for Title 1 eligible preschoolers, ages three through five. Parents, senior citizens, and the community are vital to the school's mission to SERVE CHILDREN, EMPOWER PARENTS, STRENGTHEN FAMILIES, and SUPPORT COMMUNITIES.

Fair Garden has nine general education classrooms and one developmental Pre-K classroom. There are nine Pre-K general education teachers, one special education teacher, one curriculum coach, twelve education assistants, a school nurse, a social worker, two food service workers, two custodians, and one secretary/bookkeeper. Additionally, Knox County Schools provides the ancillary services of a psychologist, speech teacher and occupational/physical. Hearing and vision screenings are conducted annually.

Fair Garden provides 180 instructional days. Our instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m. and concludes at 1:15 p.m. Breakfast is served from 7:35 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Lunch is served from 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Dismissal is at 1:15 p.m. Extended care is outsourced to SHADES of Development per an application process. Their hours are from 1:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Fair Garden Preschool, Sam E. Hill, and all of Knox County Schools Volunteer PreK (VPK) classrooms are implementing the HighScope Curriculum. The HighScope Preschool Curriculum is based on the principles of active learning and support of a child's positive interactions with adults and peers. Longitudinal studies show that the HighScope Preschool Curriculum promotes children's development and provides lasting benefits into adulthood. We have also chosen COR Advantage (Children Observation Record) as our assessment component.

