



## Curriculum

FSC provides an educational experience that integrates the head, the hand, and the heart, resulting in a balance of academic excellence and spiritual depth.

### Curriculum Features

**Integrated.** Whenever possible, lessons at FSC combine relevant learning areas from all the disciplines taught in the school. This means, for instance, that learning in language arts will be reinforced in social studies, science, Spanish, and even math. Teachers look for ways to best integrate material knowing that this helps students see the connection between pieces of information and it also helps students to better retain information. The passion for learning and teaching, so vital to a Friends School, is best captured in well-integrated units of study.

*Example:* The book, *Paddles to the Sea*, tells of the journey down rivers to reach the sea. Such a book allows for reading work, writing assignments, the study of watersheds, the study of the people who live along rivers, the study of flora and fauna associated with rivers, drawing and painting aspects of the story, discovering the music of a river region, fun math assignments related to river travel, and fieldtrips to local rivers.

**Standardized ... and Personalized.** Curriculum in a Quaker school is created first from the professional experience and thoughtfulness of the faculty, using the NC Standard Course of Study as a framework. It is further extended and modified through the interest and questioning of the students. Educator and Quaker Parker Palmer describes this interaction between teachers and students as creating a community of truth seeking. We believe it is in such a community that learning takes place. The classrooms of Friends School of Charlotte are *multi-aged* to help create learning communities in each classroom that are diverse and multi-layered. The classrooms also give time for both individual and group learning experiences

**Flexible.** While curriculum components will not change, the multi-aged classroom setting and the influence of the children's passions may cause the delivery of the curriculum to periodically change pace or course. This may be true for individuals or the entire class and should be kept in mind in order to gain a clearer perspective on the curriculum of Friends School of Charlotte.

## Curriculum Components

**Language Arts:** Offered for grades K-3. The Language Arts program encourages students to participate in all forms of effective communication: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Whenever possible, language arts study will be integrated with student work in other subject areas. *Readers and Writers Workshop* and *Handwriting Without Tears* are two of the programs utilized.

**Social Studies:** Offered for grades K-3. The Social Studies program is based on a model of conceptual development. Students first explore the immediate worlds of the school and family, expanding to the exploration of the Charlotte region, North Carolina, America, and the international community. Quaker history will also be integrated into the curriculum.

**Mathematics:** Topics offered for grades K-3 will include the number system and number sense, data collection and sorting, introduction to probability, geometry in two dimensions, and measurement and time. When appropriate, topics offered for grades 1-3 will include geometry in three dimensions, addition and subtraction, operations with fractions, and pre-algebra and algebra. All students will work with word problems and problem solving. Solutions to math problems will be solved in number form, explained verbally, and clarified in written form.

**Spanish:** Offered for grades K-3. Children will develop the ability to communicate in Spanish while building a strong foundation for continued non-native language acquisition. Topics will include, but are not limited to, identification of colors, numbers, animals, weather, location, and foods. Students will learn to introduce and describe themselves and will learn the vocabulary to discuss families. Spanish will be taught formally two days per week through music, play, art, and movement, but will be reinforced throughout the week.

**Science:** Offered for grades K-3. The basic process of scientific investigation—observation, hypothesis building, data collection and analysis—will be included in every aspect of the class. Topics to be covered will include weather, gardening, and the natural world. In keeping with the Quaker testimony of stewardship, an emphasis will be placed on understanding our responsibility for the earth's resources. Science will be taught formally two days per week, but the lessons learned will be reiterated and built upon throughout the week.

**Community Life:** Offered for grades K-3. The school embraces community within each classroom, within the larger school population, including staff, family, friends, and within the world outside of the school. At the heart of our school community lies *Meeting for Worship*. It is a shared weekly experience of silent reflection that allows people from diverse religious backgrounds to meaningfully join together. In addition, the family-style atmosphere of the multi-aged classroom provides a daily experience of meaningful connection to each student. All students will take part in community involvement experiences that link us to life outside the school. In addition, school assemblies and field trips will be a regular part of school life.

**Conflict Resolution:** Offered for grades K-3. While the peaceful resolution to conflict will be a daily part of school life, a 6-8 session course in conflict resolution will be taught at the start of the school year. The course will help children focus on listening to others, defining the problem, and arriving at mutually agreeable solutions. Fundamentals learned here provide students with a “common language” not only for addressing one another, but also for examining and reflecting upon lessons from history and other areas of study.

**Physical Education:** Offered for grades K-3. Classes will help promote a positive self-image, a cooperative attitude, teamwork skills, good sportsmanship, leadership, and a basic knowledge of rules and strategies of different games. Emphasis is placed on motor development for balance, running, throwing, catching, and footwork. Physical Education will be taught 2-3 days per week, but the skills acquired will be practiced throughout the week.

**Art:** Offered for grades K-3. Students will employ a variety of materials and techniques creating both two and three-dimensional works. Art projects will be integrated into regular classroom work whenever possible and regular classroom projects will often have art components. Art will be taught 2 days per week, but the terms and techniques acquired will be integrated through other subjects as well.

**Music:** Offered for grades K-3. Classes emphasize full participation, collaboration, and listening skills. Music appreciation through performance will be emphasized and the fundamentals of music theory introduced. The program will culminate in at least one performance per year. Music will be taught 2 days per week while the concepts and skills introduced will be reinforced throughout the week.