



1953

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ACADEMY

Leading in Courage • Learning with Purpose

**2026-2027
ACADEMIC OVERVIEW**

**DOWNTOWN CAMPUS
K3, K4, TK & K5**

Shannon Forest Campus

829 Garlington Road Greenville SC 29615
864-678-5107

Downtown Campus

200 W. Washington Street Greenville, SC 29601
864-565-0990

FPA DOWNTOWN CAMPUS



Leslie Hatten



Early Education Principal

Dear Families,

I am thrilled to be a part of the First Presbyterian Academy team as the Early Education Principal at the Downtown Campus and Crusader Station, and I'm equally excited that you have chosen our program! The staff and I look forward to a wonderful year as we partner with you to care for and nurture your most precious treasures.

At First Presbyterian Academy, our mission is to provide a Christ-centered learning environment where young learners grow in knowledge, character, and faith, guided by teachers who model Christ's love and truth each day.

At FPA, we strive to give each child a firm sense of self and an understanding of the world and their place in it. With small class sizes and caring teachers, we know each child well, celebrate their strengths, support their growth, and encourage them to reach their full potential. Through Christian teachings of love, respect, and purpose, we guide each child through explanation, exploration, and experimentation to develop language, academic, social, and motor skills. We hope to instill in each child a sense of belonging, community, and the knowledge that they are deeply loved by God.

Our teachers provide rich learning opportunities in language development, math, science exploration, creative play, and social-emotional growth. We believe young children learn best through play, hands-on activities, and meaningful interactions. Differentiated instruction lets us meet each child where they are developmentally while gently challenging them to grow. The result is a community where learning feels joyful, purposeful, and personal.

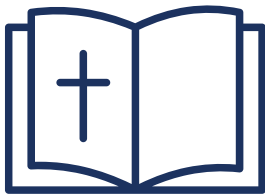
I truly believe that strong connections between home and school are essential during these important early years. We are here to support you, and I invite you to be active in your child's learning experience. At FPA, we strive to cultivate a community that feels like family, a place where relationships flourish, confidence grows, and learning is filled with curiosity and joy.

Please don't hesitate to reach out anytime at lhatten@firstpresacademy.com. Your thoughts, questions, and input are always welcome.

Thank you for allowing us to partner with your family during these precious early years. It is our honor to walk alongside your child as they learn, grow, and discover that they are deeply known and loved.

Warmly,
Leslie D. Hatten
Early Education Principal
First Presbyterian Academy, Downtown Campus & Crusader Station





CHAPEL

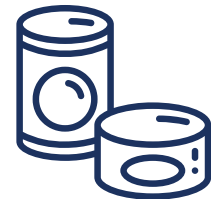
Every Wednesday morning, our students gather in the **Harper Prayer Chapel** for one of the best parts of the week—Chapel! This year, our chapel theme is **The Unshakable Truth**, based on **John 14:6**, where Jesus declares, *"I am the way and the truth and the life."* Throughout the year, students will discover the unchanging truths found in God's Word and what they reveal about our identity in Christ. Together, we'll explore biblical truths such as *I am saved by grace, I am God's creation, I am forgiven, I am protected by God, I am a faithful servant,* and *I am loved with an everlasting love.* In a world where truth is often questioned, we want our students to stand confidently on the unshakable truth of God's Word. Chapel is a special time of worship, biblical teaching, and reflection that encourages every student to know Christ more deeply and faithfully live out His truth each day.



TOYS FOR TOTS TOY DRIVE

Our entire FPA family comes together each year to spread joy through Toys for Tots toy drive. We collect toys to brighten the holidays for children in need in our local community. We have collected almost 5000 toys over the past 8 years.

Last year we collected 778 toys, and we're excited to see our students continue this tradition of giving and compassion this year.



CANNED FOOD DRIVE

To celebrate the 100th day of school, each lower school grade level takes on the special challenge of collecting 100 non-perishable food items to support a local food bank.

Our students show incredible generosity as they help provide meals for families in need, turning a fun milestone into a meaningful act of service.





3 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN



Brandey Freeman



Dawn Knepp



Rebekah Ross



Pamela Miller

MATH

K3 math focuses on building foundational concepts through, interactive play and hands-on learning.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- number sense (counting to 10+, recognizing numerals),
- geometry (naming basic shapes),
- measurement (comparing size/length)
- patterns (recognizing & creating)
- sorting/categorizing,

SCIENCE

K3 students explore the natural world through hands-on science experiences. Students engage in nature exploration, observe seasonal changes, learn about living things, and discover concepts through the five senses. Interactive, age-appropriate activities foster curiosity, scientific thinking, and a love for discovery.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Nature & Seasonal Exploration
- Living Things
- The Five Senses
- Weather & Seasons
- Hands-On Exploration & Observation

READING

K3 literacy overview focuses on building foundational skills like oral language, print awareness, phonological awareness, and alphabet knowledge through play-based activities.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Storytelling
- Book purposes
- Recognizing letters (especially in their name)
- Conversational skills to build a strong base for future reading success

SOCIAL STUDIES

K3 students develop social awareness and an understanding of community. Students learn about their families, develop friendship and social skills, and explore their roles within the classroom and home environments. Through engaging activities and real-world connections, young learners build empathy, understanding of others, and a sense of belonging.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Family & Community
- Friendship & Social Skills
- Classroom & Home Environments
- Kindness & Empathy
- Self-Awareness

WRITING

K3 writing focuses on emergent skills, moving from scribbles to recognizable pictures. Building fine motor skills and understanding that writing has purpose.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Drawing, scribbling, painting, coloring, sidewalk chalk
- Fine motor strengthening (sensory writing, playdough, tweezers)
*Using craft projects and manipulatives to strengthen hands for pencil dexterity.

BIBLE

K3 students are introduced to God's love and Word through developmentally appropriate Bible stories. Lessons feature engaging stories presented through rhyme, making Scripture memorable and fun. Students listen to Bible stories, join interactive activities, and explore ways to retell them through songs, movements, and hands-on experiences. Through these joyful interactions, young learners begin to understand that God loves them and is part of their everyday lives.

K3 Special Events:

- Christmas Program
- Spring Showcase
- Dr. Seuss/Read Across America Week
- Grandparents Day & Book Fair





4 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN



Michelle Jarrell



Christina Chimot



Ryan Stewart



Bridgett Gallo

MATH

Our K4 math curriculum uses Footsteps for Fours from BJU Press to help our students develop fundamental math skills that will serve as a solid foundation for them as they move into K5 and beyond. This is a hands-on, interactive program that allows for free play, exploration of materials, as well as small and large group instruction.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Number Recognition
- Sequencing
- Shapes and patterns
- Sorting and classifying
- Estimating
- Graphing

SCIENCE

Our K4 science program provides hands-on activities as the children explore God's creation through a Biblical world view. The children participate in a variety of engaging activities and experiments that spark their curiosity and encourage active participation and build their problem solving skills.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- 5 senses
- Animal habitats
- Healthy Foods / Choices
- Density (sink / float)
- Weather
- Plant Life
- Planets

READING

In K4 our approach to reading development spans across all curriculum areas. Our K4 program is literature rich and incorporates a wide range of children's literature across all areas of the curriculum. From daily story time and independent book time, to weekly letter bags, the children are actively engaged in a print rich environment that fosters reading at a developmentally appropriate level.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Letter names and sounds
- Print concepts
- Beginning Sounds
- Story Sequencing

SOCIAL STUDIES

Our K4 social studies presents our world through a biblical word view. From large scale topics such as creation and the planets, to the here and now of classroom community, community helps and neighborhoods, we seek to inspire our students to see the world through the lens of the Bible. This is accomplished through large and small group discussions and activities, along with hands-on learning and crafts to provide something concrete to often abstract concepts.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Biblical Creation / Bible Stories
- All about Me
- Community
- Community Helpers
- Native Americans
- Holiday Studies

WRITING

Our K4 classes use Handwriting Without Tears as a writing program. This is a developmental approach to letter and shape formation and includes a variety of hands-on activities to help these little ones develop the hand muscles and foundational writing and drawing skills that will serve as a foundation for their future writing in elementary school.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Lines and shapes
- Proper pencil grasp
- Proper letter formation
- Proper number formation

BIBLE

K4 uses ACSI Bible Curriculum Purposeful Design to help guide our students to develop not only a biblical worldview but to lead them towards a life of faith and hope in Jesus. We read through the Bible from beginning to end and engage the children in hands-on, engaging activities to help solidify their understanding of what we are learning. In addition scripture memorization is included to not only instill the word of God in their hearts, but strive to help make this a life long routine that they carry with them throughout their school career and beyond so that they leave FPA deeply rooted in God's Word.

K4 Grade Field Trips and Special Events:

- Runway Park (Transportation Focus)
- Callaham Orchards (Strawberry picking)
- Festival of Trees walking field trip @ the Hyatt Hotel downtown
- Christmas Program,
- Spring Showcase



TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN



Katie Brayton

MATH

In Transitional Kindergarten, students explore foundational math concepts using the K5 Bob Jones curriculum. Lessons focus on number recognition, counting, basic addition and subtraction, shapes, and measurement. Hands-on activities and play-based learning help students develop number sense, confidence, and a love for math.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Number Recognition & Counting
- Comparing Quantities
- Basic Addition & Subtraction
- Shapes & Spatial Awareness
- Measurement & Comparison
- Patterns

SCIENCE

Transitional Kindergarten students explore the natural world through hands-on science experiences using integrated resources and curriculum. Students engage in nature exploration, observe seasonal changes, learn about living things and their habitats, and discover concepts through the five senses. Interactive activities and real-world connections foster curiosity, scientific thinking, and a love for discovery.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Nature & Seasonal Exploration
- Living Things & Habitats
- The Five Senses
- Weather & Seasons
- Hands-On Exploration & Observation

READING

In Transitional Kindergarten, students explore foundational skills using a teacher-created curriculum bundle that supplements the Scope and Sequence for Kindergarten. Lessons focus on letter recognition, phonemic awareness, alphabet development, basic sight words, number concepts, and social-emotional development. Hands-on activities and play-based learning grounded in the Science of Reading help students build confidence, early literacy skills, and a strong foundation for kindergarten.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Letter Recognition & Phonemic Awareness
- Alphabet Development (Science of Reading approach)
- Sight Words
- Number Concepts & Counting
- Fine Motor Skills
- Social-Emotional Development
- Shapes & Colors

SOCIAL STUDIES

Transitional Kindergarten students develop social awareness and community understanding through Social Studies lessons using hands-on resources and literacy-integrated activities. Students learn about community helpers, develop friendship and social skills, and explore their roles within the classroom and home environments. Through engaging activities and real-world connections, young learners build empathy, understanding of others, and a sense of belonging.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Community Helpers & Roles
- Friendship & Social Skills
- Classroom & Home Environments
- Kindness & Empathy
- Understanding Our Community

WRITING

In Transitional Kindergarten, students develop pre-writing and fine motor skills using Handwriting Without Tears' Kick Start to Kindergarten program. This developmentally appropriate curriculum uses multisensory techniques, fun activities, and proper pencil-grip instruction to prepare young learners for writing. Students practice letter formation, build hand strength, and gain confidence with writing tools through interactive lessons.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Pre-Writing Strokes & Motor Skills
- Proper Pencil Grip Development
- Letter Formation Basics
- Hand Strength & Dexterity
- Writing Readiness Activities
- Confidence Building Through Play

BIBLE

Transitional Kindergarten students are introduced to God's love and Word through the K5 ACSI Bible Curriculum, Purposeful Design. Lessons feature Bible stories about Jesus, God's care, and His love for us, presented in age-appropriate, engaging ways. Students listen to simple Bible stories, learn about Jesus and His teachings, practice basic scripture concepts, and explore foundational biblical truths such as God's love, kindness, obedience, and belonging to God's family, helping them begin to understand that God loves them and is part of their everyday lives.

TK Grade Field Trips and Special Events:

- Sky Top Apple Orchard
- South Carolina Children's Theatre
- Critter Keeper
- Greenville Zoo / Eden Farm



KINDERGARTEN



Mary Lane

MATH

Our kindergarten math curriculum uses Math Expressions, a hands-on, interactive program that helps students build a strong foundation in number sense, patterns, shapes, and problem-solving.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Adding and Subtracting
- Graphing
- Measurement
- Comparing numbers
- Write and count to 100
- 2D and 3D shapes

SCIENCE

Our kindergarten science intentionally weaves Biblical integration throughout each unit. Students explore God's creation through a hands-on, inquiry-based approach that encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- 5 senses
- Living things
- Weather
- Matter
- Forces of Motion
- Human Body

READING

In kindergarten, we use the Bob Jones Reading curriculum to establish strong foundational skills in fluency and comprehension.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Letter names and sounds
- CVC words
- Consonant blends
- Silent e
- Sight words

SOCIAL STUDIES

Our history and geography curriculum is taught through a Biblical worldview, helping students see how God has shaped history for His glory. Students gain an understanding of the world while recognizing God's sovereign hand at work throughout time and place.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Mapping
- Wants & Needs
- Community helpers
- Who are we
- Holiday studies
- National symbols

WRITING

Kindergarten students learn to express their thoughts through pictures, letters, and simple sentences. They build vocabulary, explore sentence structure, and grow as confident, creative writers. Handwriting is taught using the Handwriting Without Tears program, helping students form letters correctly and develop strong writing habits.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Beginning, middle and end
- Sentence structure
- Informational writing
- How-To Writing

BIBLE

Kindergarten students begin their journey in faith with the Deep Roots Bible curriculum, learning through engaging, hands-on lessons that make God's Word come alive. Each week, children practice scripture memory and explore foundational biblical concepts, including God's creation, obedience, and His love for people. Holiday and special units, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, help students see how biblical truths connect to their everyday lives.

K5 Grade Field Trips and Special Events:

- Sky Top Apple Orchard
- South Carolina Children's Theatre
- Critter Keeper
- Greenville Zoo / Eden Farm



RELATED ARTS



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Each day, students participate in 30-minute Related Arts classes, including Art, STEM, PE, Spanish, and Music. These classes nurture the whole child—creatively, intellectually, and spiritually—helping students explore God’s world, develop their gifts, and grow in character alongside academic learning.



De’quan Rowland
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

“Every PE class is a chance to move, learn, and grow; building strength, faith, and joy in Jesus through active play and teamwork.”



Ann Carruthers
SPANISH (TK & K5)

“My goal for teaching Spanish in the lower school is to provide engaging exposure that makes the language feel familiar rather than foreign. I also encourage students to use what they have learned to glorify God and share Him with others.”



Vicky Burr
STEM / ART

Our Early Education STEAM program introduces young learners to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math through hands-on exploration, creativity, and play—all from a biblical worldview. Children are encouraged to ask questions, investigate, build, create, and solve problems while recognizing that God is the Creator of an orderly, beautiful, and purposeful world. Through engaging activities and meaningful experiences, students develop curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration, and confidence as they discover the wonders of God's creation and learn to use their gifts to glorify Him.



Michelle Ward
MUSIC

“My desire is to cultivate a love for Jesus in the hearts of young children through joyful music, purposeful movement, and engaging, faith-centered learning experiences.”



Related Arts Special Events

- Downtown Spring Showcase
- Christmas Program





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STAY CONNECTED!

Scan the QR code to access our Parent Portal—your one-stop resource for important school information, calendars, forms, supply lists, lunch ordering, handbooks, academic resources, and more. Everything you need, all in one place.

