



The Children's School
AT STEPHENS COLLEGE

2022-2023

Handbook

CSSC Handbook Table of Contents

Stephens College Mission, Vision, Values	2
Children's School	2
History	2
Mission Statement	2
Vision Statement	2
Values	3
Curriculum	3
Programs	3
Faculty & Staff	4
Class Day Policies and Procedures	4
Classroom times	5
Arrival/Departure	5
Clothing	6
Extended Day	6
Meals/Snacks	6
Rest Time	6
Classroom Management Policies	6
Birthdays/Special Occasions	6
Discipline Policy	7
Emergency Situations and Drills	7
Items from Home	8
Family Involvement	8
Communication	8
Family Group	8
Orientation	8
Parent Access to Child's File	9
Parent Grievance	9
Health Policies	10
Abuse and Mandated Reporting	10
Accidents or Injuries	10
Communicable Diseases	10
Illnesses	11
Immunizations	12
Medication	12
School Policies	13
Closures/Inclement Winter Weather	13
Field Trips	13
Lost and Found	13
Special Needs/Accommodations	13
Tuition Payment	14
Visitors	14
Withdrawal	14

Stephens College Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Learn. Grow. Lead.

Vision

Inspired by its tradition as an undergraduate women's college, Stephens College engages lifelong learners in an educational experience characterized by intellectual rigor, creative expression, and professional practice, supported by accomplished faculty, talented staff, and engaged alumnae/alumni. Graduates of Stephens College are educated in the liberal arts, informed by diverse perspectives, and committed to lives of leadership, integrity, and service

Values

Stephens College is committed to its Ten Ideals as core values that inspire and enrich our lives:

1. Respect for our own dignity and the dignity of others, embodied in a sense of social justice.
2. Courage and persistence.
3. Independence, autonomy, and self-sufficiency.
4. Support for others through the willingness to take and give criticism, acceptance, and love.
5. Sensitivity to the uniqueness and fragility of the natural world of which we are part.
6. Responsibility for the consequences of our choices.
7. Belief in our changing selves and in our right to change.
8. Creativity in the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of life.
9. Intelligence that is informed and cultivated, critical yet tolerant.
10. Leadership which empowers others

The Children's School at Stephens College

History

What started as an experimental nursery school in 1925 is today's Children's School at Stephens College (CSSC). The school moved to the Audrey Webb Child Study Center in 1970, and expanded to the Hugh Stephens Library Penthouse in 2016. Today, the school, in its entirety, is located at the heart of campus in Hickman Hall. Throughout CSSC's history, teaching, learning, and children have been at the heart of the Stephens College laboratory school.

Mission

Provide pre-service teachers teaching and learning experience inside the laboratory school. In addition, children in our laboratory school receive solid, research-based instruction.

CSSC Vision Statement

Constructivist theory and a focus on art and science, provides CSSC a framework for developing intrinsic learners. Our vision is to create learning environments that consist of children, families, faculty, and Stephens College education students learning collaboratively.

Values

- Children and college students have an intrinsic desire to learn and construct knowledge by interacting upon the world.
- Children and college students should be active learners who have a variety of opportunities to try out ideas they are learning in real situations.
- Classroom teachers are active facilitators who utilize a variety of resources and methodologies.
- Education should involve the total person, including social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development with attention to feelings, attitudes, and values.
- Acceptance and support of each individual and the encouragement of social and moral autonomy are central to The Children's School at Stephens College experience for students, families, faculty, and pre-service teachers.
- Students learn best when exposed to a variety of practices, methods, and experiences.
- Artful thinking has application beyond the classroom and supports our ability to ask critical questions, solve problems in innovative ways, and make meaning.

Curriculum

CSSC curriculum supports the ever-changing and developing child. The laboratory school's curriculum is child-centered, interest-based, and hands-on to encourage each child's growing independence. The teachers at CSSC design curriculum that initiates children's interest and provides a learning environment to grow development, learning, and independence. We facilitate children's' learning using a variety of professional resources and although planned units of study are designed, children's' interests are considered, and curriculum is adapted as needed.

Our preschool rooms are designed with interest centers; blocks, dramatic play, manipulatives, art, sensory, library, music & movement, and science. In these interest centers, children choose from a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Our multiage, elementary classroom ranges from kindergarten through 5th grade. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of our students and align with Missouri state standards. All classrooms balance teacher facilitation and independent learning opportunities. They are designed to actively engage children in learning throughout the day to promote their creative expression.

Curricular decisions are closely linked and shaped by on-going assessments. Decisions are based on the fundamental concepts of developmental and culturally appropriate anti-bias practice. Theory and research in child development, family studies, early childhood, and elementary education guide the curriculum and assessment practices of CSSC programs. Monitoring and documentation of children's progress is on-going.

CSSC includes the community in planning curriculum. We invite relevant community member to our school as experts.

Programs

Our quality programs include a morning half-day preschool program, a full-day preschool program, and an elementary (K-5) program. All three programs integrate the arts, sciences, and technology throughout the curriculum. The preschool program (ages 3-5) is designed to

support the whole child, including social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth. The elementary classroom is an authentic multi-age setting where children are grouped by ability rather than age. The curriculum is child-driven and teacher-facilitated. The curriculum includes direct and indirect instruction of literacy, math, social studies, science, art, music, theater, and dance, and is heavily cross-curricular and arts-integrated.

Faculty and Staff

CSSC children are taught by experienced, certified teachers, with Stephens College education majors as assistants.

Administration

Elizabeth Watson, ABD in Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum, Director
Melanie Kelley, M.Ed. in Inclusive Education, Administrative Assistant

Classroom Teachers

Elementary

Rachel LaMear, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary Teacher
Peter LaMear, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, Elementary Teacher
Kimbriana Evans, BS in EC and Elementary Education (December 2022), Elementary Teacher
Julia Gundacker, BS in EC and Elementary Education (December 2022), Elementary Teacher

Preschool

Taylor Midgley, M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, Preschool Teacher
Stephanie Stilley, M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction, Preschool Teacher
Renee Monroe, B.F.A in Photography with a minor in Education, Preschool assistant teacher
Erin Bradley, BS in Elementary Education, Preschool assistant teacher

Education Program Faculty

Sean Clouse, Ph.D., Chair
Sharon Schattgen, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Watson, ABD.

College Students

CSSC provides opportunities for college students to observe and interact with children in various ways to develop a frame of reference concerning the growth, development and behavior of children. These experiences allow students to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning activities, observe children's reactions to the routines of the day, study their progress, and develop skills in interacting positively with both individual children and groups.

Class Day Policies and Procedures

Classroom times

Morning Extended Day	7:30-8:30
Half Day Preschool	8:30-11:30

Full Day Preschool	8:30-3:30
Elementary	8:30-3:30
Afternoon Extended Day	3:30-5:30

Arrival/Departure

Children may be dropped off heading north on Waugh St. Drop-off for Elementary is between 8:20 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and Preschool is from 8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m. Pick up is the same location with Elementary from 3:20 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. and Preschool from 3:30 p.m.-3:40 p.m.

Parents drive heading north on Waugh St. and a teacher will help guide the flow of traffic. Staff will accompany children from the drop-off and pick-up zone to and from the classroom. Please do not drop children off without a teacher present.

Parking is available in the parking lot near Stamper Hall or on the street on Waugh for children dropped off after 8:40 a.m. Please accompany children dropped off after 8:40 a.m. to the front door. Children not picked up by 3:40 p.m. will return to Hickman Hall for afternoon Extended Day. Parents may park in the lot behind Senior Hall during extended day hours with flashers turned on.

Late Pick-up

CSSC understands that delays can occur at any time. If you are delayed, please contact the school office (573-876-7260) and let them know the estimated time you will pick up your child. If Extended Day is in session, your child will be sent there and you will be assessed a \$5/hour fee. If you are delayed in picking up your child from Extended Day, you will receive a written reminder of the school policy. On subsequent occasions, you will be assessed a \$10 charge for every thirty minutes past 5:30 p.m. If this occurs more than two times, the privilege of after-school care will be revoked. If we have not been able to reach a family member or an authorized person on the pick-up list by 7:00 p.m., the police will be contacted.

Parking

The parking lot next to Stamper Hall can be used during the day. If the lot is full, legal street parking may be available on nearby connecting streets. If you are doing a quick drop-off or pick-up that is not during drop-off and pick-up times, you may park in this area with your flashers on. We do ask you to find a legal spot if you plan to stay longer than five minutes.

Important Arrival/Departure Rules to Remember

Children may not be left unattended at any time while on school property (including but not limited to parking lots, academic buildings, stairwells, or walkways).

If someone other than family members or caregivers is picking up a child, they must be listed on the emergency contact card as being authorized to pick up your child and bring a picture ID.

If someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child, you must notify the school/teachers in advance. For the first few weeks of enrollment, family members and caregivers may be asked to show a picture ID as well. This is for the protection of your child, so please comply willingly with these requests.

All children must be in car seats in compliance with Missouri Law. Children not in compliant car seats will be reported.

Clothing

We go outside every day, weather permitting, so please plan accordingly. Children at CSSC play, explore, and get dirty, therefore, we recommend dressing your child in comfortable, durable clothing. Preschool children are asked to bring a change of clothes to keep at school. Elementary children need to bring an extra pair of shoes for the playground and may bring a change of clothes.

Extended Day Program

Extended Day is available from 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and from 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday – Friday for \$5.00/hour. You also have the option of being billed monthly at a 20% discount. These options will be placed on the tuition agreement form to be signed at the beginning of each school year. For extended day, families can park in the drop-off and pick-up area with flashers on, and walk their child to Hickman Hall.

Meals and Snacks

CSSC provides snacks for preschool and for afternoon extended day.

Food Allergies

Please request the Family Food Allergy Health History Form from the CSSC office to complete regarding any allergies or dietary restrictions your child may have. Teachers need to be informed at the beginning of the year of any foods a child may not eat. In addition, an Emergency Action Plan will need to be in place. Information supplied on the Family Food Allergy Health History Form will be kept confidential in the school office.

Rest Period

Children in the full-day preschool program will have the option of a rest period in the afternoon. The school provides cots, sheets, and a pillow for those who nap that will be laundered by the school weekly. Children are permitted to have a comfort item from home, but please limit it to one item that can easily fit in their cubby area or backpack.

Classroom Management Policies

Birthdays and Special Occasions

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please talk with the teachers to schedule the best time. We do not allow food to be brought into the classroom for birthday celebrations.

Discipline Policy

The Children's School at Stephens College believes that classroom management should be a collaborative effort with the families, children, and teachers. Our primary focus is to support the academic, socioemotional development of every student. We seek to promote a love of learning, a sense of responsibility, and respect for others. We support children in making positive behavior choices to ensure a safe and productive learning environment for all.

CSSC utilizes positive reinforcement, redirection, and clear expectations to help children be successful in the classroom. If a child does not meet behavior expectations, he/she is given verbal instruction and redirection to remind him/her of expectations. If this is not successful, the child will be instructed to take a break from the current activity (e.g., sitting in a calm, safe space within the teacher's sight). After a short period of time, the teacher and child will discuss the incident, the expected behavior, and ways to respond differently in the future. The teacher will then help the child re-enter the classroom activity. If the inappropriate behavior continues, an incident report may be filled out and shared with the family/parent.

If inappropriate behaviors persist, the family will be asked to meet with the teaching staff. Together, we will evaluate the situation, discuss possible strategies, develop an action plan, and establish a timeline for success.

Additional conferences may be held to evaluate progress and revise the plan. If the behavior does not improve, it may be necessary to withdraw the child from the program.

Please note: Careful consideration is given to individual situations. Suspensions and expulsions will be considered when ongoing behavior is disruptive and detrimental to the operation of the school.

Emergency Situations and Drills

Students will participate in scheduled fire, tornado, earthquake, and active intruder drills throughout the school year. All staff members and students are given information about safety procedures appropriate for such situations. In the event of an actual emergency, family members will be notified through email and are encouraged to opt into RAVE, the Stephens College Emergency System.

Fire. The building is equipped with a central fire alarm system. Stephens Security and the Columbia Fire Department will respond when the fire alarm is activated. There are fire extinguishers and smoke detectors throughout the building and in each classroom. If we are instructed to evacuate the premises, teachers will escort students to their assigned meeting place.

Tornado. Teachers and Students will be notified of severe weather by their floor monitors. When notified of a Tornado Warning, teachers and students will seek shelter on first floor central hallway, basement, and bathrooms away from windows and doors or the basement.

Earthquake. All students participate in earthquake drills throughout the year. These drills educate students on how to shelter in place during an earthquake and evacuation routes to

gathering places once the tremors have passed. We will evacuate to the central quad in front of our building.

Active Intruder. The teachers at the Children’s School attend Active Intruder training, as conducted through Stephens College Security. In the event of an emergency, faculty and staff will help students follow emergency protocols (shelter in place, evacuation, or other as directed by local emergency responders). Families will be contacted once the immediate safety and security of the students has been assured, as verified by emergency responders.

Items from Home

Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home unless requested by the teachers (show-and-tell or share days, for example). Full-day preschoolers are permitted to bring a blanket and nap buddy for afternoon rest time. We encourage children to bring books to share that pertain to classroom studies, but please be sure these are clearly labeled.

Family Involvement

CSSC encourages all families to become actively involved in their child’s education. We believe that a strong home-school relationship is an integral part of a child’s education. You are always welcome to visit and observe your child in the classroom. We encourage you to share any special talents, skills, or interests that the children would enjoy learning and experiencing. Please talk to your child’s teachers about ways you can participate.

Family Communication

We encourage families to ask questions and share concerns with your child’s teachers. We feel that a positive relationship based on open communication is a vital component of your child’s feelings of happiness and security at school.

We communicate with families on a daily basis at drop-off and pick-up, and on a weekly basis through class newsletters. In addition, teachers will send emails or notes home periodically with updates on your child. Two formal conferences with your child’s teachers are scheduled for the year, one in the fall and one in the spring. The conferences are your opportunity to find out how your child is progressing and to discuss any questions you may have. Of course, you are welcome to schedule a conference with your child’s teachers at any time throughout the school year if you feel it is necessary.

Family Group

The Family Group at CSSC works on fundraising, helps coordinate volunteers, and schedules Teacher Appreciation events. Family members are welcome to join at any time. Please talk with the teachers for more information.

Orientation

An orientation open house for new and current families will be offered the week before school begins. Your family can come to the school, meet the teachers, see the classroom, and participate in an orientation meeting to help become acclimated with some of the daily

procedures of elementary and preschool. During this time, the family will have the opportunity to ask questions about the program with the teachers and director.

Parent Access to Child's File

Assessment

Child assessment is a vital and necessary component of all high-quality early childhood and elementary programs. Assessment is important to understand and support children's development. Each classroom completes authentic assessments that encompass all areas of development. Assessment is also essential to document and evaluate how effectively programs are meeting young children's educational needs and to inform program improvement.

Assessment Results

The information gained during all assessments will be used to develop curriculum, parent education, and evidence for referral. Teachers use the information gathered during the assessment process to use in planning a curriculum that best meets the needs of all children. If there is an indication of a developmental delay, the teachers will use the information gathered for referral for further diagnostic screenings and assessments.

Confidentiality

All information gathered about a child is kept confidential. Records are kept in a secure area with limited access except by authorized personnel.

- Information obtained and collected by the program will be shared with other staff only on a "need to know" basis.
- Practicum students are not included in discussions of children and assessment/screening results unless the information is relevant to the practicum experience.
- Parents and guardians may ask to view screening and assessment results by asking the classroom teacher or the director.
- All information compiled during assessments will be used to promote the healthy developmental growth of the child. As appropriate, the classroom teacher, the parents, and other essential personnel will be involved in making goals for the child or a referral in cases of developmental delays.
- No information shall be shared with an outside agency without the written consent from the parent or legal guardian.

Child Portfolios

Tools may include checklists, social inventory, anecdotal records, self-reflections, evaluations, samples of work, drawings, paintings, writings, stories and photographs, etc. Parents are welcome to view their child's portfolio at any time.

Parent Grievance

A parent who has a grievance or complaint about some aspect of the program should first try to settle the grievance directly with the teacher. If the conflict is not resolved, the grievance should be discussed with the Director of CSSC. In the event that the conflict remains unresolved, the parties concerned may discuss the issue with the Stephens College Dean of Integrated Studies.

Health Policies

The Department of Health has established certain requirements and guidelines regarding children's health in an educational setting. These requirements are meant to protect all of the children in the program. Therefore, we ask for your cooperation in complying with these rules.

Abuse and Mandated Reporting

As professionals in contact with children and their families, we at CSSC are required by law to help the DFS become aware of children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors, as well as day care/child care workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is the policy of CSSC staff and faculty to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to DFS immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone. Our school will offer full cooperation of its staff and faculty during the investigation of the reported incident. The phone number to report is: 1-800-392-3728 and the website is: <https://apps.dss.mo.gov/OnlineCanReporting/default.aspx>.

Accidents or Injuries

CSSC makes every effort to ensure the safety of all children. If an accident occurs, the teachers will notify parents, either at pick-up or immediately by phone. The teachers will fill out an accident report form, sending one copy home with the family and keeping a copy at school. For minor injuries such as scrapes, scratches, and bruises, the appropriate first aid will be applied. This aid includes cleaning injuries that break the skin and applying a cold compress to bumps and bruises.

For serious incidents, CSSC will call 911 and the parent/guardian immediately. A staff member will accompany your child to the hospital if parents/guardians have not yet arrived. We will make every effort to ensure your child's comfort and safety until you arrive at the hospital. Please be sure that the office has updated information for you and your emergency contacts. These same guidelines are applied during off-campus trips.

Communicable Diseases

If your child is exposed to or contracts a communicable disease, please report this information to the school. We are required to notify all families when a child contracts a communicable disease, such as flu, chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, head lice, Covid-19. Your child's name will be kept confidential.

When your child is well, you will need to provide written verification from your child's physician stating that the condition is no longer contagious and that it is safe for your child to attend school.

Illnesses

For the health and safety of everyone, children who are ill may not attend The Children’s School at Stephens College. If your child becomes ill while in attendance at CSSC, you will be notified to pick up your child. Please list the name and phone number of two or more adults who can pick up and care for your child if we are unable to contact you. This information should be placed on the emergency information sheet stored in our front office. Please keep this information current.

If you know your child will be absent due to illness, please notify the school by calling our office at 876-7260 or emailing childrenschool@stephens.edu.

We are committed to safeguarding the health of all children attending, so please follow these guidelines when deciding if your child is well enough to attend:

Symptom/illness	Keep child home until...
Fever (100 or above)	Fever registers below 100 without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours
Runny nose with discoloration of mucus	Mucus/discharge is of normal color
Rash/ringworm	Physician determines the cause and recommends when the child can return to school
Red, watery, or irritated eyes/Pink eye	Physician determines the cause and recommends when the child can return to school
Vomiting or diarrhea	Child is free of vomiting and diarrhea for at least 24 hours and able to participate in normal daily activities
Draining sore	Physician determines the cause and recommends when the child can return to school

Head lice	No nits or lice are present (we will perform a check before child re-enters the classroom)
-----------	--

Children who are being treated with antibiotics for any illness must complete a full 24 hours of treatment before returning to school (ex: if we send your child home at 11:00 am but the child does not receive his/her first dose of antibiotics until 3:00 pm, he/she cannot return to school the next day).

Covid-19

Our Covid-19 policies follow the CDC guidelines.

Immunization

Immunizations are essential for the protection of children and ARE REQUIRED BY MISSOURI LAW FOR STUDENTS TO BE ENROLLED IN AND ATTEND SCHOOL. (MO State Law 19 CSR 20-28.010; sections 167.181, 192.006.1, and 210.003)

Family members or guardians of each child must furnish the school with satisfactory evidence of immunization in the form of a statement, certificate, or record from a physician or other health facility, or a statement of medical or religious exemption from immunizations against diseases. Exemptions for religious or medical reasons will only be accepted if CSSC is provided with proper, current documentation (religious exemptions must be filed annually). The school should be informed of immunizations a child receives after enrollment in order to maintain current and accurate information on the child’s health record, as required by state law.

Medication (Prescription and Non-prescription)

The Children’s School at Stephens College does not have a registered nurse on staff and therefore cannot administer any medication not prescribed by a physician. All prescription medication must remain in its original container and be registered with the administrative assistant in the school office where it will be stored. A separate form is needed for each medication; forms are available in the Hickman Hall office. It is the responsibility of the family member/guardian to retrieve the medication at the end of the day.

Sanitation

Our teachers and staff will encourage and model regular handwashing regularly throughout the day. Students will wash hands:

- Upon arrival to the school
- After touching frequently-used and shared objects (such as doorknobs, railings, craft supplies, playground equipment, water fountains, etc.)
- Before lunch/snack time
- After lunch/snack time
- After coming inside from outdoors
- After coughing/sneezing/blowing nose

- After recess/play
- Before going home

Staff will also regularly sanitizing regularly-used areas throughout the day using a 3-step cleaning method approved by the CDC and Missouri Accreditation.

School Policies

Closures/Inclement Winter Weather

CSSC may close for inclement winter weather. If road conditions warrant cancellations for CSSC due to inclement winter weather, announcements of school closings will be on the following TV stations: KOMU-TV, Channel 8; and ABC-17, Channel 17. In addition, we will email parents if school is closed.

Field Trips

The majority of our field trips will be within walking distance of the school. We visit campus locations such as the stables, the library, and the post office. We also take regular walks to Lion-Stephens Park. We will keep you informed of any upcoming field trips and always welcome family volunteers. If we leave campus, all students are required to have an additional permission form in order to attend.

Lost and Found

Lost items are either turned in to the office or with your child's teacher.

Special Needs/Accommodations

Our school welcomes children with a variety of gifts and needs. We know that children with diagnosed special needs deserve the best in quality education, but are aware we are not always equipped to meet all of these needs. Children must be toilet-trained and independent in the bathroom before they attend. All written material about the child must be shared with the teachers and director so the school can make informed decisions concerning acceptance and may properly plan for each child.

The classroom teachers will conference with the family to set up an educational plan to be used. If the parents do not comply with the plan or, if after a reasonable trial, the school feels unable to meet the needs of the child, the school will recommend the child be withdrawn. The director, the teachers, and parents will determine whether a child needs an aide. The hiring of an aide will be done by the director, but the salary of the aide will be the parents' responsibility. There are children who have undiagnosed special needs. Any time after a child has enrolled in our program, the teachers have the right to:

- Conference with the family
- Recommend evaluations
- Create an educational plan

After a full evaluation, the family must agree to follow the recommendations of the evaluation team and agree to follow the educational plan. If the family does not comply or, if after reasonable trial, the school feels unable to meet the needs of the child, the school can require that the child be withdrawn from the school.

Tuition Payment

Families will be required to sign a tuition agreement form annually stating the agreed-to monthly tuition payment. Tuition is paid monthly, September – May. Tuition is billed by the Stephens College Accounting Office the first of each month and payment is due by the last day of each month. Checks should be made payable to Stephens College and either dropped off at the CSSC office or mailed to:

Stephens College Accounting Office
Box 2006
Columbia, MO 65215

You may also pay with credit card over the phone at 573-876-7105. Or online: [Tuition online](#). Please contact the Stephens College Accounting Office if you need to work out a different payment schedule or payment plan.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome to observe our programs. When coming to observe, please sign-in at the front office.

Withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw your child from The Children's School at Stephens College, please inform your child's teachers and the school office at least two weeks before the effective withdrawal date. You will be responsible for paying the full month's tuition. _