

Christ Church  Episcopal Preschool



HEAD OF SCHOOL SEARCH

Position Starts July 1, 2024

Wilmington, Delaware



EDUCATORS COLLABORATIVE
EXPERTS IN SEARCH, TRANSITION & STRATEGY



A THRIVING PRESCHOOL IN AN IDYLIC SETTING

Arriving on the leafy campus of Christ Church Episcopal Preschool (CCEP), one immediately senses being in another world — a world that is characterized by kindness, gentleness, an embrace of nature, and a dedication to exploration. Children recognize that this is their place to grow, and the school reinforces this culture by focusing its attention entirely on its young students.

Sharing the Parish House of the historic Christ Church Christiana Hundred, CCEP takes advantage of its pastoral setting with programming that includes active outdoor play. The campus includes two playgrounds, a nature trail, and an award-winning outdoor classroom. Children also use outdoor space for art classes and observation of the natural world around them.

CCEP is in the enviable position of enjoying full enrollment, a beautiful campus, a supportive community, an exceptional Board of Trustees, and dedicated, talented teachers. Graduates of CCEP consistently attend the top independent, public, and parochial schools in Wilmington. Simply put, this is an opportunity to lead the top preschool in the Wilmington area, which is well positioned for continued success.

16 YEARS OF DEDICATION TO PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool was founded in 2006 as the successor to Madame Layton Nursery School, which had operated on the grounds of the church for many years. Since its founding, CCEP has developed its programs and enrollment to become Wilmington's most well respected independent preschool. The school now enrolls 89 students for children from 18 months through prekindergarten. Its operations include care for students before and after the school day, as well as a thriving summer program.

CCEP prides itself on being a preschool and not a day care center. Students engage in both guided and structured play, utilizing the school's well-maintained indoor facilities and extensive grounds. The school believes that outdoor play is crucial to child development and the use of the 22-acre campus is fully integrated into the school's approach to learning. Programs begin with the Kickstart program for the school's youngest children who aren't yet ready for a full day at CCEP and extend to the Stars group, which is the name for the school's prekindergarten class. Teachers follow a clearly articulated curriculum that is based on [Delaware Early Learning Foundations](#). The program includes "specials" such as music and Spanish, which are taught by trained professionals who visit the school several times a week.



A CLOSE AND THRIVING SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Parents of CCEP students routinely describe the school as “nurturing”, “safe”, and “joyful”. Community connection is a major part of the CCEP ethos and, to that end, the school provides numerous opportunities for families to engage in their children’s education. Families visit often and regularly connect with each other outside of school, either informally or at school family events such as the Book Fair, Grandparents and Special Friends Day, the annual “Running of the Rams”, Moms’ Night Out, Dads’ Night Out, and countless other community experiences. Families are able to see what’s happening at school every day through the school’s robust use of the Brightwheels communication platform.



SERVING WITH A SKILLED ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

The Head of School is supported by an administrative team that includes a full-time school administrator, well as a part-time Director of Special Programs, a teacher who is responsible for administering licensing and rules, and a curriculum coordinator. A student support team meets regularly and provides both observation and support to faculty members. The result of this leadership structure is a well-functioning school that prides itself on the unique needs of each student and the continuous professional development of the faculty to ensure professionalism and growth. The Head of School receives the support of the Rector of Christ Church Christiana Hundred, with whom the Head meets regularly.

LEADERSHIP BEGINS HERE

As a standalone preschool, CCEP provides opportunities for its oldest children to become leaders in a manner that is unavailable at schools whose enrollment extends to kindergarten and beyond. Members of the prekindergarten class serve as role models for the school’s youngest students and are given opportunities to build their leadership skills throughout the school year. They take their responsibilities seriously — leading students into Chapel, performing in the Christmas pageant, and staging a musical production in the spring.



Throughout the prekindergarten year, the school advises families on their choice of schools when they leave CCEP. This is an important process, and CCEP strives to provide guidance as to which of the many area public, independent, and parochial schools will be an appropriate fit. Regardless of where graduates enroll after CCEP, they are well prepared for the next stage of their academic and personal journey, as evidenced by feedback given by parents of former CCEP students.



AT A GLANCE

- Established: 2006
- Number of Students: 89
- Faculty members: 17
- Classrooms: 7
- Specials include Music, Spanish, Chapel, Godly Play, and Gym
- Afternoon enrichment for full-day children
- A 9-week play-based summer camp
- Annual Budget: \$1 million
- Financial Aid: \$67,000 annually

Words that Members of the CCEP Community Use to Describe their School



THE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL TRADITION AT THE HEART OF CCEP

Episcopal schools have a long history of education that is characterized by academic excellence, inclusivity, social involvement through service to others, and valuing the innate potential that every child brings to the world. CCEP is proud to be one of over 400 Episcopal schools in America that provides an exceptional education to children of families of all faiths, traditions, or none. Students and staff at CCEP attend weekly chapel services and, once a month, the school convenes for a brief “family Chapel” service, that includes the families of students. In the words of one parent, “It’s the best 15 minutes of my day.” In the Episcopal tradition, CCEP believes that there is something to be valued and respected living in a community that proclaims the unique worth and beauty of all human beings.

At the heart of CCEP’s philosophy are:

- **Children:** We strive for excellent teaching to meet children’s needs.
- **Diversity:** We welcome all children at CCEP regardless of race, religion, social or ethnic background.
- **Teachers:** We create an environment that promotes mutual respect, trust, and development of the professional staff.
- **Teamwork:** We collaborate to achieve optimal goals for children and staff.
- **Renewal:** We continually seek to improve all aspects of CCEP.
- **Management:** We manage ourselves with integrity and respect for one another.
- **Communications:** We engage in two-way communications that are honest, clear and timely.
- **Ethical Behavior:** We uphold ethical and moral behavior in all aspects of CCEP.



Explore What Makes Christ Church Episcopal Preschool Distinct
(click on the links below)

- [Christ Church Christiana Hundred Kick Start Program](#)
- [Beginner Program](#)
- [Nursery program](#)
- [Primary program](#)
- [Pre-Kindergarten Program](#)
- [Summer Camp](#)

FUTURE LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool seeks a leader who enthusiastically embraces and champions the school's mission, which is grounded in creating community among families, school and church, and honors and nurtures children in the Episcopal tradition.

The successful candidate will demonstrate a leadership approach distinguished by a warm, welcoming, and inclusive personal manner, exceptional verbal and written communication skills, a commitment to values-based education and spiritual development, and a love for young children. They will also bring the skills, initiative, and drive to help further realize a compelling, and sustainable vision for the future of the school.

The Board of Trustees of CCEP is conducting a national search to identify its next Head of School. Search consultant George Sanderson of Educators Collaborative solicited input from all stakeholders during an on-campus visit and gathered additional input from stakeholders through an online survey. Based on this input, impressions of the consultant, and feedback from the Head of School Search Committee, the following represents a summary of the school's strengths, challenges and opportunities, and the skills and attributes desired in the next Head of School of CCEP.

Strengths of The School

- CCEP is unequivocally clear about its mission and its desire to combine a play-based academic program with a focus on kindness, compassion, and connection with both its families and the local community. The school's Episcopal identity grounds its culture and actions.
- CCEP strives to offer a learning environment that is joyful and inclusive, fostering curiosity and compassion balanced by a focus on preschool academics so that students find success in the schools they attend upon their graduation. Often described as "sweet," the school retains a level of closeness that is refreshing and appreciated by all community members.
- Unlike many schools, CCEP is in the enviable position of enjoying full, growing enrollment and draws from throughout the Wilmington area.
- The CCEP community is impressively engaged in, and supportive of, the school. Parent volunteerism is strong and the high-functioning Board of Trustees is deeply committed and forward-thinking in its approach to governance.



- CCEP nurtures a collaborative and mission-focused partnership with Christ Church Christiana Hundred. The school and the church are steadfastly aligned in their commitment to developing thoughtful, compassionate young learners while instilling a sense of community responsibility in children and adults alike.
- Consistent with the culture of the Episcopal Church, CCEP welcomes families of all faiths and backgrounds. The school is dedicated to providing a warm, welcoming environment for all of its families.
- CCEP has earned an outstanding reputation in Wilmington. It is deeply respected by families for its preschool academic programs and commitment to nurturing the character of its students. The strength of the school is reflected not only in its full enrollment but also by the fact that its graduates go on to attend the area's top independent, parochial, and public schools, including Tower Hill and Tatnall.

Opportunities and Challenges

Develop and implement a vision for the future of CCEP

The Board of Trustees is in the process of completing the school's next Strategic Plan, which will be finalized and implemented by the next Head of School. The draft Strategic Plan outlines the future priorities of the school, which include increasing the diversity of the student body, achieving accreditation, and upgrading classrooms. The next Head of School will take part in refining these goals and working to bring them to fruition.

Maintain full enrollment and increase demand within target areas

CCEP is full-enrolled, with a waiting list, after experiencing impressive growth in its student body in recent years. Managing this growth and determining the optimum size for CCEP given its current facilities will be an opportunity for the incoming Head of School.





Steward the relationship with the parish

Founded as a ministry of Christ Church Christiana Hundred, CCEP enjoys a fruitful and engaging relationship with the parish. The school shares facilities with the church and the Head of School is a member of the rector's lead staff. While the Board of Trustees supports the direction of the school, the Head of School joins the clergy and other lay program leaders to fine-tune plans for space use and programs that support the mission of the church and the success of the school. Both parish and school value the close connection and the spirit of collaboration.

Continue to recruit and retain mission-aligned, passionate, teachers, supporting their wellness and professional growth

Committed, talented faculty are at the heart of CCEP and continuing to invest in their growth and development is key to successful teacher recruitment and retention. This includes managing faculty turnover and continuing to help professionalize teachers in early childhood education practices. The next Head of School will work to consciously blend professional development with teacher evaluation to support a culture that values creativity and autonomy as well as ongoing growth and accountability.

Guide and nurture the school's commitment to belonging and its Episcopal values

CCEP is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community that empowers its students and families to celebrate their cultural identities, faiths, backgrounds, and heritages. The school will look to the next Head to guide the community by supporting an inclusive space, and facilitating its evolution in a thoughtful, transparent manner.



Build administrative infrastructure and efficiency

The next Head of School will work to maintain an efficient administrative structure and systems, supporting the development of administrators and teachers.

Skills and Attributes of the Next Head of School

CCEP seeks a caring leader and passionate educator to step into the challenging role of Head of School. The school takes great pride in nurturing a compassionate and kind environment that is joyful and disciplined. An individual who brings energy, integrity, faith, and joy will thrive and experience success in the CCEP community.



The ideal candidates will possess many of the following skills and attributes:

- A commitment to servant leadership that includes empowering and inspiring others, working in partnership, and holding people accountable in ways that support continued professional and personal growth
- Demonstrated success in the classroom and in leadership roles in early childhood and/or elementary education
- The capacity to facilitate inclusive dialogue, make difficult decisions, have courageous conversations, and build trust
- An appreciation for the Episcopal Church traditions and values, and the positive role they play in a school environment
- Proficient understanding of strategic financial sustainability, budget development, student and faculty recruitment and retention, and enrollment management
- A deep love for children, an earnest belief in joyful learning, and unbridled enthusiasm for the school's compelling mission of guiding young children to do and be their best
- An inspiring communicator who is warm, personable, collaborative, transparent, and approachable and who listens deeply to all community members while taking the time to understand the culture of CCEP
- A visionary builder who can think strategically in partnership with a hard-working Board and capably execute plans to bring initiatives to fruition, while managing community expectations and the impact of change
- Skilled in building relationships within and beyond the CCEP community, generating excitement about the school's mission to instill in its students curiosity, compassion for others, and faith.



SUMMARY OF THE SEARCH PROCESS

Candidates interested in this position are asked to submit the following materials by **January 15, 2024**:

- EC Summary Sheet and Disclosure Statement (contact George Sanderson for these documents)
- Letter of Interest addressed to the Search Committee
- Current Resume
- Statement of Educational Leadership Philosophy
- A list of five or more references with contact information (name, relationship to candidate, phone and email addresses)

Application materials are to be sent electronically via email to:

George Sanderson, Partner, Educators Collaborative

Email: gsanderson@educatorscollaborative.com

The Search Schedule

The Search Committee plans to identify a preliminary group of candidates to interview (virtually) in late January. From this group the Search Committee will select finalists for a full day of interviews on campus in late February or early March. The Trustees expect to reach a decision and appoint a Head-Elect shortly after finalist visits with the term of office to commence on July 1, 2024. The salary range and benefits for this position are highly competitive with similar preschool leadership positions.

Christ Church Episcopal Preschool is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, or local discrimination laws. If you have a strong sense of self, a good sense of humor and the qualifications to match, submit your application.



P.O. Box 3510
505 E. Buck Road
Wilmington, DE 19807
ccep@christchurchde.org