



galileoschool
FOR GIFTED LEARNING

Galileo VPK Handbook

2022-2023

About Galileo VPK

Thank you for choosing Galileo’s VPK program! We understand that Preschool learning is rooted in experiences that are geared towards the whole child, creating opportunities for high-quality learning. These early experiences place students on a strong educational trajectory towards success. Please take time to read this handbook as it will answer questions you may have concerning our policies and procedures. We encourage you to become an active participant in your child’s education and to keep the lines of communication open by reaching out to your child’s teacher and our administration and staff if you have any questions or concerns. We strive to provide high quality learning that will help your child’s successful academic learning.

Mission and Vision:

The Galileo School for Gifted Learning provides innovative, research-based education in a nurturing environment for gifted and talented students and those who want to learn in a gifted learning environment that will challenge and motivate them to pursue their passionate interests in service to others.

The goal of Galileo Preschool is to nurture the whole child in developing foundational skills through play-based learning experiences and integrated critical thinking.

Core Educational Beliefs

- Ability is not fixed; it can increase or decrease based on effort.
- Success is due to hard work.
- All children can increase their ability in all subject areas.
- Engagement is crucial for real learning to occur.
- Children actively construct an understanding of the subject matter at hand. These initial understandings shape how students learn, and they must shape how the curriculum is taught.
- Teach in the ZONE—the place where skills and challenge intersect.

Core Values

- Kindness rules our hearts.
- Intellectual honesty and curiosity rules our minds.
- Perseverance and respect for others guides our behavior.

Golden Rule:

Do to others as you would like done to you. Do not do to others what you do not want done to you.

Hours of Operation

The Galileo VPK class will coincide with the Seminole County Public School calendar/Galileo School for Gifted Learning calendar.

There are two VPK classes that occur Monday through Friday during the school year on designated school days. The hours are as follows:

Morning Class- 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Full day Class (VPK Wrap): 8:45-3:15 (MTRF), 8:45-2:15 (Wednesdays)

Wraparound Program is NOT available on school holidays, teacher in-service days or other non-school days. Galileo may decide to offer camps for an additional cost for students when school is out of session such as Thanksgiving, spring and summer break based on demand and availability. Please keep in mind the full wraparound fees are due and will not be prorated for shorten weeks due to holidays (i.e. MLK day, Labor day, etc).

Late Pick-up Fee After Closing

If students are not picked up at their class's corresponding ending time, a \$25 late fee will be assessed and an additional \$1 per minute for each minute thereafter.

Additional extended hours (7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 3:20 to 6:00 p.m.) are available through the Galileo Dragon Watch Extended Day Program at an additional charge. Students attending morning class only must be picked up at 11:45 a.m.

State Licensing

We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with State licensing regulations in order to ensure a quality environment for your children. Galileo PreK complies with all applicable State licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facility, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios.

Admission Requirements

Enrollment in our school is open to all families; we operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one will be excluded from our school because of race, color, religion, disability, sex or national origin.

Students are accepted to the school based on a random lottery by grade level. We will only accept a completed, signed and dated application. All lottery applications must be received by the deadline to be considered. Once the initial lottery drawing takes place, there will be a weekly rolling lottery which will include new applications that are received.

Proof of Residency in Florida (regardless of county of residence) is required. WE ACCEPT OUT OF COUNTY APPLICANTS.

One item from EACH of the categories MUST be attached:

All documents must have the same address and the name of the parent/legal guardian

- **Category 1:** Lease/rental or mortgage agreement, property tax records
- **Category 2:** Driver's License (or Florida Dept. of Motor Vehicles picture ID), voter registration
- **Category 3:** Current utility bill (electric, cable, water, etc), income tax record, or proof of receipt of governmental benefits, the parent/guardian may provide a valid Florida or auto registration with the correct property address on it.

If the parent/guardian is NOT the leaseholder or property owner, then the following is required: Notarized Verification of Residency signed by the owner of the home. This must accompany one document from each of the above categories.

Students entering the following grade levels in the fall must be the designated age on or before September 1 in order to be eligible for that grade level:

- VPK must be 4 years of age
- Kindergarten must be 5 years of age
- First grade must be 6 years of age

Does Galileo Accept Applications After the Deadline?

Yes, but any applications received after the deadline will not be included in the initial lottery drawing. They will be accepted and kept on file in case any future lottery drawings take place for the current school year.

Does Galileo Accept Students Who Do Not Live In Seminole County?

Yes, students who reside out of county will be eligible to submit a lottery application by the deadline, and will be enrolled contingent upon available openings. Students who wish to apply to Galileo and are not residents of Seminole County, and have not been subject to a current expulsion or suspension from another Florida county, may submit an application (1002.31 F.S.). Applications must be received by the deadline posted on the Galileo Website. After considering maximum class size pursuant to s.1003.03(4), F.S., and after all Seminole County student applicants have been placed, other applications from out- of- county students will be placed in a separate lottery using the Lottery Procedures outlined below and assigned any remaining open seats at Galileo. Per the Galileo School for Gifted Learning Charter, at no time should a student who does not have enrollment preference from outside Seminole County have preference in the lottery over a student who resides in Seminole County.

How Does the Lottery Process Work?

Galileo will admit all eligible students (described in the Florida Statutes) based on the lottery drawing whose applications meet the submission deadline and have a signed parent participation agreement. The number of children accepted will be limited to Galileo capacity (at the class, grade, or school level). In the case of maximum enrollment, Galileo will conduct a random lottery drawing, which will choose students for enrollment according to the order in which their number is selected. Each child will be assigned a number that will be drawn randomly. If two children from the same family have enrolled in the lottery and one child's number is drawn, the sibling will also be selected and either placed in the classroom or on the wait list contingent upon the order in which the child was selected. When capacity for a grade level is reached, remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which their number was drawn. They will be contacted (in order) and asked if they want to enroll their child when a spot becomes available. If the enrollment falls short of the available capacity, and there are no students on the waiting list for that grade level, there will be a weekly lottery to fill vacancies.

Galileo does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, ancestry, creed, marital status, citizenship status, military or veteran status, national origin, disability, age or any other legally protected characteristic.

What Students Have Preference?

Only five categories of students are eligible for preferential treatment, in order of priority:

1. Children of board members (priority given to siblings of currently enrolled students).
2. Children of employees at the Galileo School (priority given to siblings of currently enrolled students).
3. Siblings of children enrolled, or selected to be enrolled, at the school.
4. Seminole County Residents
5. Out of County Residents

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT:

Initial offers for enrollment will take place by phone and/or email. Subsequent offers will be via phone **OR** email. The parent/guardian must give a written notice of acceptance within 2 days (by 4:30 P.M) of receipt of the admittance notification. After your official written notice of acceptance is received, you are required to complete a registration packet to complete the registration process. Enrollment will **NOT** be completed until registration packets are submitted to the school by the posted deadline. Families who decline enrollment or neglect to submit their registration packets on time will forfeit their spot at Galileo and must re-apply to the school.

Galileo must be informed of any custody arrangements or changes in advance and will require proper support documentation to be kept in the child's file. Proof of custody may be required. All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be complete before your child can attend Galileo. All personal information will be maintained in accordance with the Florida statutes. Parents are required to update emergency data, including address, home, cell, work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must also be submitted to the school upon enrollment. Parents will be required to comply with State regulations and school rules as set forth in this parent handbook.

Tuition and Fees

The State of Florida plans to provide funds for children to attend VPK for 3 hours each day at Galileo are 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. (morning class).

The charge for the VPK Wraparound Program (11:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; 11:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. on Wednesdays) is \$150 weekly. Payments will be due on each Monday preceding the week ahead. As an example, the first day of school is August 10, 2022. Payments will be due on August 8th for that week. Invoices are not provided. Payments not made on Mondays will result in a \$10 late fee weekly.

The program supply fee for Galileo VPK Wraparound is \$ 150 and is non-refundable for tuition-based programs. There will be a *suggested* cost of \$150 to offset costs of supplies and materials for AM only students. These are **NOT** one-time fees and they are due each year prior to the child's first day. Children who unenroll during the school year will be required to pay the registration fee again upon return for all paid programs.

Supply fees will need to be paid in full by a designated day scheduled the week prior to the start of school. Payments can be made using a schoolpay link, check, or money order. All checks can be made out to "Galileo School."

Field Trip Policy and Fees

Parents/guardians will be required to sign permission slips for field trips if they want their child to attend. The forms must be turned in and fees must be paid before the student leaves the premises or the child will remain at the school with other staff members. Fees for field trips vary according to the destination and are not included in the tuition. Parents/guardians will be notified of cost prior to each field trip. Parents/guardians are not required to allow their child to attend trips.

Parental Involvement

Volunteer Requirement

Wraparound parents are required to volunteer at least 20 hours per child or a minimum of 30 hours per family who have multiple children. The deadline for completing all volunteer requirements is June 30 of the respective year. Families that do not comply with this policy are subject to sanctions up to and including disenrollment for the following academic year. AM only parents are welcome to volunteer as well.

Our philosophy dictates that it is important for students to observe their parents volunteering and as part of their educational process. However, we do recognize that sometimes conditions exist that might require an additional source other than the parent to help with the acquisition of the mandatory volunteer hours. In an effort to be supportive, Galileo will allow parents to enlist other members of their own families to help provide their volunteer service. Family members may include grandparents, aunts and uncles, and similar. Families may not "gift"

another family with excess hours over their volunteer hour minimum, nor may a parent provide volunteer service on behalf of another family.

Parents and community members are encouraged to help out at the school. Everyone who wants to volunteer must register via the SCPS Dividends registration site at: <https://dvd.scps.k12.fl.us/>

Parent Conferences

Galileo VPK schedules conferences with parents two times each year (Fall and Spring) to discuss VPK assessment results. We will contact parents when the dates are set. We may reach out to you and schedule additional conferences if needed. In addition, you are always welcome to contact your teacher anytime.

Transportation

Galileo does not provide transportation to students.

Attendance

VPK is a State-run program based on attendance. Therefore, Galileo School has a strict attendance policy. Regular attendance is mandatory (year-to-date – attendance will be checked with prior schools). Students who are absent more than the authorized hours permitted may result in termination and removal from the VPK program. The following guidelines will be followed:

- Students may not be absent more than 15 days during the school year.
- Excessive tardies will result in a parent conference to determine a plan of action.

Your tuition is paid for by the State of Florida during the selected VPK hours (up to 540 hours). VPK wrap-around tuition fees will apply if your child is in attendance beyond VPK hours whether it is contracted or if the parent drops off early or is late for pick-up. Please keep in mind the full wraparound fees are due and will not be prorated for shorten weeks due to holidays (i.e. MLK day, Labor day, etc).

Some parental actions may cause a child's dismissal from the VPK program to include:

- Documented habitual disregard for drop off and pick up times
- Documented habitual disregard for sick child policies
- Documented abusive behavior toward staff or other parents;
- Documented habitual nonpayment of fees
- Failure to adhere to policies and procedures as outlined in the school handbook

Parent/guardian agrees to sign their student in and out daily and agrees to sign the required state VPK attendance verification form each month.

Vacations and illnesses will be charged at the regular weekly tuition rate regardless of attendance.

Health and Wellness

Emergency Medical Consent Form

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance, your child's doctor or dentist if he/she

needs emergency care. The form will contain basic information like your child's doctor, dentist, preferred hospital, phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts be listed on your Pick-up Permission form. If your child has any allergies (food or non-food) or is on any medications, please include this information on the form. The Emergency Medical Consent form will be updated and certified annually.

Immunization and Health Requirements

Immunization forms will need to be presented on or before the first day of school. A copy of these records will be kept on file at the school. When your child receives additional immunizations or the card is updated, you will be required to provide us a copy of the updated immunization card. If a parent/guardian wishes to take a religious exemption, they must contact Galileo School to initiate the exemption process. Students will not be permitted to attend school if immunization records are not provided or updated when they are due. For tuition-based programs, tuition is still due regardless of attendance. Students are subject to automatic dismissal if the child does not have the proper updated records on file. Parents are responsible for keeping track of immunization due dates. Galileo School will make every effort to remind parents when forms are due.

Medication

Any medication given to your child must be in the original prescription bottle with instructions clearly printed on it as provided by the doctor or pharmaceutical company. All medicine including scripted and unscripted must be in a current bottle and not out-of-date or past-due. All prescription medication must have the child's name on the script. All non-prescription medicine must have a permanent sticker with the child's name and date the medication was left at Galileo School. Permission to Give Medication form is required prior to administering any medication. All medicines must be personally delivered to the office staff at the time of arrival along with a completed designated form. This form can be found on our website. Galileo School reserves the right to refuse to give medicine to a child if the dosage is questionable or not in accordance with the label. Galileo School reserves the right to request a doctor's consent via hand written prescription for any non-prescription medications. A copy of the Authorization to Give Medication form, medication bottle and any remaining medication will be returned to the parent upon completion of administering any medication.

Allergies

Galileo must be made aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. If your child has any allergies (food, medicine or anything else), you will need to complete the section on the Emergency Contact and Medical Form. This allows us to alert all staff members to be attentive to their allergy. A written letter AND/OR updated Emergency Contact and Medical Form must be turned into Galileo School as soon as any new allergy is identified. This form will be updated annually or as needed. Lastly, an Authorization to Give Medication form will be required if your child needs an EpiPen or other medicine treatment.

According to the Florida Child Standards related requirements the following policies apply **Communicable Disease Control**

Any child in the facility suspected of having a communicable disease shall be removed from the facility. The child will be isolated from other students but will remain under the supervision of an adult until such time. Upon identifying that a child is ill and no longer suitable for the classroom setting, a parent will be contacted. It is required that the parent pick up the child from our facility to provide proper medical attention to their child. The child may not return without medical authorization or until the signs and symptoms have not been present for 24-hours.

Dress Code Policy

A higher standard of dress encourages respect for individual students and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days. The school reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines. Every student shall wear school uniforms. All school uniforms must be worn properly (no low hanging clothes).

The Galileo School uniform consists of a polo shirt with the Galileo School logo from Lands' End. Pants, skirts, shorts, or skorts must be khaki/tan-colored. Girls must wear shorts, leggings, or bloomers under Galileo school logo dresses and jumpers.

Shoes: Students must wear closed shoes at all times. Crocks, backless shoes, sandals, wheelies, open toed shoes and flip flops may not be worn.

Spirit Fridays: Students may wear their Galileo PTA shirts to school on Fridays with their khaki shorts, pants, skirts, or skorts. On Fridays only, students may wear jeans or jean shorts (mid-thigh length or longer) as an alternative to their khaki colored bottoms. On all other days, students must wear their polo shirts with the Galileo School logo and khaki colored bottoms.

Reasonable accommodations based on student's religion, disability, or medical conditions will be allowed. Please make accommodation request in writing.

Shop Uniforms

At Galileo we use Lands' End for our uniforms. Click on the image below and then click "Look up Your School" on the left navigation bar. Either search by school information or enter Preferred School Number: 900192550.

Discipline Procedures

At Galileo, we work to establish positive relationships. We expect all students and staff to show kindness and apply the Golden Rule. This will help make everyone feel safe and respected and make Galileo a GREAT place to be. The Student Code of Conduct states: I will do to others what I would like them to do to me, and I won't do to others what I wouldn't want them to do to me (the Golden Rule). I will be honest and tell the truth. I will take responsibility for my behavior. I will learn from my mistakes. I will try my best to be kind to everyone. Galileo will establish consequences on a case-by-case basis.

Children's Birthdays

We are happy to help your child celebrate his/her birthday! Parents are welcome to bring in a treat or small toy to share with the class. We ask that treats be mini treats and not full sized cupcakes or large pieces of cake. Be sure to check with your child's teacher for any classroom allergies and to be sure it is an opportune time to celebrate.

Toys

Galileo School has a wide variety of games and other educational resources to offer children during school. Some classes may have "show and tell", but other than that, personal toys will not be permitted at school, as they can cause disputes, get broken or lost. Galileo is not responsible for stolen, lost or broken personal items. Toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction will not be allowed in our school.

Lunch and Snacks

For full day students, at the start of class each day, students must report to their teacher if they have brought or are buying school lunch. Lunch may be purchased for \$3.50 and will be supplied by Seminole County Food Services. The Galileo lunch menu will be posted monthly on the Galileo website. Lunches can also be paid for using checks and money orders. Lunch can also be paid for using My School Account. Please set up an account on www.myschoolaccount.com. Cash will NOT be accepted as a form of payment for lunch. Students must throw away any leftovers or stow them in their lunch box. No food may be taken outside of the lunch area.

Half day students will have one snack time during their time at school. Full day students should bring two snacks with them to school. Snacks should be able to be eaten in five minutes or less and easily eaten without utensils.

Withdrawal and Termination

Half school day students are permitted to withdraw at any time. Parents must complete the proper transfer paperwork and an exit survey. Once unenrolled, the student will need to re-enter future lottery drawings if they choose to return to Galileo School. For full day students, two weeks of notice of departure is required BEFORE payment is due.

**For more information, please contact Johanne Alexander at
johanne.alexander@galileogiftedschool.org**



Galileo Preschool