Provided by the Applicant (Jill Paterson, Co Founder and School Director - Focus Plus Academy)

Special Use Permit Application Narrative

Focus Plus Academy – Fletcher United Methodist Church

Property Address: 50 Library Road, Fletcher, NC 28732
PIN: 9653615698
Zoning District: C-1
Proposed Use: Small private school / educational use within existing church facility
Applicant: Focus Plus Academy

1. Project Overview

Focus Plus Academy proposes to operate a small, supportive private school for students in grades 6–12 (starting with grades 6-9 for the 2026/27 school year) within existing classroom space at Fletcher United Methodist Church. The program is designed for students who need additional structure, executive-function support, and individualized instruction. Maximum enrollment at this location will be **25 students** with **up to 6 staff**.

No construction, exterior changes, site work, or new impervious surface is proposed.

2. Existing Facility & Scope of Use

The school will occupy existing interior classrooms with a **separate entrance and drop-off area**, as shown on the site plan. All operations will use existing:

- **Parking**
- **Ingress/egress**
- **Utilities**
- **Lighting and landscaping**
- **Walkways and access points**

The applicant has completed required **fire** and **health** safety inspections for the proposed school area.

3. Enrollment, Staffing & Hours

- **Startup:** 1–5 students, 2 staff
- **Maximum:** 25 students, up to 6 staff
- **Schedule:** Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. (1:30 finish p.m. Fridays)
- **Drop-off:** 8:15–8:30 a.m.
- **Pick-up:** 3:30–3:45 p.m. (1:30 - 1:45 p.m. Fridays)

No evening, overnight, or weekend activities are proposed.

4. Relationship to Church & Preschool

SonShine Preschool operates in a separate portion of the Fletcher United Methodist Church building. Focus Plus Academy will use **different classrooms, a different entrance, and a different drop-off loop**, with schedules intentionally staggered:

- Focus Plus Academy drop-off ends at **8:30**
- Sonshine Preschool drop-off begins at **8:45**
- Sonshine Preschool pick-up ends at **12:10**
- Focus Plus Academy pick-up begins at **3:30 (1:30** Fridays**)**

This prevents overlapping and maintains safe, orderly traffic flow.

5. Special Use Permit Criteria

Ingress & Egress

The school will use the existing Library Road driveway and rear parking/drop-off area. No new driveway, access point, or roadway change is proposed. Traffic volumes are low and scheduled to avoid preschool activity.

Parking, Noise & Site Impacts

Existing parking (15 spaces) exceeds the estimated need for 6 staff and short-duration parent vehicles. The use is quiet and limited to weekday daytime hours. No adverse noise, glare, odor, or economic impacts are expected.

Utilities, Lighting, Landscaping & Improvements

All existing utilities and site features remain unchanged. No new lighting, landscaping, buffering, playgrounds, or site improvements are proposed. The project does not trigger stormwater review.

Buildings & Structures

The school will use existing interior space only. No additions, exterior alterations, grading, or new impervious surface are proposed.

Neighborhood Compatibility

The use is small, supervised, educational, and consistent with the existing institutional character of the church campus and surrounding area.

6. Community Benefit & Land Use Consistency

Focus Plus Academy will provide a positive community benefit by creating local jobs and offering an additional educational option for students who may not thrive in larger or more traditional school environments. The school is designed to provide structure, executive functioning support, individualized academics, life skills development, and a calm learning environment for students who need this type of setting. Additional details available at www.focusplusacademy.org.

Focus Plus Academy's goal is to offer this program at a tuition level that may be completely or mostly covered by available state scholarship funding for qualifying families, making the school more accessible to students who need this type of educational support.

The proposed use is consistent with the Town of Fletcher's goals for community-serving institutional uses, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, support for local families, and efficient use of existing infrastructure. The project provides a small educational use within an existing institutional property without requiring new construction, land disturbance, new utilities, new parking, new signage, new lighting, or expansion of the existing site.

7. Request for Approval

Based on the limited scale of the use, reliance on existing facilities, completed fire and health inspections, low traffic impact, and positive community benefits, Focus Plus Academy respectfully requests approval of the **Special Use Permit** to operate a small private educational program within Fletcher United Methodist Church.

Illustrative Image

