



HARPETH HILLS
PRESCHOOL

2021-2022 Parent Handbook

“Train up a child in the way he should go
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

General Objective

To provide a positive learning experience for children ages 15 months through 6 years of age with emphasis on their developmental, physical, social, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being in a nurturing Christ-centered environment.

Parent’s Day Out: 15 months by September through age 2

Preschool: 31 months through age 5 by September

Organization

Elders: The general control of the Preschool is vested in the elders of Harpeth Hills Church of Christ.

Preschool Board: The elders of Harpeth Hills Church of Christ have named a special committee to be responsible for the coordination of the Preschool. This is called the Preschool Board and offers guidance on finances, policies, personnel, programs and special events. This Board is comprised of professional educators and parents with children in our program, past and present.

Parent Advisory Committee: The elders of Harpeth Hills Church of Christ and the Preschool Board have named a special committee composed of present Preschool parents, the Preschool Board Chair, and the Coordinating Deacon over Education.

Admission Policy

1. Admission and Information about Harpeth Hills Preschool is on our website- <http://www.harpethhills.org/preschool>
2. Admission to the Preschool is open to children, regardless of race or religion. A registration fee of \$75 per family is due with the application. This fee is non-refundable.
3. Re-enrollment applications for current students are accepted in January for the coming school year.
4. New student applications are accepted in January for the coming year. New applications are reviewed in February on a first-come basis.
5. Continuing enrollment is based on a child's ability to adjust to group activity, subject to teacher and/or director discretion. HHPS is not equipped to provide a one-on-one aide if needed for developmental or behavioral needs.
6. The parent/guardian must present a health certificate signed by a licensed physician or health care provider before admission to the classroom.
7. Completed application must be on file with current information prior to the first day of school.
8. Harpeth Hills Preschool follows the Williamson County School schedule for the following: First snow day ONLY (see Snow Policy section for further information), Thanksgiving & Christmas holidays and Spring Break.

Arrival/Dismissal

The school day begins at 9am. Children should arrive at school no earlier than 9am and no later than 9:15am. It is very important to establish good attendance habits. Classroom activities begin at 9:15am. Our staff gathers at 8:55am each morning to pray, and we unlock doors @ 9. Promptly at 9am we will begin admitting students to their designated class area. You will scan your child in with your phone using the Brightwheel app. School dismisses promptly at 2pm. Children will again be signed out using the Brightwheel app.

Safety/Security

Each day at 9:20 a.m., the Preschool doors are locked to prevent unauthorized access to the school or its students. Please notify the teacher and/or director (by phone or note) with any changes in the transportation of your child. The parent of the child being picked up must notify the office!! Tennessee State Law requires that all children under the age of 9 years and under the height of 5 feet be placed in a car seat/booster seat. If your child will be riding home with a different driver, SEND A NOTE in their folder or call the office, please leave their labeled car seat/booster at school when you drop off.

**Everyone picking up must be on your transportation list. We are a smoke free, alcohol free and weapon free building.

**Outside Visitors: If your child will have services provided at preschool by someone outside of our school staff, such as Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, etc., we are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian.

Discipline

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving positive verbal rewards. This reinforces a child's good feeling about his/her behavior. Asking a child to stop and think about his/her unpleasant behavior enables that child to work at self-control. "Take a break" is often used in these situations. Corporal punishment will not be used. Teachers will communicate persistent challenges to parents for their assistance and input. If behavioral problems persist, the parent is asked to a conference to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way. We want to partner with you to address any concerns at school and at home in the same way. Once all options are exhausted to correct these behavioral problems, the Preschool reserves the right to dismiss the child from further enrollment from the program. If we determine that your child would need a one-on-one aide, we would conference with you to develop a plan.

Extended Day

An Extended Day program is offered from 2:00-3:00 p.m. every school day for the 3's, 4's and 5's classes. The cost is \$5.00 per session- payable monthly. You will be billed separately from monthly tuition. You must complete an Extended Day Application Form for your child to be eligible. Only 20 children may attend per day. You may use the program daily or on an as-needed basis (based on availability). The office must be notified by by phone before 1:30 p.m. Please do not make your request in the drop-off line in the morning. It is very important to pick up your child from Extended Day by 3:00 p.m. Often times, the teachers working have commitments after school (i.e. picking up their own children). NOTE: This after-school service will be discontinued after 3 different occasions of a late pick-up after 3:00 p.m. We thank you for your cooperation.

School/Family Communication

Newsletters are sent to parents during the school year. These newsletters have information about events/activities, family news, and reports from teachers regarding classroom happenings. Teachers will send weekly communication via email, Instagram, GroupMe, Brightwheel etc. You will also receive emails from the preschool office.

Snow Days

Harpeth Hills Preschool will close with WILLIAMSON COUNTY SCHOOLS ON THE FIRST DAY ONLY. We will make an independent announcement on NEWS CHANNEL 5 each day thereafter. Our teachers will try to call with any changes, but please do not rely on this should there be any unforeseen phone problems. We will also attempt to use an email notification system.

- If Williamson County opens LATE – we will open late.
- If Williamson County dismisses EARLY – we will dismiss early.
- Should snow or ice begin to accumulate during the school day, please come immediately to school for pick-up.
- No tuition will be refunded due to snow days. Our expenses remain the same (teacher's salaries by contract, dated milk/juice, etc.) In the event of excessive closings, our Preschool Board will make every attempt to handle the situations fairly.
- Note: We do not take the decision to close school without fair deliberation of the consequences to parents. Several factors weigh into the Preschool Director's decision to close school for a full day or open late. The safety of our students and staff is the main consideration. We cannot meet DHS requirements if we have inadequate staffing. Our teachers work to make advance arrangements for their children, but we still may not have the required number of teachers who can arrive on time due to conflicts in transporting their children to school late. Also, some live in areas without clear roads.

Communications

Each child will be given a pocket folder. This folder will be placed in your child's bag each day. It is very important to check this folder daily for any notes, class work, etc. Please send notes and payments for teachers and director inside the folder. Please be certain to place this folder in your child's bag each day. Teachers will also use email for communication. We thrive on communication so we offer and welcome: conferences twice a year (virtual this year), daily folder, email, Parent's Coffee (virtual), phone calls, office quarterly newsletter and frequent emails, classroom weekly newsletter, handouts, etc. You may also request a conference at any time during the school year.

DHS requires written parental permission for observation of children by non-child care agency staff. We will need that prior to any Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, etc. coming for an observation or session.

Written Plan of Transitions

A letter will go home to parents informing parents about any transition in the preschool. Examples of transitions are changes in personnel, planned changes affecting children's routine care, curriculum, etc.

Monthly Tuition/Materials Fee

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. You will receive tuition statements each month through Brightwheel. You will have the ability to pay several ways.

*pay by ACH directly through the Brightwheel app.

*pay by personal check sent through your child's folder

*pay by check sent through your bank.

Please plan to make payment by the 1st of every month no matter the method you choose. Monthly tuition is non-refundable.

Tuition 2020-2021

Tuesday/Thursday (Toddler & 2s) - \$280/month

Tuesday/Thursday (Threes) - \$300/month

Tues/Wed/Thurs (Threes) - \$385/month

Tues/Wed/Thurs (PreK) - \$390/month

Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs (PreK) - \$490/month

A Preschool Supply Fee of \$75.00 is due for each student on September 1.

This is a one-time fee for the year to cover incidental supplies used for every child. Some examples include first aid, cleaning, paper goods, lunch box, etc.

Tuition is due for 9 months that make up our school year (September - May). As is the case in other private schools, holidays and student absences have no effect on the monthly tuition payments. In the event you must withdraw from our program, we require a minimum of 30 days notice in writing to determine a "withdrawal date" which becomes the official end of enrollment. Said notice must be given on or before the first day of the month. If notice is given after the first day of the month, the 1 month (30 day) notice will not start until the following month. (The notice must be one full calendar month starting on the first day of the month.) You will be responsible for full tuition for any partial month your child is enrolled.

Example: You notify us on February 15th that you will be withdrawing your child. Your "withdrawal date" becomes March 15th and you will be responsible for tuition for the entire month of March.

Daily Needs

1. Harpeth Hills Preschool will provide monogrammed canvas bags for each child at a cost of \$20 per child – (back packs do not have sufficient room- large enough to hold the lunch box, blanket, change of clothes, and child's folder). Each child should bring this bag each day to school.
2. HHPS will provide a BENTO BOX for each child's lunch. This is for health & safety purposes.
3. Every child needs a change of clothes (including socks and underwear) suitable for the season of the year to be used in case of an accident during the school day. This change of clothes needs to be in your child's bag each day.
4. Children should bring lunch in a labeled Bento Box (provided) consisting of foods on the list shown on the last page in the handbook or nutritionally acceptable substitutes. This is a requirement of the Dept. of Human Services. Please label all lunch boxes and containers. Milk or water will be furnished at lunch to all children as specified by parent, otherwise a milk substitute should be sent from home.
5. Children should wear loose, comfortable clothing, suitable for play and appropriate for weather conditions. Children will be taken outside, weather permitting, daily. We strongly recommend a comfortable rubber-soled shoe, such as a tennis shoe, to prevent slipping as children play. No cowboy boots or flip flops please. All coats and jackets should be labeled.
6. Children in our Toddlers & 2s not yet potty trained will need to bring 3 diapers daily.
7. A beach towel and blanket for nap time with your child's name on it needs to be in your child's room on the first day, to be left at school for 2s & 3s. Any special stuffed toy which helps to rest should come and go with your child daily. Each child is required to have a blanket to cover with during rest time/nap time.

Health Matters

The parent or guardian must present an Immunization Certificate to the school, signed by the child's physician, stating that the child has had a physical examination within three months prior to the admission and is current with immunizations. This immunization form is due the first day of school, even if your child will receive immunizations in the next few weeks. This is a DHS requirement.

Parents will be notified immediately if their child is showing any symptoms of a communicable illness (please refer to the list below*). If you feel like your child is not well enough to play outside with his/her class, we advise you to keep him/her home for the day.

If your child has had

1. Fever or vomiting within 24 hours of school opening time
2. A green runny nose or eyes
3. Persistent cough
4. Any sign of a communicable illness
5. Simply too tired to enjoy or participate in daily activity with others, please do not send him/her to school.

If you are called to pick up your child for fever or vomiting, they will not be able to return the next day.

We cannot, due to state law, and will not by our own choice, allow any child to remain if any of the above conditions exist.

Harpeth Hills Preschool strives to be diligent about the health and safety of our children and staff. We take seriously the responsibility of creating an environment for our students and staff that will, to the best of our ability, reduce the risk of exposure to illness. Because we are a DHS licensed preschool, we will continue the best practices that HHPS has always used to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. These practices include:

- Frequent hand washing with soap and water multiple times a day
- Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces before and after meals and snacks
- Following health guidelines for children and staff with symptoms referenced in this handbook
- Professional cleaning of our facility as directed/facilitated by Harpeth Hills Church

Tennessee Dept. of Human Services requires that prescribed and non-prescribed, internal and external medication shall not be administered to a child by Preschool staff except under the direction of a physician or with parent's written authorization. Emergency medications or drugs shall be labeled with the child's name and specific instructions for administering the medication. This medication will be placed in a box in the director's office. The Harpeth Hills Preschool staff cannot be responsible for the administration of medications required for a child on a daily basis. We will only administer medications required in emergency situations for which both parents have given written consent. Our first aid can only consist of a bandaid and ice pack if needed. We are not allowed to use any type of medication, lotion, ointment, etc.

Toys From Home

We ask that children do not bring toys to school (with the exception of teacher request) because they may be lost or broken. If a child does bring a toy to school, we explain that it must be shared or put in the child's bag until time to go home. Although we try to teach children to respect the property of others, this is not always easily accomplished at very early years. You will receive notice from your child's teacher regarding "Show and Tell" when school begins (if applicable to your child's classroom).

TV/DVD Showings

Teachers work diligently planning their curriculum for the school year. Each classroom curriculum is designed to stimulate growth through enjoyable and developmentally appropriate activities. Our center-based approach to learning helps to facilitate learning through play activities. From time to time, the teacher will show a television/dvd show in the classroom to support an enrichment activity going along with their curriculum. Videos must be developmentally appropriate for the viewers. All shows will be G rated and will be previewed by the staff for content. If media is played in the classroom, there will be two other activities offered and a sign of the title posted on the outside door. Media time for children 2 years of age and older are limited to thirty minutes per week. Computer time is limited to fifteen minute increments

Birthdays

A child's birthday is a very special event and should be celebrated! We suggest that you arrange a date & time with your child's teacher for a classroom celebration if desired. We do require that all celebrations at school be relatively uniform- nothing elaborate, no gifts- in fairness to all children. The time for the treats will be reserved at the close of lunch period, during snack time, or any pre-arranged time that parents have consulted with their child's teacher. Children with summer birthdays are invited to choose a date during the year for a birthday celebration. Please inform your child's teacher if you wish to send something in! We ask that treat items for birthdays be limited to an item without nuts, as we have a number of children with food allergies. We also encourage parents to consider a treat other than food – such as stickers, pencils, etc.

Bible Curriculum/Academic Curriculum

Each day we have a Bible story woven throughout the day. These stories are on a very simplified level, dealing with basics such as the Creation, Baby Moses, Noah, Baby Jesus, God's love for each of us, etc. Each of our centers will have pieces of the story to help reinforce them during their center and play time. Most importantly, children are taught that God made each of us and that we are loved and indeed special to Him. Each child is a primary concern for us and is greatly strengthened because of this spiritual emphasis. We have no "doctrine" to teach, only basic Bible truths and attitudes by which we live.

We follow the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards for all ages. These standards apply in the following areas: Speech & Language Development, Early Literacy, Math & Science, Social Studies, Creative Arts, Social & Emotional Development, and Physical Development. A weekly newsletter from your child's teacher(s) will inform you in more detail of classroom learning experiences. Each classroom curriculum is designed to stimulate growth through enjoyable and developmentally appropriate activities. Our center-based approach to learning helps to facilitate learning through play activities.

Conferences

Parents may schedule a conference with their child's teacher anytime during the year. All 3s, 4s, 5s classes will offer scheduled conferences to parents during the fall semester and again in the spring semester.

Child Abuse Prevention

In the back to school summer packet, you receive information about a Child Abuse Prevention class that we offer to teachers and parents. If you have any concern about any child's safety, you must report the situation. All calls are confidential and available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

DCS Reporting number is 1-877-237-0004

DHS Complaint Hot Line is (615) 313-4820

Guidelines for Responding to Disclosure or Suspicion of Sexual Abuse of a Child

1. When in doubt, REPORT.
2. If you have any Suspicion:
 - a. Be available- provide a safe environment for disclosure.
 - b. Ask if a child has a problem-would like to talk, etc. BUT do not say that you think she/he has been sexually abused.
 - c. Make an opportunity to talk about ok secrets and not ok secrets
 - d. Utilize a personal safety or touching lesson.
3. If an individual offers Disclosure:
 - a. ALWAYS REPORT
 - b. Do NOT notify parents
 - c. Accept the child's statements- communicate calm, not shock- it is not your job to determine the facts or the truth, but it is important to let the child know he is right to tell and that you believe.
 - d. Let the child know you are safe and willing to listen. Do not question for details or further facts.
 - e. Be very straight with the child about your need to tell someone who can help.
 - f. Do not make promises- that everything will be ok or you will be with the child when questioned.

Animals

Due to allergies and safety, teachers will review all enrollment forms for allergies before allowing any animal in the classroom or allowing children to go outside to visit an animal. Animals cannot remain in the classroom. Small animals that are brought onto the campus must be in a carrier or in arms with a leash. Large animals must be on a leash with a parent present at all times and remain outside the building.

Drop-In Childcare Policy

Due to the Dept. of Human Services regulations and classroom student/teacher ratios, we are unable to take children on other days they are not enrolled.

Various Dept. of Human Services Requirements (DHS)

1. As required by Tennessee State Law (T.C.A. 37-1606), we will provide an opportunity in our Enrichment class for the curriculum- "Growing Up Strong and Safe." The Enrichment teacher will provide a letter to parents of children in the 3's, 4's and 5's classes with an outline of topics covered in the curriculum.
2. DHS requires that we have an "Emergency Preparedness Plan" should the need arise. The following are reminders of our plan:
 - We will contact News Channel 5 with any bulletins.
 - Off-Site Evacuation: Should an off-site evacuation be needed- our buddy system is with Hillsboro Church of Christ, 5800 Hillsboro Pike, Nashville, TN, phone number 615-665-0014; all staff vehicles and church van/bus would be used to transport children.
 - Shelter on the Premise: Inside- Underground tunnel to church auditorium;
Outside- Baseball Field area;

The director and assistant director will notify parents by phone with any emergency. Emergency contact cards will be used. Mobile phones would be used if needed. The church office number is (615)373-0601. Emergency supplies (water, snacks, blankets, diapers, etc.) will be gathered at the beginning of each school year and are stored in the Preschool supply closet.
3. Investigations of Child Abuse/Neglect- Any citizen is required by law to cooperate with the Dept. of Child Services and other investigators by reporting any suspected child abuse and neglect to that department. Suspected child abuse or neglect shall be reported immediately to the local Dept. of Children's Services office by the childcare agency. Failure to do so for children in the care of the licenses is, by itself ground for denial or revocation of the agency's license. Any questions or reporting shall contact Abuse Reporting at (615)329-1911.

4. Parents are required to sign their child in and out each day as stated in the following Department of Human Services Guidelines: (T.C.A. 1240-4-3-.04 6 (g) "Children shall be signed in and out of the center by the custodial parent or other person specifically authorized by the parent or the appropriate staff person. Center staff shall verify parental authorization and the identity of any person to whom the child is released." And the rule (T.C.A. 1240-4-3-.04 8(a) (7) "General Requirements- Daily attendance records that include the time in and out for each child.") Parents are required to sign in and out each day- signature and time in/time out. Parents will sign a label on a clipboard each morning with first and last name of parent and child, and sign a class roster each day at dismissal.

Suggestions and Ideas For Lunches in Child Care Centers

1. Lunches provided by parents should give the child the same nutrients as hot lunches. Especially important are Vitamin A, Vitamin C and Iron sources.
2. Include foods that the preschool child can handle- finger foods such as small sandwiches, sectional fruit, etc. in containers your child can open. **Food must be ready for your child to eat. Any food that needs to be cut – such as carrots, grapes, etc. – must arrive in cut sizes that your child can safely eat.
3. Pack lunch in the provided Bento box. You may include an ice pack if needed.
4. Avoid food containing eggs, milk or other protein-rich food items that require refrigeration unless ice pack is provided.

Suggested Meal Patterns for Lunches:

DHS Licensing Requirements:

Meat (1-2 oz)

Fruit and/or Vegetables

**2 total servings of ¼ cup each

**1 serving must be vegetables

Grains/Bread, ½ slice

Desserts and Other Foods

Milk, ¾ cup

How to Meet Requirements:

cheese, luncheon meats, tuna,
peanut butter, yogurt, etc.

Fruits- apples, oranges, bananas
peaches, raisins, blueberries

Vegetables- carrots, celery,
cauliflower, cucumbers, pickles,
tomatoes, peppers, mixed veggie, salad, hummus, etc.

bread, rolls, biscuits, buns,
crackers, muffins, cornbread,
pasta, cereal grain, etc.

plain cookies, plain cakes, pound
cakes, custards, gelatin desserts, etc.

provided for all students requesting;
otherwise a milk substitute should be sent from home

**DHS REQUIRES 1 SERVING OF VEGETABLES

GOLD SNEAKER POLICIES

The list of Gold Sneaker policies must be added to the child care provider's policies or parent handbook.

Policy 1:

Children attending less than a full day program shall be offered a proportional amount of the physical activity time as required by TDHS licensure rules

Physical activity for children ages three years and older must be a balance of **structured and unstructured play**, both **indoors and outdoors** (weather permitting) utilizing age appropriate activities

Policy 2

Providers shall provide education (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources, etc.) to families twice each year that addresses the importance of **limiting screen time** according to current American Academy of Pediatrics policy and the development of a Family Media Plan

Policy 3

Children shall not be allowed to remain **sedentary** or to sit passively for more than 60 minutes continuously, except for scheduled rest or naptime

Child care director shall take **Go NAP SACC Self Assessments** (Infant and Child Safety Physical Activity & Screen Time) to compare their physical activity practices to best practice standards

Policy 4:

Child care providers must ensure physical activity is a **positive experience** for children and that it is never used negatively or to control behavior

Policy 5

Providers shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **breastfeeding**. All educators shall be trained to: advocate for breastfeeding, safely prepare expressed breastmilk for feeding, feed infants according to their individual needs, and store expressed breast milk properly

Providers shall publically **display their support for breastfeeding infants and mothers by posting signage** or other publically facing information (i.e., participate in *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* through the TN Department of Health or Team Nutrition resources for new and expectant moms about breastfeeding)

Policy 6

Child care educators shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including **adequate time for snack and meal consumption** and age-appropriate portion size

Child care educators shall **provide education to families** twice each year (i.e., via parent meetings, provider newsletter articles, sharing of educational video resources, etc.) that addresses nutritional learning experiences, with a focus on adequate time for snacks and meals and age-appropriate portion size

All eating opportunities shall consist of a respect for the child and promotion of a **positive attitude toward food**

Child care educators shall apply evidence-based **early food preference learning strategies** such as introducing healthy foods, repeatedly pairing new healthy food choices with foods children already like and modeling consumption and enjoyment of healthy foods

Policy 7

The child care provider **campus shall be free of all tobacco and tobacco-related products**, including smoking, smokeless and electronic products. The campus is inclusive of all vehicles used to transport enrolled children, all outdoor spaces, and all indoor locations, whether or not children are present. Child care employees and volunteers may not use tobacco or tobacco-related products while off-campus at provider-related activities (i.e. fieldtrips, walks, and all other outdoor activities)

Employees who use tobacco products while off campus are required to **change clothes and wash hands** thoroughly prior to interacting with children

"No Smoking" signs shall be posted conspicuously at each child care provider entrance, as required by state law