

# **Harpeth Hills Preschool Parent Handbook Policies and Procedures**

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

Proverbs 22:6



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for choosing Harpeth Hills for the care and education of your child. Harpeth Hills Preschool is a ministry of Harpeth Hills Church of Christ. We are so happy to partner with you in an undertaking that joins home and school and are very honored that you have entrusted your child to our care. We encourage you to be actively involved in your child's education this year and in the years to come.

This handbook outlines our policies and procedures. However, like any such handbook, it is impossible to cover all of the questions that may arise from time to time. Please always reach out to us with any questions you may have.

Thank you again for choosing Harpeth Hills Preschool. We prayerfully and excitedly look forward to this 2022-2023 school year as we endeavor to serve your child and your family.

Blessings,

LuciAnn and Melissa

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## I. Mission Statement

The mission of Harpeth Hills Preschool is 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.

## II. 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 Preschool Board offers guidance on finances, policies, personnel, programs, and special events. This Board is comprised of community professionals, local educators, and parents whose children have attended our program.

**Parent Advisory Committee:** The Preschool Board has named a special committee composed of present Preschool parents, the Preschool Board Chair, and the Coordinating Deacon over Education.

## III. Licensing

**3 Star Rated Preschool** – Harpeth Hills Preschool has consistently been awarded 3 stars (the highest rating available) by the State of Tennessee for excellence in childcare. Our preschool includes students 31 months through age 5 by September.

Our Parent's Day Out program which is our children 15 months by September through age 2 is not licensed by DHS because the children are only allowed to attend two days a week. However, our PDO does meet all safety guidelines and follows DHS guidelines in exactly the same way as all licensed classes.

All our teachers follow developmentally appropriate teaching standards as outlined in the Tennessee Early Learning and Development Standards. (TN-ELDS).

## IV. Curriculum, Bible, Conferences

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. 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.

Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self—expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning.

### **Bible**

Each day we have Bible stories that are 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. Our centers and activities will have pieces of the story to help reinforce them during their center and play time. Teachers encourage children to pray at meals and at other times within their day. They also introduce memory verses and encourage memorization. Students and teachers participate in a monthly chapel time – JAM – Jesus and Me. 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.

### **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.

### **Personal Safety**

As required by Tennessee State Law (T.C.A. 37-1606), we will provide an opportunity in our Enrichment class for curriculum regarding Personal Safety. The Enrichment teachers 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.

### **TV/DVD Showings**

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

## **V.Guidance**

HHPS makes every effort to praise children for positive behavior. Our teachers plan interesting activities and take into consideration the attention spans and skill-level, so the behavioral expectations are developmentally appropriate.

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Redirection is our first response in seeking positive behavior. As a last resort, a child may be removed from a group activity so that he/she can regain self-control. Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at HHPS has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work with the parents to discuss strategies that can be used to bring about the desired behavior. If a child exhibits three incidents of difficult behavior in one day, parents/guardians are called, and the child must be picked up immediately. When appropriate, HHPS may suggest an evaluation by a professional consultant.

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions

HHPS makes every effort to ensure the success of children within our program. The termination of a child may become necessary if this child is unable to adjust to the school's routine and social interaction. This includes, but is not limited to, children who:

- Struggle with anger management or aggressive behavior
- Are disrespectful to staff or other children
- Exhibit behaviors that threaten the safety and well-being of self-and/or others in the class
- Continued care would not be in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel
- Monopolize the teacher's time, drawing the teacher's attention away from the class
- Place undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation

In these extreme cases, it is the directors' prerogative to terminate a child from the program.

## VI. Transitions

**Transition Goals:** Your child's transition to HHPS should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

**Transition from home to center:** Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's teachers, and communicate any

anticipated concerns. Please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to contact you.

**Teacher Transitions:** Children will remain with the same teachers for the school year August through May. In the unlikely chance there is to be a change in staff, your children will be prepared in advance. Also, a letter will be sent home to the child's families to inform the families of the change and to introduce them to the new staff.

## VII. Admissions

Admission and Information about Harpeth Hills Preschool is on our website <http://www.harpethhills.org/preschool>. We ask that all families tour our facility prior to enrollment.

- 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.
- Re-enrollment applications for current students are accepted in January for the coming school year.
- New student applications are accepted in January for the coming year. New applications are reviewed in February on a first-come basis.
- 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.
- The parent/guardian must present a health certificate signed by a licensed physician or health care provider before admission to the classroom.
- A completed application must be on file with current information prior to the first day of school.

## VIII. Tuition

Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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. (Auto-pay is recommended but not required)
- pay by personal check sent through your child's folder
- pay by check sent through your bank platform.

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



**Tuition 2022-2023**

Tuesday/Thursday	(Toddler	&	2s)	\$285/mo
nth				
Tuesday/Thursday			(Threes)	\$305/mo
nth				
Tues/Wed/Thurs			(Threes)	\$390/mo
nth				
Tues/Wed/Thurs			(PreK)	\$395/mo
nth				
Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs			(PreK)	\$495/mo
nth				

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). Holidays and student absences have no effect on the monthly tuition payments.

**Notice to Withdraw:** 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.*

**TAX ID: 62-0788643**

## IX. Hours of Operation/Arrival/Dismissal

Hours of Operation: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

**Arrival:** 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.

*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*

**Dismissal:** School dismisses promptly at 2pm. Loading will begin at 1:45. Children will again be signed out using the Brightwheel app.

**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 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 may be discontinued after 3 different occasions of a late pick-up after 3:00 p.m. We thank you for your cooperation.

## X. School Closings

**Holidays:** Harpeth Hills Preschool follows the Williamson County School schedule for *Thanksgiving & Christmas holidays and Spring Break*.

**Weather:** 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 communicate 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, however, 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.

## XI. What to bring (or not bring)

Bring:

- **Bag:** 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.
- **Lunch:** HHPS will provide a BENTO BOX for each child's lunch. This is for health & safety purposes. 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.
- **Clothes:** 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. 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.
- **Diapers:** Children in our Toddlers & 2s not yet potty trained will need to bring 3 diapers daily.
- **Rest:** 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.

### Don't Bring:

- **Toys from home:** We ask that children do not bring toys to school (except for 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 dismissal. Although we teach children to respect the property of others, this is not always easily accomplished at very young ages. You will receive a notice from your child's teacher regarding "show and tell" when school begins (if applicable to your child's classroom).

## XII. 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 several children with food allergies.

## XIII. Parent Involvement

We welcome ALL our parents to be involved.

We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Collaboration with parents is integral to our mission at HHPS. Parent involvement strengthens our school and our sense of community. We look forward to partnering with you in the growth and development of your child.

## XIV. Nutrition

### Lunch

The school does not provide lunch. Children should bring a lunch from home daily. Please keep nutrition in mind when preparing your child's lunch.

1. Pack lunch in the provided Bento box or one that is similar in size/style. You may include an ice pack if needed.

2. Include foods that the preschool child can handle- finger foods such as small sandwiches, sectional fruit. 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. Have everything ready to eat when box is open.
3. Children are not permitted to have nuts, popcorn, or hard candy in their lunches.
4. Avoid food containing eggs, milk or other protein-rich food items that require refrigeration unless ice pack is provided.
5. Please keep nutrition in mind when preparing your child's lunch. See DHS guidelines below. Especially important are Vitamin A, Vitamin C and Iron sources.

DHS state licensing requires the following:

- One serving of meat/protein
- One serving of bread/grain
- Two servings of vegetables or one serving fruit and one serving vegetable
- One serving of fluid milk. We will offer milk or water to each child based on your direction. You may send a milk substitute in your child's lunch if you prefer.

**Food Allergies** If your child has a food allergy, you must notify HHPS in writing. The written notification must be updated at least annually. Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy requiring EpiPen should have an Action Plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. While we are not a nut-free preschool, we will work diligently and take every precaution to keep your child safe. Tables are disinfected, children's and teacher's hands are washed before and after snack and lunch, and teachers are mindful of reviewing lunches so to avoid placing children with allergies next to allergenic foods. Teachers talk about allergies with the students, so they can all begin looking out for one another.

## XV. Health Forms, Illness Policy, Allergies & Medication

### **Health Forms/ TN Certificate of Immunization Form**

All children must have a current Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Form kept on file prior to entering school and updated annually. The State of Tennessee requires immunization against diphtheria, measles, rubella, pertussis (whooping cough), poliomyelitis, mumps, and tetanus before your child attends school. Exceptions to these immunizations must be signed by the child's doctor.

Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization must be turned in no later than August 30, 2022, to the preschool office. You may contact your physician's office and request that your Immunization Form be fax to 615-373-5343.

DHS encourages all parents to have children, 6 months to five years, be immunized against influenza annually. Website to visit for information:

<http://www.familiesfightingflu.org> and <http://www.cdc.gov/flu> .

### **Contagious Disease**

Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child.

Parents please do not bring your children to school if they display any of the following symptoms/conditions:

- Fever – currently or within the last 24 hours (Children must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.)
- Vomiting in the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea (two incidents of loose stools within the last 24 hours)
- Common cold
- Sore throat
- Croup or persistent unexplained cough
- Any unexplained rash or spots (e.g., impetigo)
- Head lice or nits
- Pink eye (i.e., Conjunctivitis) or other eye infection.
- Hand-foot-and-mouth disease

Parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately if signs of illness occur during the day. If you are called to pick up your child for fever or vomiting, they will not be permitted to return the following day. Please keep all emergency information up to date.

We request that parents notify the school office if their child has a communicable disease, for example, chicken pox, head lice, ringworm, conjunctivitis, pink eye, hand foot and mouth, COVID-19 or any other contagious illness. This can easily enable the preschool to take precautions to minimize the risk of infecting other children.

Before bringing your child back to school after an illness, he/she should be fever free for at least 24 hours and free of any vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours. Colds, viruses, flu, and strep throat spread easily. We hope you will take precautions to protect your child and other children from excess exposure.

### **Allergies – EpiPens and Inhalers**

Families are expected to notify us regarding any allergies. Families of children with diagnosed life-threatening allergies requiring an EpiPen or Inhaler must provide the following:

- A written action endorsed by the child's physician or licensed health provider detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care.
- Medication in original containers with a copy of the prescription
- A completed and signed medical information form

A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the classrooms and in the preschool office. Teachers are trained to familiarize themselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

## Medication

HHPS does not administer medications to children. We will only administer medications required in emergency situations for which both parents have given written consent, as detailed in above section. Our first aid can only consist of a band aid and ice pack if needed. We are not allowed to use any type of medication, lotion, ointment, etc.

## XVI. Pandemic Policies and Procedures (Covid-19)

Harpeth Hills Preschool takes 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 Covid-19. Although we cannot guarantee that no child or staff will be exposed to this virus this school year, we will continue to use practices to prevent the spread while offering children a wonderful environment to learn and grow.

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.
- ❖ Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces before and after meals and snacks
- ❖ Following Health guidelines for staff and children with symptoms referenced in sick policy.
- ❖ Daily classroom cleaning by staff; additional daily facilities cleaning by a professional business facilitated by Harpeth Hills Church.
- ❖ Air filtration system
- ❖ Any staff that becomes symptomatic during the school day will go home.
- ❖ Any child that becomes symptomatic will be isolated in the office until parent/guardian can come to pick them up.

### COVID procedures:

**If staff or student tests positive**, please notify Directors. (Confidentiality will be respected) You can return to school after:

- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
  - 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
  - Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving\*
- If you have no symptoms, you can return to school 10 days after positive viral test.

A notice will be sent by the school to those individuals/parents/guardians at risk of exposure when a positive case has been reported to the school. This is intended to give parents/guardians notice to watch for signs/symptoms of the virus in their own child.

**If a student has 'in-home' exposure to Covid**, please contact the Directors for guidance on when child should return to school.

**All protocols and procedures will be continually evaluated and are subject to change without notice based on guidance from the Harpeth Hills Preschool Board of Directors.**

## **XVII. 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.

Everyone picking up must be on your transportation list. 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. Children will not be released to anyone whose behavior leads staff to question a child's safety.

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.

### **Clothing**

Warm clothing in winter and cool clothing in summer is necessary for outside play. Close-toed shoes are preferred for outside play. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. We require that all children always have a complete change of clothes (labeled) in their bag. \*Extra clothing should be rotated for the seasons.

### **Outdoor Play**

If notice is received from the Health Department concerning high levels of air pollution, we will remain indoors as advised.

Our students are allowed the opportunity for outside play when the temperature is in the range of 32-95 F (after adjustment for wind chill and heat index) and when it is not raining. Apply sunscreen and insect repellent at home. Dress your child appropriately for the weather conditions of the day.

### **Injuries**



Safety is a major concern in childcare and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

### **Biting**

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once. When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting. Phone calls will be made to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

However, if the biting continues after exhausting all other options, the biting child may have to be removed, either temporarily or permanently, from school in consideration of the other children in the classroom.

### **Smoking**

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor environment used by HHPS are always non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on Harpeth Hills premises.

### **Child Abuse**

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Harpeth Hills will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

*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 877-237-0004.*

DCS Reporting number is 1-877-237-0004

Guidelines for Responding to Disclosure or Suspicion of Sexual Abuse of a Child: When in doubt, REPORT!

1. If you have any Suspicion:
  - Be available- provide a safe environment for disclosure.
  - 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.
  - Make an opportunity to talk about ok secrets and not ok secrets
  - Utilize a personal safety or touching lesson.
2. If an individual offers Disclosure:
  - ALWAYS REPORT
  - Do NOT notify parents
  - 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.
  - Let the child know you are safe and willing to listen. Do not question for details or further facts.
  - Be very straight with the child about your need to tell someone who can help.

## XVIII. Emergencies

We are required by law to have at least one other emergency contact on file (other than the parent/guardian). Your child will only be released to those individuals designated on the Child Emergency Information form by the parent/guardian. In the event of an emergency that requires someone else to pick up your child, please call the Preschool office (615-690-4675) to make arrangements for the necessary permission. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep all contact information up to date with HHPS. This includes address, phone(s), emails, emergency contacts, medical information, etc.

In the event of a tornado, students will follow approved safety procedures. They will be directed to go into the tunnel that is in the inner hallways of the first floor. We practice this on calm, sunny days so that we do not instill fear as we learn this procedure. Please talk to your children about this drill and what they would do at home in the event of a tornado warning.

We have monthly fire drills throughout the school year.

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 directors 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) 690.4675. 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.

A complete Emergency Plan is in each classroom and the preschool office. This plan is reviewed monthly by our entire staff. The church office

## **XIX. Communication, Discipline & Termination**

### **Communication:**

Communication with our parents is of utmost importance to Harpeth Hills Preschool.

If we are unable to answer the phone during the day, please leave a message as we check our messages frequently. Also, you are welcome to email the school office with questions and for reporting absences. HHPS makes every effort to stay in communication with our families.

- Key Communication with Parents comes through email, Brightwheel, Instagram, and sometimes texts. Each classroom functions a little differently as far as communication but will keep you informed and updated about everything! Each teacher communicates with families by email, phone, or text.
- You may request a conference with teachers and/or director at any time •
- Parent-teacher conferences for Pre-K are held twice during the school year. Advanced notice is given for scheduled times
- Bulletin Board provides center news, upcoming events, holiday closing dates, announcements, operating license, etc.

### **Discipline**

HHPS makes every effort to praise children for positive behavior. Our teachers plan interesting activities and take into consideration the attention spans and skill-level of children, so the behavioral expectations are developmentally appropriate.

Redirection and distraction are our first response in seeking positive behavior. As a last resort, a child may be removed from a group activity so that he/she can regain self-control.

Should difficult behavior continue to occur, we will be in contact with the parent to discuss strategies that can be used to bring about the desired behavior. If a child exhibits three incidents of difficult behavior in one day, parents/guardians are called, and the child must be picked up immediately.

### **Termination**

Harpeth Hills Preschool makes every effort to ensure the success of children within our program. The termination of a child may become necessary if this child is unable to adjust to the school's routine and social interaction. This includes, but is not limited to, children who:

- Struggle with anger management or aggressive behavior
- Are disrespectful to staff or other children
- Exhibit behaviors that threaten the safety and well-being of self-and/or others in the class
- Monopolize the teacher's time, drawing the teacher's attention away from the class.

## **XX. Gold Sneaker Policies**

**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. Childcare 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:** Childcare 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, and feed infants according to their individual needs, and store expressed breast milk properly. Providers shall publicly display their support for breastfeeding infants and mothers by posting signage or other publicly 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:** Childcare educators shall ensure appropriate infant and child feeding patterns, including adequate time for snack and meal consumption and age-appropriate portion size. Childcare 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. Childcare 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 childcare 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. Childcare 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 childcare provider entrance, as required by state law.

## XXI. Summary of Licensing Requirements for Child Care Agencies

Follow the following link to read these requirements. [TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/human-services)