



Parent and Student Handbook
2022-2023

Welcome to Hodges Blvd Presbyterian Church Preschool

Dear Parents,

HBPC Preschool extends a warm welcome to all parents, caregivers and children entering our program.

We strongly believe that open communication between parents and our staff is essential to fully meeting your child's needs. We look forward to developing a positive relationship with you. Early experiences are vital to your child's spiritual, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth and development and we look forward to sharing in that journey. We strive to support your child's imagination and a natural love of learning. We will provide a nurturing environment filled with warmth, encouragement and a relationship with God. Your child will discover friendships and sharing while developing a positive self-image.

The purpose of this handbook is for your reference to frequently asked questions. We hope you will use it to help promote understanding of our program and as an orientation to both our policies and services. We know that every aspect of childcare is not covered here, so please know our door is always open. We are here to answer or address any situation or question that may arise. Please call the Director at 904-254-7304 anytime.

We are thankful that children are a sacred gift from God and hold a special place in His creation.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Kimberly K Welch

Preschool Director

We are licensed by the State of Florida and operate under OCA # 16-1590 of the Florida Department of Children and Families and VPK by The Early Learning Coalition.

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Mission Statement

Our mission at HBPC Preschool is to provide a Christ-centered, Biblically-directed education which encourages the development of a personal relationship with God and instills the vision and practice of excellence in academics, character and service to God and others. We exist as an outreach program of Hodges Blvd. Presbyterian Church to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate environment where every family experiences the love of God. We are here to promote social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive and physical development.

Philosophy and Purpose

Our preschool is a Christian school, and therefore, emphasizes Christ-centered teaching. The Bible is the integrating factor around which all activities and subject matter are correlated. Our staff recognizes that children learn in varying styles and abilities. We provide a warm and caring environment that fosters the development of each child's unique talents and abilities. We offer many opportunities to learn new skills, form good habits and build life long friendships.

Curriculum

Concepts regarding God, Jesus, the Bible, church, self, family, the natural world and others are the basis of our curriculum. We incorporate praise, thanksgiving and concern for others in our teaching. Multicultural values are instilled as we teach that God has a different plan for each unique, special individual. State standards and Jolly Phonics are also built into our lessons.

Statement of Faith

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. Romans 8:14

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 1 Corinthians 3:16

For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21

Values and Priorities

As a ministry of HBPC our core values align with loving God, loving each other and loving our world. They represent scriptural ideals that guide all areas for school life.

HBPC Preschool is devoted to:

Loving God by...

- Pursuing God-honoring excellence and creativity in all aspects of the school
- Cultivation of spiritual growth and discipleship
- Igniting a lifestyle of worship

Loving each other by...

- Viewing everyone as important—staff, parents and students
- Identifying and celebrating the unique giftedness and heritage of every child
- Valuing relationships and adhering to principles that promote respect and unity
- Providing a safe, positive learning environment

Loving our work by ...

- Nurturing the vision and habits of lifelong service to others
- Exercising responsible stewardship
- Providing activities moving children from familiar to broader, unknown experiences

Families

The Bible has given parents the duty of raising their children, bringing them up in the guidance and instruction of the Lord as set forth in Ephesians 6:4. We are committed to supporting the growth and development of this God-ordained institution.

We believe in the importance of the family/home and support the family institution.

As a staff, we are committed to Jesus Christ, dedicated to the work He has called us to do, and acknowledge that we "train and educate:" on behalf of the parents, not in place of them. We view ourselves as an extension of the education process of the home. We place a strong emphasis on good communication between the family and staff.

The goal of HBPC Preschool is to partner with parents to spiritually, socially/emotionally, physically and cognitively prepare children for school readiness and the plan God has for their life, as well as to support parents in their role to raise their children as God desires.

Domains

Spiritual development

This domain encompasses children's awareness that there is a loving God who created all things and desires a personal relationship with us. It focuses on key concepts such as who God is (The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), the Holy Bible as God's word to us, how to best live our lives (moral development), the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ and the promise of heaven/eternal life in Him.

Social and Emotional development

This domain addresses the emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home and school.

Physical well-being, health and motor development

This domain encompasses children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities.

Cognitive and general knowledge

This domain includes children's ability to understand and think about the physical and social worlds. In particular, this domain focuses on children's knowledge of objects in the world around them, their logic and mathematical knowledge, their knowledge of agreed-upon social conventions such as number and colors, language and their understanding and appreciation of the arts in their lives.

Admission to Our Program

Currently enrolled parents will be extended a priority enrollment period in January, where they may reserve their child's spot for the upcoming school year. This period of time is directly following the Christmas break. Once open enrollment begins, your priority will no longer be guaranteed. Your child's currently enrolled classroom is their priority. You may fill out a class change form if you would like to add or change days. We place children in classrooms based on their age on September 1st. Students remain with their peers and teachers for the entire year.

Non-Discrimination policy

HBPC admits students of any race, color, gender, national and ethnic origin, religion, and disability to all the rights generally accorded or made available.

Withdrawal procedures

A 30 day written notice is required for early withdrawal. Annual tuition paid will be reimbursed after a 30 day notice. This includes early care and extended day withdrawals. Processing fees and enrollment fees are not refundable.

Expulsion or enrollment termination

We reserve the right to terminate enrollment at any time. Services may be terminated if a child is causing harm to himself/herself or another child or staff member. Other causes can be, but not limited to, refusal to pay tuition, verbal or physical abuse by a parent to a staff member or refusal to adhere to HBPC center policies.

Children must be potty trained in the 3 and 4 year old classes. Pull ups are not allowed. If we determine that the child is not fully trained, the parent must keep the child out of school until the child is able to take care of own bathroom needs and able to verbalize to the teachers if help is needed. In order to hold the space continued tuition must be paid.

If the child is asked to be withdrawn from HBPC Preschool, the family will not be responsible for future tuition payments.

Attendance Policy

If your child is going to be out of school, please call the office 904-254-7304 to let us know.

Please make arrivals and dismissals as smooth as possible by arriving on time. Most children do well with routine and miss out on important things in their day if not arriving on time.

VPK students and parents must adhere to the VPK attendance policy. Your child should be in attendance at least 80% of any month. Vacations should be planned outside of your child's school calendar. Failure to achieve this may be cause for dismissal from the VPK program. Parents are required to sign VPK attendance at the end of each month to remain in the program.

All children should be signed in and out by a caregiver authorized to do so. Younger siblings under the age of 18 will not be allowed to sign a child out of class.

3 Year Old and 4 Year Old (VPK) Classes must be potty trained.

Potty-trained means that the child can take care of his own bathroom needs. We do not allow the children to wear pull-ups. Accidents do happen once in awhile. We will assist your child in changing their clothes. If frequent accidents happen, a meeting will be called with the parents to help with a solution. It may be suggested that you keep your child out of school until they are successful. If you want to hold your space, tuition will still be expected.

Separation Anxiety

We hope that your child is eager and willing to come to school each day. Some mornings your child may need a little extra reassurance. As parents, you have made a conscious effort to send your child to our school. You have placed your child in the capable hands of our staff. Please reassure your child that they will be fine, say goodbye and leave. Only after the separation has taken place, can your child start to move forward. Of course we want you to feel free to send a text or make a phone call to see how your child is doing. If we feel that your child is having a hard time adjusting on a particular day, we will contact you as well.

Preschool is a place for learning

A child learns when...

They have opportunities to satisfy their curiosity and learn through discovery.

They work and play in a pleasant place where they have more chances for success, than failure.

They have opportunity for free play to practice what they learn.

The preschool program is based upon the understanding that children are individuals and learn at their own pace.

They have a great variety of experiences— stimulation and contact with people and objects. These experiences bring meaning to a child.

Growth is continuous. No two children grow in the same way.

Reminders for a Successful Preschool Experience

- Make going to school a pleasurable experience.
- Pray regularly for your child, their teacher and our school.
- Tell the teacher anything about your child that will help her understand him/her better.
- Be interested in what your child brings home from school
- Make special time for your child to talk to you and share their school day.
- Refrain from being on your cell phone during drop off and pick up.
- Never discuss the teacher, playmates or the school negatively in the presence of your child.

Teachers are mandatory reporters of any incidents of possible child abuse or neglect.

Car Seat and parking lot safety

By law, every child needs to be placed in a car seat when riding in a car.

Please never leave a child in your car when dropping off your preschool student. Cars must be parked in designated spaces. Do not leave your car in the fire lane.

Emergency Contacts

Upon enrollment, parents are asked to provide home, cell, and work phone numbers, as well as email addresses. We also ask for emergency contacts. In the event of an emergency, we will try contacting the parents first and then emergency contacts. It is the parents' responsibility to keep all numbers updated.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident or emergency while at school, we will first administer first aid as needed to minor injuries. The teacher will make a report and a signature from the person picking up will be necessary. A copy of that report will be sent home in your child's folder. If the accident is such that further treatment is required, we will call the parent and if needed call emergency contacts if parent can not be reached. In an emergency, we will call 9-1-1 if necessary; the parents will be called after contacting emergency personnel. If a child needs to go to the ER he/she will be transported by ambulance.

Safety Information

The safety and well-being of your child is our top priority. Precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Parents must walk their child in and pick their child up each day from the classroom. Children will not be released to unauthorized persons. If the staff member, who releases the child, does not know the adult, identification will be required. Please notify the school if your child will be absent.

Children are supervised while using the restroom. If a child needs assistance, a teacher will remain in the bathroom with the child. Teachers maintain a count of the children in their classrooms at all times including when they transition to another area. No child is allowed to remain or enter a classroom without a teacher.

Closed toe shoes are essential for safety and comfort. Children will be asked to not run or play on equipment if a teacher feels that it is a safety issue. Please have children wear clothes that are appropriate for the weather. Classes do go outside every day, unless it is raining. Please avoid necklaces, strings, or cords that could pose a choking hazard. We do our best to protect children's clothing but we are not responsible for their clothing while at school. Please wear clothes that are easy to manage for your child. Example; belts, one piece outfits and tights are not appropriate. Please leave a spare set of clothes at school for your child, in case of a spill or accident.

Tuition and Fees

New students are required to pay an enrollment fee for the 3 year old class. Enrollment fees are **non-transferable and non-refundable** and due at enrollment to secure your child's space. Tuition rates can be found on our website and are subject to change. Annual tuition is preferred, but there is an option to split tuition into 9 payments, with a one time processing fee, due with the September 1st tuition payment. Tuition is billed Sept. through May.

* Tuition IS due on January 1st (this is a change from previous years)

Early Care and Extended Day options are offered based on availability. Payment must be made before starting and to secure and keep spot. Refer to website for annual fee. Payment may be set up monthly Sept.-May with a processing fee. Students can only be enrolled based on the days they are enrolled in school.

Summer Camps are scheduled based on availability of the church space and staffing. These are scheduled in the spring of each year. Enrollment is first come, first serve. **Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.**

Late Fees and Return Payments

- Late tuition payment of \$35.00 will be assessed on the 3rd of the month. (amended from previous years)
- Late pick up from school \$ 20.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 for each additional minute.

Late fees are per child.

- Late fees must be paid before the child returns to school. Payment must be paid by check or through Procure. The Procure button is located on the website.
- Return payment fee \$35.00

VPK Students must register and apply for the VPK certificate of eligibility through The Early Learning Coalition of Duval. No fees are associated with participation in VPK. Students must adhere to the attendance policy and attend the first and last day of school. Failure to follow VPK attendance policy can be subject to dismissal from the program. It is the responsibility of the parents to sign the child's attendance form at the end of every month.

Chapel

Parents, grandparents and siblings are always invited to join us for Chapel. We ask that you keep younger siblings with you. We prefer that children of the preschool sit with their teachers and peers. However, if they are having a hard time transitioning from parents, we welcome you to come be with them.

Birthdays –Birthdays are a special time and we love celebrating your child.

Children wishing to celebrate a birthday at Preschool may bring a **store bought, individually packaged** treat for their classmates that will be sent home. Please confer with teachers in advance as to food allergies or restrictions. Teachers will celebrate the birthday according to their schedule. **Balloons and small items that may cause choking are not allowed.** If all students in class are invited to a party, we will be happy to send home invitations in folders. If all students in your child's class are not invited, Teachers are not allowed to put invitations into folders, and your child will be redirected from talking about it during class time.

Parents Welcome in the Classroom - HBPC has an open-door policy to all parents. We welcome you to get to know your child's teacher and get a glimpse into your child's day. We will try our best to send weekly/monthly pictures through Photo Circle App so you can see what they are doing at different times of the day.

To maintain a safe, comfortable, predictable setting for all children we ask parents to let your teacher know if you plan on eating lunch or visiting during the school day. Due to our classroom size, only 1 parent may visit at a time. Younger siblings are NOT permitted due to maximum space /ratio guidelines.

Celebrations

Throughout the year teachers will invite parent involvement in the way of projects, donations or participation in our Sweet Treats, Trike-A-Thon and other events. Families are encouraged to attend Chapel times and Lunch Bunch with their child's class.

Communications

It is very important to know what is happening at school. You will receive a monthly newsletter and calendar with important information and dates. Please make sure to inform your child's teacher if they had a difficult morning or they got an injury during home time. Please take the time to fill out an incident report for things that happened at home. The teachers will have these available for you. If you have a concern about behavior or a situation, it is best to schedule a conference or hand your teacher a note so that they can address it immediately. We will not talk about your child when other parents are around.

Conflict Resolution

We encourage direct communication with your child's teacher/Director if problems arise. Conferences are scheduled twice annually, however we are happy to have a conference or meeting any time to address needs/concerns.

Parents or staff members who have concerns that are not met by the Director are encouraged to contact the Preschool Board President who will bring issue to the Preschool Board. The Session of HBPC is responsible for the Preschool Ministry. Preschool Board meetings are announced on classroom calendars. We hope to resolve any questions or concerns.

No Solicitation and No Distribution Policy

At no time should an employee or parent solicit products or services on the property during preschool hours of 7:45 am -3:00 pm.

Staff

Teachers are not permitted to baby-sit during their scheduled hours. Teachers are not permitted to use classrooms or facility for care of children outside of scheduled school hours. Teachers are monitored while working with children by the director and other coworkers. Parents should ALWAYS do their own checks as it relates to childcare even if the childcare worker has, or is, a teacher for HBPC Preschool. Teachers are not required to give personal email or phone #'s to parents. Staff will communicate by sending notes home in the child's communication folder, setting up conferences and monthly newsletters and calendars.

Health and Safety

Please be sure to let us know if your child will be absent. You can call, email or text the preschool phone to let us know.

All students are required to keep health forms current. Form 3040 (Student Health Form) and Form 680 (Fl certificate of Immunization) must be completed and signed by the child's health provider and submitted to HBPC Preschool. A child who does not have official forms on file will NOT be allowed to attend HBPC Preschool. It is the parents' responsibility to keep all health forms updated. Some children may not have immunizations due to religious exemptions. Please bring allergies to the attention of the teachers.

Medications

Staff will not give medication without written authorization from parents or legal guardian. An authorization for medication form **MUST** be completed for all medications, (over the counter or prescription) including diaper creams. All medication must be in original containers/boxes with the name of the child, dosing instructions, and physician name. Staff may not administer the first dose of any medication.

Sunscreen, hand sanitizer, Chapstick, vitamins and hand lotion etc. are considered medications. Please do not keep these items in a child's back pack.

Medications delivered by a device (epi pen, inhaler, nebulizer etc.)- Parents must have written instructions on indications for use that include signs and symptoms that the medication is needed. Parents must demonstrate use of the device and any special care to staff administering. A dated list of staff trained to administer will be documented on the parent's instruction form. Staff follow DCF guidelines for staff with CPR/first aid training.

Accident/Incident Forms

Parents should address any accidents from home and fill out a form when dropping off your child. This includes but not limited to, scrapes, bruises, marks or trips to Doctor regarding an accident. If something happens during the school day, the teacher will write up the accident and inform the parent or person picking up at the end of the day. Parents or allowed people will sign form acknowledging the accident.

Children are closely supervised on the playground, and grouped according to their age. In the event of inclement weather, the teachers will find a space inside to allow for gross motor activities. Children are never allowed on the playground or in any area unsupervised.

Discipline Policy

Good discipline is maintained through teaching problem-solving skills and safety. Teachers use kindness, positive language and lead by example. Teachers help children build a foundation of skills to resolve conflict and manage their behaviors. When needed, teachers redirect situations. Teachers are loving, positive, consistent, firm, and strive to use situations as teachable moments.

We strictly adhere to the following Florida Department of children and families Child Care Standards on Discipline. [10-M-12.012 Child Discipline]

1. Childcare facilities must ensure appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for children in care.
2. Children shall not be subjected to discipline, which is severe, humiliating, or frightening.
3. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest, or toileting, nor elimination of entire gross motor development (outside time)
4. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.

In situations where a child is endangering the well-being of another child, time-out will be utilized. (We usually call this the thinking place). One minute of time-out per year of age is appropriate. If child becomes uncontrollable, hurting other children and/or staff, you will be called to remove your child for the day. You will be expected to pick up your child within 30 minutes of notification. Parents will be notified of recurring discipline problems. A discipline plan will be developed in conjunction with parental desires and teacher advice.

Volunteers

Adult volunteers must be oriented on policy and screened for criminal history background.

It is at the discretion of the Director if volunteers will be used. There are times throughout the year that we invite parents to come and participate in activities.

Although we have an open door policy, it is best at the beginning of the year, to give time for children to adjust and bond with their teachers.

If you are coming to observe or assist in a classroom, younger siblings may not attend. It is best to give your full attention to the task at hand and to the children in the classroom.

Examples– mystery reader, sharing a special talent like community helper.

Health Policies and Guidelines

Medications delivered by a device: (EpiPen, inhaler, nebulizer) – Parents must give written instructions on indications for use that include signs and symptoms that the medication is needed. Parents must demonstrate use of the device and any special care to staff administering. A dated list of staff trained to administer will be documented on the parent's medication/instruction form. Training is given annually or as needed with staff or device changes. Medical Care plans for children with special health needs are available and must be signed by the child's physician.

Sick children do not enjoy their Preschool experience and may expose classmates unnecessarily. Children with a fever or showing signs of illness cannot attend Preschool. Parents will be called to pick-up a sick child. If a parent cannot be contacted, people on your emergency contact list will be called and until someone is contacted. Your child will be isolated for the remainder of the class. If your child is ill and will not attend class, parents must call or text to notify the school. (904) 254-7304 by 9:45.

We have a policy at HBPC of having every child wash their hands as they enter the classroom and whenever they change activities, eat or after toileting. Hand washing has been proven to drastically reduce the amount of sickness in childcare facilities.

Chapter 65C-22.004 of the DCF Florida Administrative Code Child Care Standards reads as follows:

Any child, child care personnel or other person in the child care facility suspected of having communicable disease shall be removed from the facility or placed in an isolation area, usually with the director, until removed. Such person may not return without medical authorization or until the signs and symptoms of the disease are no longer present. With a child, the condition shall be reported to the custodial parent or legal guardian.

Many different types of viruses that are easily spread cause COMMON COLDS. Please keep your child at home if he/she has fever, sore throat, watery eyes, persistent cough and or excessive nasal discharge. Children developing these problems at school will be isolated until the parent is contacted and removes the child. **IF YOUR CHILD HAS AN ALLERGY PROBLEM, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO BRING A NOTE FROM YOUR DOCTOR AS CONFIRMATION.** It is the discretion of the preschool to send a child home, who is not feeling well.

If your child becomes ill at Preschool you will be contacted. The child must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification. Your prompt response will add to the comfort of your child.

If your child has any of the following signs and symptoms, he/she MUST NOT attend Preschool:

VOMITING - 24 hours symptom free before returning to school, see doctor for possible cause.

DIARRHEA - diarrhea can be defined as more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period.

FEVER - fever is defined as having a temperature of 100.5° F or higher. A child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to preschool.

STREP THROAT - a child with a positive strep culture must be kept at home until 48 hours after the antibiotics are begun. Children who have sore throats and are awaiting results of a culture should be kept at home until the results are known.

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE) - "Pink Eye" is an inflammation of the conjunctiva, which lines the outside of the eyeball. The eye may be weepy, reddened and contain mater on the eyelids. There is often a burning or itchy feeling in the eye. Children must be kept at home until they have been treated with an antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

IMPETIGO - impetigo appears as a blister rash. When blisters open, they produce a thick, golden yellow discharge that dries crusts and adheres to the skin. Prompt medical treatment is very effective. Impetigo is highly contagious and therefore your child must be kept at home until they're symptom free.

CHICKEN POX - the vaccine against Chicken Pox has decreased the number of cases but the disease still exists and can be very serious for anyone with an impaired immune system. Symptoms include a low-grade fever with cold-like indications three to four days prior to break out. The chicken pox lesions look like small blisters and usually being on the trunk. Incubation for chicken pox is 14-21 days, and children are considered contagious from three to four days prior to break until all the blisters have scabbed over

LICE- Itching, the most common symptom, nits form from eggs laid by the lice. Children must be nit free before returning to school.

INFLUENZA - most flu's cause fever, cough, chills, sore throat headache and muscle aches. The symptoms often begin with a generalized; "I don't feel well." Please be sensitive to this and consider keeping your child at home.

HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE - this common childhood disease includes small ulcers in the mouth and small watery blisters or red spots on the palms of hands and soles of feet. The symptoms can last for 10 days. Children with draining lesions need to be kept at home until the lesions heal.

FIFTH'S DISEASE - by the time the symptoms of this disease appear, which is a rash, the disease is over. Nothing can be done except to practice good hygiene. The child may have a slight fever and feel off color beforehand.

COVID-19 - You can be infected by coughing, sneezing and droplets from talking. Washing hands, social distancing helps minimize exposure. www.CDC.gov can provide more information.

If you think you or your child has been exposed to Covid-19, (regardless of vaccination status) you must quarantine from school for the recommended advised time by the CDC.

Disaster Preparedness

In case of any disaster at HBPC Preschool the following procedures will be followed: Please do NOT call the church or the preschool phone as in all probability they will be out of action or will be needed for outgoing calls.

- All children will be removed from the building if necessary.
- All children will be taken to the other building or off property if necessary.
- All classroom doors can be locked from the inside. Every attempt to reach you by phone will be made.
- Teachers' will remain in contact with each other by cell phone and walkie-talkies.
- Each class has a disaster preparedness pack. Teachers are trained on codes and safety drills.
- The Director or Assistant Director will handle any media relations in the event of an emergency.

Please talk to your child about the various procedures we do at the school. We practice codes for fire and tornados and for when people may be in the building that should not be. We do not want to alarm your child, but do want them to be prepared for anything that may happen. Reassure your child that teachers will always take care of them.

National Disaster or Unsafe Conditions

Every attempt for prompt notification to parents will be made to our social media accounts for an unforeseen school closing. Days missed due to unsafe conditions will not be refunded. HBPC Preschool reserves the right to decide if they days will be made up or not based on the school calendar and staffing needs. Security cameras will record common areas of the school. Covid-19 will be considered for unsafe conditions.

