

HILLSIDE PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024



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Our Philosophy

Our philosophy at Hillside Preschool is to provide a safe and fun environment for academic and social growth. Students will have the opportunity to learn and make progress in language, mathematics, music, art, fine/gross motor skills, and Christian values.

Our Curriculum

Preschool class (After age three and potty trained)

The curriculum at this age includes identifying letters A-Z, shapes, colors, and numbers 1-10. This class practices tracing, writing their first name, and fine/gross motor skills. The students learn to function in a classroom setting with skills such as taking turns, sharing, and verbal expression. We also offer music time, Jesus time, and centers.

Prekindergarten class (Age 4 by July 31)

The curriculum at this age includes identifying and naming letters, shapes, colors, and numbers 1-20. Students will learn to count to 30 and will be challenged to read some basic sight words by year end. We will introduce patterning, opposite identification, and sorting. These students will trace, write their name (first and last), practice fine/gross motor skills, and participate in music time, Jesus time, and centers.

Hours of Operation

Hillside Preschool is open from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday. We operate nine months a year from September through May.

Hillside Preschool is closed on all major holidays including but not limited to: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Spring Break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Break, and Christmas Break. (Please see Hillside's monthly calendar for more detail).

Missouri State Regulations and License Status

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services is the regulating authority for childcare facilities. In our facility, we meet or exceed the standards for childcare in a License Exempt facility. These standards relate to our facility, staff, health and safety, child-staff ratios, and record keeping. Health, Fire, and licensing representatives routinely inspect our facility. All staff receive a background screening through the Family Care Safety Registry. Staff is required to report suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.

State licensing requires each child to have a file on site while actively enrolled, which is kept on file for one year after enrollment. If you need to review your child's file or update information, notify your child's teacher. Files may not leave the facility and the child's information is updated yearly.

Admissions

Prior to admission, a pre-enrollment tour of Hillside with parents or guardians may be scheduled. The purpose of this tour is to determine the needs of the parents and child and the suitability of the program to meet those needs.

Before attending, all forms must be completed and returned along with the registration fee and first month's tuition.

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex be excluded from participation, be denied, or be subjected to discrimination.

Sample Daily Schedule

9:00am Students are welcomed and belongings are stored. Folders are put in the teacher's basket.

9:15am - Circle Time- Calendar and weather time, story time

9:30am - Centers/Learning Stations

10:30am- Jesus Time/Music Time

10:45am- Snack

11:00am- Language Time

11:15am Gross Motor (Playground or Gym)

11:50am Reflection and pack up

12:00pm- Dismissal

Drop Off

When you drop your child off each day, please park your car and bring your student into the lobby entrance. You will need to sign them in and wait until the teacher opens the education doors and invites the students down to the classroom. The first few days may be a little emotional for students and parents. It is not uncommon for there to be tears at the beginning. It helps to say a quick goodbye and leave the settling down to staff. It usually does not take long to calm a child and we would appreciate your trust in this matter.

Pick up

When you pick your child up each day, please enter the lobby and sign out your child. The teachers will open the education doors and call your child's name to walk to you. We want to make sure that each child gets with the correct parent. Please be patient with us, especially as we get to know your faces and names. Anyone who picks up your child must be on your pickup list on the enrollment form. Names are always checked, so please list anyone that may pick up your child (see Child Safety and Security Policy) and ask them to bring a photo ID. A written note will need to be sent to school if someone other than those listed picks up your child. Students should be picked up promptly at 12:00. If a parent is late picking up their child more than two times in a month, a late fee may be charged at the Director's discretion.

Financial Policies

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. If the due date falls on a weekend, the payment will be due the following Monday. A 3-day grace period will be given to receive payment without penalty. If the payment is not received by the end of the grace period, a \$20 penalty will be assessed. If payment and penalty are not received by the end of the month, the student will no longer be allowed to attend Hillside. A \$15 fee will be charged for returned checks. Tuition is the same amount each month regardless of sick days, holidays, spring break, vacation, inclement weather, or any unforeseen or uncontrollable acts of God.

Payments must be written to Fenton United Methodist Church with "Hillside" in the memo. Payment can be made in the church office, mailed, or sent by a bank.

A one-time **Non-Refundable** registration fee is required to register.

Termination/Withdrawal

Occasionally, we find that our program is not the best fit for every child. If the Director feels that your child is not adjusting well to the program, we will request that you remove your child near the end of the week. You may request a prorated tuition reimbursement for weeks unattended.

If you choose to withdraw your child, please notify your child's teacher so items can be collected and sent home with your child. Parents may request reimbursement for time paid for, but unused due to the student leaving Hillside at the behest of parents or teachers. No reimbursement will be made for days the student was in attendance.

Illness

Please keep your child home if he/she has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, bacterial infections, viruses, pink eye, or head lice. If your child is sick, please call the church office at 636-343- 5010 or send a message to your child's teacher. Please inform us if your child has a contagious illness.

Inclement Weather

Hillside Preschool follows the Rockwood District schedule for inclement weather. If Rockwood is closed for inclement weather, Hillside is also closed. Please check the Hillside Facebook and/or the Dojo App for updates.

Discipline

Part of our curriculum includes teaching students how to live and work in a community. We stress the importance of sharing, respecting our friends and teachers, listening, and following directions. Teachers will use the following methods for discipline:

1) redirection, 2) a warning along with an explanation of why the behavior is unacceptable and what is expected, 3) In a situation where a student exhibits aggressive behavior, the student will be removed from the situation, and told why the behavior is unacceptable, and 4) the parents will be notified.

Behavior Concerns

If a student has become a regular disruption in class, the following strategies will be used: 1. The teacher will calmly ask the student to stop the behavior and redirect him/her to what the teacher would like the student to do instead.

2. The teacher will write a note to the parent(s) describing the incident(s) and place in student's backpack.

3. After two significant class disruptions, the teacher will notify the parent(s) and schedule a conference to discuss teacher's concerns. The teacher will ask the parent(s) if they see behavior at home, discuss how it was handled in the home and develop an intervention plan.

4. The teacher will observe the student for improvement after talking with the parent(s).

5. If the behavior does not improve, a behavior incentive chart will be sent home with the student each day to be returned to the teacher with the parent(s) signature. This will allow regular communication between the teacher and parent(s) about the issue.

6. If a student is a threat to staff or other students, the teacher will bring the situation to the Hillside Board's attention. Suspension for a specified number of days is a possibility.

Tears/Shyness

If a student is reluctant to leave his/her parent, the teacher will:

1. Try to direct the student's attention on an activity set up in the classroom.
2. Remind the parent(s) that most students will calm down only a few minutes after the parent(s) leaves.
3. Assure parent(s) that they will be called if the student has not calmed within 15-minutes.
4. Close the door after the parent(s) leave so the student does not run after them.

Nutrition-Snack

Each day a snack is served. Parents will be asked to send a snack to share on certain days. This may be fruits, vegetables, yogurt, cheese cubes, pretzels, chips, cereal, or graham crackers. A refrigerator is available to store cold items. No homemade snacks are allowed.

Birthdays

If your child would like to celebrate his/her birthday at school, you may bring a prepackaged treat. Their snack day will be on their birthday, or around their birthday. You are welcome to be a part of your child's birthday celebration during snack time at 10:45 a.m. if you wish.

Potty Trained Policy

All students that attend Hillside must be potty trained. We understand occasional accidents happen. No pull ups may be worn. Please send a labeled set of clothes, underwear, and socks in a Ziploc to be stored at school. In the event of an accident, we have limited extra clothes. If your child comes home in borrowed clothes, please wash and return them. Children usually prefer their own clothes over our spares. Sometimes a child gets wet or dirty from the playground, so it is best that all students have extra clothes.

Toys

Please do not send your child's toys or personal belongings to school. There will be times when we ask students to bring a show and tell. So please save toys for those special days.

Holiday Parties

To Be Determined

We plan three parties: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. All parents are invited to attend the parties. We encourage you to help plan, prepare, and assist during the party. The sign up will be posted prior to the party to donate needed items. Siblings are welcome.

Conference

We will have a parent-teacher conference during the year. This will be an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher to review the report card and discuss your child's progress. If a concern is noticed before then, you will be contacted. Feel free to approach us if you have a concern. You may opt for a virtual or phone conference if preferred.

Clothing

We encourage children to wear clothes that are comfortable and washable. We do occasionally get messy, and your child will not worry about staining. Keep in mind we go outside daily so your child will need a coat, boots, mittens, and hats when the weather is wintry. We prefer tennis shoes over flip flops, slip-ons, or slick soles. Shoes need to accommodate our daily activities of running, walking and playing on the playground or in the gym. Label all coats, hats, gloves, etc. Sometimes children have similar items or things get lost. Labeling helps find the owner.

Communication

Parent(s) should always call the church office (636-343-5010) for emergency/information purposes and **NOT** the teacher's cell phone as they will be unable to answer their cell phone or text messages during class time. If there is an emergency and you need to speak with us, the Administrative Assistant can transfer your call to our classroom.

You may email the church office to contact our Administrative Assistant at admin@umcfenton.org, or call 636-343-5010 to let us know if your child is ill or will not be in attendance.

For non-emergencies, you may write us a note and place it in your child's folder, stay after school for a few minutes and talk with us, leave us a message, or message us through our classroom app. You will be asked about your email preferences in the required paperwork. The monthly newsletter contains detailed information. Also, check our Facebook for information or to send a private message. We will respond as quickly as possible.

Class Dojo App

Class Dojo App is a secure way to communicate with parents. We post pictures, important updates, closings and other important reminders. You can also privately message the teachers to ask questions or let us know if your child will be out. You will receive an invitation soon after school begins.

Accident Reports

An accident report is completed for cuts, scrapes, bruises, etc. The report describes how the injury occurred and the location of the injury. The X on the sign in/out sheet under the A/R column informs you that your child has an accident report. Please review the report, sign it, and leave it at school to be filed.

Medical Requirements and Conditions

All students are required to have a physical exam signed by a physician on file. A copy of current immunizations must also be attached. These documents must be submitted within 30 days of the first day of school. All immunization records will be examined at the beginning of the year to make sure the information meets state standards. If you have a medical or religious exemption, a separate form must be signed.

Medication Policy

Our staff is not authorized to administer any medication at our facility. All medicine must be given to your child by you either before or after school.

Emergency Care Information

We ask that you complete an authorization for emergency medical treatment. We hope we won't need this authorization, but we want to be certain your child receives the attention needed should an emergency develop. If your child is injured while at school, our first step is to administer any basic first aid. Staff is trained in CPR and First Aide. We will make every effort to contact you and/or the physician you have chosen to treat your child. Please keep your and the physician's phone numbers current. Emergency personnel will be contacted if necessary.

Emergency Preparedness/Evacuation

To prepare our students for emergencies, we have fire, tornado, and intruder drills. The more students are accustomed to the procedure, the more comfortable they become with it. Our classrooms each have an emergency backpack that is filled with a first aid kit, phone numbers to contact parents in the event of an evacuation, and some comfort items. Our facility is locked and under surveillance daily. The safety of your children is our first priority.

Substitute Teachers

Sometimes the teachers are ill or have personal days that require them to be out of the classroom. In this event, there will be a substitute teacher. If you are interested in being a substitute throughout the year and would like more information, please let the Director know. Substitute teaching requires a background and fingerprint check.

Hillside Board

The Hillside Board is composed of members of Fenton United Methodist Church, teachers, and parents. This Board oversees Hillside Preschool, writes Bylaws, hires teachers, and makes sure that the school is operating effectively. The board reports to the Fenton United Methodist Church Administrative Council. If you have concerns or want to provide positive feedback, the Administrative Assistant can assist with contacting the Board Chair. If you are interested in being a parent on the Board, let the Director know.

Themes

We will have a variety of themes to cover throughout the year, which is usually monthly depending on content. Table activities are usually centered on this theme. We will be incorporating dramatic play, story time, and lesson time into these themes.

Donations

We are always looking for new materials to add to our themed units. If you have anything at home that you are ready to part with that we may want for preschool, please let us know! If we cannot use it, it can be sent on to our church Rummage Sale. Items may include craft supplies, toys, games, puzzles, books, and more.

Daily Water Bottle

You may send a water bottle daily with your child. They are allowed access to it at appropriate times during the day. Your child's water bottle will be used daily at snack.

School Supplies

Each student will need a two-pocket folder to carry papers. They will also need a box that includes crayons, markers, and two glue sticks. Backpacks are optional, however, one that is larger than the folder is preferred because all the papers fit easily without being folded or crumpled.

If you choose to donate any of the following frequently used items, it would be greatly appreciated.

Optional supplies: wet wipes, paper plates, playdoh, washable paint, watercolor paint, stamp pads, cotton balls, Q tips, brads, paper towels, Clorox wipes, hand sanitizer, tissues.

Nametags

Students will be given a name tag. We ask you to keep this and have your child wear it for the first two weeks of school until we get to know your child's name. After that, we will collect them for future use.

Special Visitors

If you have a special talent or knowledge and would like to share it with our students, please contact us to set up a time to visit the classroom. Examples may include playing a musical instrument, teaching the class about fire safety, or demonstrating how to stay healthy.

Reviewed/Revised: 08/20; 03/21; 06/21; 07/22; 07/23