



Hilltop
Preschool

Where the love of learning grows

PARENT HANDBOOK

7612 Wanyamala Road, Henrico, Virginia 23229

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Director: Jackie Allgood

Our Mission is provide children between the ages of 2 ½ years old through Pre-Kindergarten a safe, developmentally appropriate, nurturing environment to promote social, emotional, and academic growth, as well as a positive self-image and love of learning.

Hilltop Preschool

Since 1988, Hilltop Preschool has been serving the community alongside West Richmond Church of the Brethren.

Hilltop enjoys a wonderful reputation within the Richmond Community and continually strives to offer the best educational and loving preschool experience for the children in the community we serve.

Hilltop Preschool is tucked away on several acres of land in a quiet residential neighborhood. This location affords a safe and enjoyable outdoor experience for the children and their classmates.

Hilltop believes the preschool years are critical in the process of laying the foundation for continuing personal, social, physical, spiritual and intellectual development. We also believe a well-rounded preschool experience is important in readying children for a lifetime of success.

The Director, under the guidance of the Preschool Board, coordinates the school. The Board consists of church members, the Pastor, treasurer, and the Director.

Staff

The teaching staff is selected on the basis of their educational background and professional development, as well as their personality, love for and ability to work effectively with children.

Every staff member is screened and must undergo background checks required by law.

All Preschool staff members are certified annually by a practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Each staff member must have a health form on file, participate in staff meetings, and attend local and national conferences for continued education and to enhance professional development.

Student Eligibility Requirements

Hilltop Preschool maintains an open admissions policy provided there is space in the classroom for that child's age group.

We accept children between the ages of 2½ years old through five based on their age as of Sept. 30th.

Children who are 2 ½ years old do not have to be potty-trained. All other students must be potty-trained and independently toileting.

We reserve the right to deny or terminate enrollment to any child who would not benefit from our program, for lack of payment, or for not returning all proper forms.

Hilltop Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, disability, orientation, or national and ethnic origin in any of its educational programs, admissions, or general policies.

Classroom Placement

The Director, in conjunction with the teacher and/or parents, may make exceptions for class placement based on the individual needs of the child.

Placement in classes is subject to change after enrollment if it is determined that a child meets the developmental criteria to move up or down to another class before the next school year.

Final placement is at the discretion of the Director.

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Waiting List

Once classes are filled, Hilltop will maintain a waiting list for families interested in new vacancies.

Registration and Tuition Fees

A completed registration form and fee is required. The registration fee holds a place for your child for the school year.

The amount is \$100.00 and is non-refundable.

Proof of identification (official birth certificate or passport) and immunization records (State Health Form is printable from website, if needed) must be supplied to the Director before school begins.

Other forms needed are: Enrollment Agreement, Emergency Form and Car pickup Form.

The first tuition payment is due on or before August 1. This will include the first month's tuition plus one month's deposit that will be applied to May's tuition at the end of the school year.

If a student is enrolled after August 1st, the first month's tuition plus deposit is due upon enrollment.

The deposit paid will be applied to May only and will not be applied to any other month.

Tuition payment options include annual, biannual, and monthly.

Tuition may be paid by:

- **Cash**
(place cash in an envelope with your child's name on it. Exact amount due is preferred as we do not keep change in the office)
- **Check** (made payable to: Hilltop Preschool)
- **Credit/Debit Card** (Online or in the office)
- **BILLPAY** (you set up through your bank)

BILLPAY Payments should be mailed to:

7612 Wanyamala Rd. Henrico, VA 23229 Attn: HILLTOP PRESCHOOL.

There are no refunds for vacation days, sick days, or closings due to inclement weather.

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the Director immediately if the tuition obligation is unable to be met by the due date. Failure to meet this obligation could result in your child/children being withdrawn from the school until such time as this obligation is met.

The current returned check fee charged by all banks involved will be passed along to the payer. This fee plus the tuition due must be paid before children can return to class. Only cash or money order will be accepted after the 2nd occurrence.

A LATE FEE of \$20 will be charged after the 5th of the month.

If tuition is not received by the 8th of the month, the student will not be able to attend school until tuition and late fees are paid.

Student's enrollment may also be forfeited if fees are not paid by the 10th day of the month.

If you are out of town or your child is ill or absent for any reason, please make sure tuition is still paid on time to avoid the late fee.

WITHDRAWAL

Enrollment for the entire school year.

If withdrawal is necessary before the end of the school year, please notify the school as soon as possible of your child's last day. You will be responsible for tuition to be paid up to the date of your child's last day of attendance (may be prorated). The deposit paid (which covers May's tuition) may not be applied, and is not refundable.

Refunds will not be issued for the tuition payments already paid regardless of the length of time that the child has attended, or for reasons of moving or job transfer.

A refund may be made if:

- Withdrawal is recommended by a physician (in writing)
- It is determined that all reasonable efforts have been made and the preschool is unable to meet the child's and/or parent's needs. This decision must ultimately be approved by the Director and/or Preschool Board.

School Hours

The school hours are 8:30 am - 12:15 pm

Curb Dropoff

Curb drop off will run from 8:30 - 8:45am.

Both the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up take place in the paved parking lot.

When stopping to drop off or pick up your child, your child needs to be accessible on the sidewalk side of the car. To allow drop off to run smoothly, **parents should stay in the car.**

If you arrive after 8:45am for dropoff, please park your car and walk your child to the preschool door located under the steps. Knock on the door and a staff member will greet you and escort your child to their classroom.

Can I walk my child in?

Yes! If you prefer to walk your child to their class in the morning, please park and come to the preschool door at 8:45 or after. Before 8:45, there will be no staff available to answer that door.

Once you become comfortable using the convenience of the curb drop off, we recommend you try it as it gives children a sense of independence and pride, and may make the separation moment easier on them.

Curb Pickup

All classes participate in Carpool/Curb Pickup

Please advise the Director or your teacher if your child will be riding with other families.

In the afternoon for pickup, pull up to the curb. After your child is placed in the car, please pull forward out of the carpool line into a parking spot to buckle your child into his/her car seat. This will keep our line flowing.

What if I need to pick up my child early?

No problem! Just let your teacher or the Director know when to expect you so we have your child ready to go. Please come to the Preschool door at the side of the building.

Inclement Weather Closings

For the safety of our students and staff, Hilltop Preschool follows the Henrico County Public School (HCPS) system for weather closings or delays.

The local news channels will announce closings or delays due to weather.

Hilltop families WILL NOT receive an email or phone call to alert of weather related closings. We will change the answering machine as soon as possible to reflect changes.

Keep in mind that our phone system will not work if there is a power outage.

HCPS 2-Hour morning delay = Hilltop curb drop off runs 9:30-9:45am

HCPS Closed = Hilltop closed

Missed days due to school closings are beyond our control and may not be made up, nor is a refund given. The Director may make efforts to recapture missed snow days after 5 whole days are missed. Late openings do not constitute a missed day.

Daily Necessities

What do I send with my child each day?

Each child is asked to bring a tote bag or back pack to school each day – along with a snack they can easily feed themselves (nut free), and a sippy water bottle. Please label all items with your child's name for easy identification.

A folder will be provided in your child's tote bag at the beginning of the year. This folder will be used for communication purposes with the teacher, you may send tuition (checks) and will receive school work and notes from the teacher and office.

Please keep the folder in the bag daily - but check and empty your child's folder each night.

Clothing

What should my child wear to school?

Dress your child in clothing that is comfortable for active work and play, inside as well as outside. We do enjoy painting and other activities that may be messy so clothes should be washable.

Closed-toe shoes (Velcro or slip-on sneakers or tennis shoes) are preferred. Avoid sending your child in flip flops or sandals.

Please be mindful of sending your child in pants that are easy up and down for independent toileting. Belts, overalls, suspenders, and onesies cause frustration in children trying to be independent.

Please label all coats, jackets, and hats with your child's name.

Please do not send scarves as they pose a choking hazard on the playground.

Though mittens are preferred, gloves are ok IF your child can independently put them on and off.

Children should have a change of clothes that can stay at school or in their backpack, including underwear and socks. Please put them in the provided labeled Ziploc Bag. These items should change seasonally.

Non-toilet trained children should have a supply of wipes, pull-ups, and non-latex gloves that will remain at school. If the supply runs low, the teacher may ask you to replenish it.

Snacks (No nuts or Peanut Butter snacks please)

Each child must bring a (nut free) snack and a drink each day.

Please pack the snack in a spill proof container that your child can open themselves or with minimal help.

Drinks should come in a closing kid-friendly bottle. Containers and drinks must be labeled with your child's name. Also, do not send snack that needs to be refrigerated or heated. Please cut fruits up including grapes.

We will help children peel bananas. Fruit cups with syrup are discouraged, unless the juice is drained already. Fruit in Jello is ok.

Almonds should also be cut in half due to choking hazard.

Personal Belongings (Please no precious jewelry)

All personal belongings should be marked with the child's name. Children are not to bring personal toys to Preschool unless asked to do so by their teacher.

Parents at Hilltop

There will be many opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's education:

- Parent-school communication, Parents may use daily folders for notes to and from the teacher or the Director.
- Joining your child in the several opportunities throughout the year to come in to school for specials performances, programs, and parties that are offered.
- We thank you for your help with your children learning at home, which occurs when parents reinforce classroom activities and behavior.

Parents are always welcome in the classroom. Visits must be arranged in advance with the Director. Visitors must first report to the Preschool office.

Due to our small classroom size, we must ask you to please leave siblings at home unless you are attending a family event.

Hilltop at times is able to use parent volunteers. All volunteers must go through Fingerprint based background checks.

Communication

The Director may address your questions or concerns at any time. Please call, email, or stop by the office.

The school annual calendar is available on the website or in print from the office.

Parents will also receive monthly calendars (in your child's folder) of school planned activities, weekly themes, annual special events, or special visitors.

Each teacher will share their own school email for questions, concerns, or communication. There will also be regular communication from the teachers to their parents of specific classroom activities.

Parents are encouraged to reach out at any time with questions or concerns.

Student Evaluations/Conferences

A written evaluation of your child's adjustment to school will be sent home in the fall.

A second evaluation of your child's progress during the school year will be sent home in the spring.

The 3-4 year old's classes will be tested for their basic skills gained throughout the year.

The Pre-K students will go through more enhanced testing for Kindergarten preparedness.

Conferences are available upon request throughout the year at the urging of either the teacher, the parents, or the Director.

Illness

Staff members may not administer medication to your child. This includes cough drops.

Do not send your child to school when he/she has a bad cold or infectious disease.

If a child appears to be sick or contagious, a parent will be called and asked to take their child home.

Please cooperate by keeping your child home:

- for a fever, cough, sore throat, earache, rash, and nasal discharge, or eyes are inflamed. If your child has vomited or had diarrhea in the previous 24 hours.
- when a constant cough is present.
- when there are symptoms of a communicable disease.

Children who show signs of discomfort/illness will be sent home in consideration of others.

Children who have had a fever should remain at home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal.

Please call Hilltop if your child has a contagious disease so other parents may be notified to look for similar symptoms.

Health and First Aid

Hilltop takes extreme care and all precautions to prevent any injuries of the children at the school, but at times, accidents do happen.

In the event of an accident or emergency situation, routine first aid will be administered when needed.

If first aid is necessary (other than a hug and/or band aid), an accident report will be filed and given to the parents to sign at the end of the day.

In case of a major emergency, the staff will notify the parents, 911 may be called, and emergency contact called and/or child's doctor on file, if the parents are not able to be reached.

Enhancements throughout the year

Hilltop does not take children off the premises for field trips.

We do invite various guests to our facility to entertain and educate the children throughout the school year. This is a highlight for the kids!

Celebrations, Class Parties, and Birthdays

Several celebrations, programs, and parties will be held during the school year.

Your child's teacher may send home a note asking for a food or paper item to be contributed.

Please also send in your child's regular snack on these days.

Birthdays are a fun and exciting time for children and may be celebrated at school. Children may bring a treat to share with the class.

If your child's birthday falls during the summer months and you would like to celebrate a "Half-birthday" or another occasion, please let us know!

Please make arrangements with your child's teacher in advance, and ask if there are any food allergies among the classmates.

Confidentiality

Hilltop Preschool staff are receivers of shared confidences both from children and their parents. Our program is committed to protecting the rights and privacy of the children, their families, and our staff.

Privacy will be maintained in both verbal and written communication in accordance with the ethical principles of professional behavior in the preschool setting.

The identity of children and their families will be revealed only in the cases of professional necessity such as in child abuse or neglect, developmental records and special family circumstances.

Confidentiality will always be retained unless the Director determines plausible danger or risk exists for the child, staff or program. In such cases, the appropriate personnel or agency may be contacted and be done without the parents' knowledge as required by law.

Building and Grounds

Hilltop Preschool is approved to have a capacity of 70 students per day. Hilltop utilizes existing classrooms in the church building Monday through Friday.

The sanctuary is used for performances and meetings. The gathering room is used for special programs and occasions, as well as Music and Movement Class.

The playground is adjacent to the church building and is equipped with age appropriate equipment.

Indoor areas are comfortably controlled by central heating and air conditioning. Annual inspections are made by the Fire Marshal, Health Dept. and DSS.

Insurance

Hilltop Preschool is covered by a policy from Church Mutual Insurance Company. The policy limits meet all required statutes.

Compliance

Hilltop Preschool is an Exempt Child Day Center in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716. We are regulated and licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services, and are in compliance with the standards set forth in the Code. We are regularly inspected by both the Health Department, Fire Marshal, and Department of Social Services to meet all of their standards.

Revised 8/2019