

**Huntsville Christian Church
Preschool and Kindergarten
Ministry**

171 Indian Creek Road
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Parent's Handbook

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Letter from the Director

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Huntsville Christian Church Preschool and Kindergarten. We are excited that you have chosen to send your child to our program. We pray that this year will be an important time of development for your child. The Preschool Committee has prepared this handbook to assist you in better understanding the policies of our ministry.

At Huntsville Christian Church, we believe as Jesus did, that children are very important. Jesus said in Mark 10:19, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these". Our staff of committed Christians will strive to model Jesus as we provide quality care and instruction for your children. We will work to see that all children learn and experience success and confidence in their abilities.

Thank you for letting us work with your child. We appreciate your trust in this program and look forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Catherine 'KK' Case

Director

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Huntsville Christian Church is to win people to faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ and to commit them actively to the church, to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ that increasingly they may know and do His will.

The Preschool and Kindergarten Ministry is an extension of the overall ministry of Huntsville Christian Church and is committed to serve children, their parents, and the community by providing for the care, education, and development of each child enrolled. This will be accomplished through developmentally appropriate activities designed to nurture each child spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially.

Learning objectives listed on the next page describe in detail the objectives for each area of child development we aim to nurture in each child.

Program and Philosophy

A competent, loving, and qualified staff whose mission is to provide a safe Christian atmosphere where children can learn and have fun leads our program.

Our preschool learning environment provides children with many activities including music, art, story times, indoor/outdoor play, Bible related activities, science experiments, social awareness, language arts concepts, mathematical concepts, and developing social skills through play.

Our goal is to unite with parents to accomplish the learning objectives which drive our program, and which nurture the complete development of each child.

Classes are offered for children from two years through four years of age and a half-day kindergarten, with no discrimination based on race, creed, sex, or religious preference.

Learning Objectives

The following are our objectives in working with your children. They will vary depending on age and ability of each child.

Spiritual: To help the child

- Grow in the knowledge of God, God's love, and God's care.
- To know that Jesus is God's Son; to feel that Jesus is a special friend; to know ways Jesus helped people; to want to be like Jesus.
- To think of the Bible as a special book. Learn Bible stories and verses.
- To think of the church as a special place where we learn about God and Jesus.

Mental: To help the child

- Develop language skills through everyday activities that develop eager readiness for reading when the child is ready.
- Learn about people and the world around us.
- Learn to follow instructions,
- Grow in creativity.
- Experience readiness activities that will lead to success in mathematics.
- Develop reasoning, thinking, and problem solving skills.

Physical: To help the child

- Develop large and small motor skills.
- Establish good health rules.
- Learn and follow simple rules of safety.

Emotional: To help the child

- Build a healthy self-esteem and feeling of self-worth.
- Build mutual respect, trust, and love between children, teacher, and parents.
- Develop a love of learning through provision of daily activities that let each child experience success.
- Develop personal attributes of self-control, responsibility, initiative, and independence.

Social: To help the child

- Grow in ability to work and play with others.
- Respect personal rights of others.
- Develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation, courtesy, and helpfulness.
- Experience a positive introduction to an educational environment.

Curriculum

Huntsville Christian Church Preschool Ministry uses curriculum that is Bible-centered and theme-based. Each class has its own age-appropriate materials, from which our teachers develop lesson plans, supplemented with thematic resources. In addition to classroom activities, the children will have a music class each day. Our program will also include a chapel time weekly, alternating between Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

In our four-year-old classes, phonics, math, and handwriting materials supplement the standard curriculum. These additions enhance our program's ability to promote kindergarten readiness. Our goal is to provide fun activities that promote regular opportunities for verbal interaction and hands-on exploration with attention and encouragement from the teacher. The ABeka letters and sounds and language development materials are recent additions to our four-year-old program.

Our kindergarten classes use the ABeka Kindergarten Curriculum. This Christian material is a successful, phonics-based program with excellent resources in math, reading, and handwriting.

Faculty and Class Size

Our teachers have the educational training, experience, and Christian love to relate to the preschool child. The following list is the teacher-child ratio for each class:

Two's - One teacher and a classroom aide to eight children

Three's - One teacher to eight children with a shared aide

Four's - One teacher to ten children with a shared aide

Kindergarten - One teacher to twelve children

Registration and Admission

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and will generally be held in February prior to fall admission. Children currently enrolled in the program have first priority, then their siblings, followed by Huntsville Christian Church families and the general public, respectively.

The registration fee must be paid, Parent Handbook Agreement signed, and Registration Form completed before a child is considered enrolled in the program.

Before a child may attend Huntsville Christian Church Preschool or Kindergarten, the following forms **must** be in our office:

- Registration Form
- Student Information,
- Medical & Media Form
- Alabama Immunization Record - Blue Card or Certificate of Exemption
- Parent Handbook Agreement

Two, Three and four year old children may choose a two, three, or five-day program. Kindergarten is a five-day program.

Requests for a teacher or classmates should not be listed on the registration form. If you have any special needs, contact the Director.

Termination of Service

HCC Preschool must have one month's written notice when withdrawing your child from this program. The parent is responsible for payment of tuition for the period of one month from the date withdrawal notice is given.

We reserve the right to dismiss a child due to non-payment of fees, consistent discipline problems, or other issues that have an adverse effect on the program.

Fees & Payment Guidelines

The registration, tuition, and program fees listed below support Huntsville Christian Church Preschool and Kindergarten.

1. Tuition and registration fees are established as part of the annual budget and published in the registration information.
2. A registration fee will be paid at the time of enrollment and is nonrefundable.
3. Tuition is due by the tenth (10) of each month. If payment is not received by the tenth (10), it is considered late and a late fee of 10% of the monthly tuition will be charged. If there are any special circumstances concerning tuition, please see the Director. We will try to assist your family in this matter.
4. All children must be picked up by 1:00 pm. A late fee of \$5.00 for every 10 minutes late will be charged for a child not picked up by 1:10 pm. At 1:10 pm, the child will be taken to the office and may be picked up there.
5. Receipts will be issued for any fees paid in cash.
6. Make all checks payable to Huntsville Christian Preschool (HCC Preschool). There is a charge for returned checks.

There is no reduction in fees for holidays, absences, or school closings, nor is there an extra charge for months having extra days.

School Calendar and Closing

Classes are offered on Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

We will follow the Madison County School system for holidays and will be **closed** any time the Madison County Schools are **closed**. If Madison County **delays opening by 1hour**, we will still open at 9:00. If Madison County **delays opening by 2hours**, we will open at 10:00.

If the Madison County Schools announce that they are **closing early after the school day has begun**, and if the closing is to occur at or before 1:00 pm, then we will also close early, and children should be picked up 30 minutes before the time set for the county schools to close.

While not a likely occurrence, the school may need to close in the event that special activities (weddings, conventions, funerals, etc.) need to take place during school hours. If and when that occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible.

Emergency Procedures

Huntsville Christian Church Preschool and Kindergarten Ministry has a plan for any emergencies that might occur relating to fire, severe weather, etc. An emergency plan is posted in a prominent place in each classroom. If Madison County is under a tornado warning during school hours, the school will be in lock-down mode until the warning has expired. We hold fire and tornado drills as preparation for an emergency. A weather alert radio is kept in the preschool office to warn us of any dangerous situations.

Disciplinary Practices

Discipline will be consistent and fair. "Time-out" will be used as needed. No physical punishment will be used.

Arrival and Departure

Please do not bring your child into the classroom before 9:00 a.m., as the teachers need this time to prepare their rooms. Teachers will be instructed not to accept children before 9:00 a.m. unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director. Each school day is carefully planned and organized to give your child the best learning experiences possible.

Parents are encouraged to drop off their children in a timely manner. It takes some children longer to get adjusted to preschool than others, and a parent lingering in the classroom tends to prolong this adjustment period and make it more difficult for the child. If your child is crying or upset when you leave, feel free to call us to check on them. We will always call you if your child remains unhappy or cries excessively.

To insure the safety of the children, if someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up a child, their name must be on the child's information sheet in the Preschool Ministry office. If for some reason a person who is not on the child's Student Information Form is going to be picking up the child, the parent needs to leave a signed note with the Director, giving permission to release the child to that adult. In this situation, the staff will check the driver's license of any unfamiliar adults.

Car Line

Children will be unloaded and loaded by a teacher at the front door. When entering the parking lot, move around the perimeter of the parking lot and enter the drive-thru from the east side. Please make sure that your child is seated on the **right side** of your car to make unloading and loading easier.

Do not let your children walk in unescorted. If you choose to walk your child in to the school, please pay special attention to the traffic flow around the building.

Clothing and Personal Items

Please dress your children in washable, comfortable play clothes so that they can play freely. Also be sure that your child's shoes are appropriate and safe for play, and that their clothing is free of drawstrings, which pose a strangulation hazard.

All preschool children are required to bring a change of clothes. Please be sure this change of clothing is appropriate for the season. All clothing and personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name. We will go outside on the playground on pleasant days with a temperature above 40 degrees.

If your child is wearing diapers, you are expected to provide a sufficient amount to meet their needs.

Children entering the three-year-old class must be potty trained.

Meals

Lunches are to be provided by the parents in an insulated container, or a container with an ice pack to prevent food spoilage. Please provide food that is easy for children to handle and eat. If you send grapes or hot dogs, please make sure they are pre-cut into very small pieces to avoid choking hazards. A beverage in an unbreakable container should be sent along with the lunch. All lunch boxes must have the child's name printed on them.

We serve snacks such as juice and crackers for our preschoolers. Water is always offered as a beverage choice. Please be sure we are aware of any of your child's food allergies.

Medical Information

We seek to protect the health of your child by conforming to the medical requirements for the day care centers licensed by the Department of Human Resources. We require current medical information on all children enrolled in our program. We ask that you help protect the health of other children by not bringing a child who appears ill or who has appeared sick overnight. A child must be free of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting without medication for 24 hours before returning to our school. They must not be brought with colds, undetermined rash or spots, fever, vomiting, discharge from eyes, green/yellow discharge from the nose, a sore throat, or other symptoms of illness. Children with these symptoms should remain at home for observation until the symptoms are gone. However, if the parent has a doctor's excuse indicating that they are not contagious, they may return to our school. Teachers will not hesitate to refuse admittance to any child who appears unwell. Repeated abuse of this guideline will result in dismissal from the program. We appreciate your help in safeguarding the health of your children.

If a child becomes ill during the day and/or develops a fever of 100 Degrees or higher, the parent(s) will be contacted and will be expected to pick up the child promptly. If the parents cannot be contacted, the emergency contact listed in the child's file will be notified and asked to pick up the child. Parents of a child who has had a contagious disease may be asked for a doctor's release before the child returns to his/her group. Other parents will be notified if their children have been exposed to a communicable disease.

No medication will be given to your child, but first aid treatment is available for minor emergencies. The Director must approve any exception to this rule. Parents will be contacted if it appears that an accident or illness requires medical attention. In a life-threatening emergency, staff members will not transport children to the hospital, but will call for ambulance transportation. One staff member will accompany the child. This child's parents will

be called to meet the ambulance at the hospital. Cost will be the responsibility of the parents.

Birthday Celebrations

Your child may celebrate their birthday at school by bringing simple refreshments for their class. We want to share in a time of helping your child to know they are very special.

However, to keep the focus on the child, we ask that you keep the celebration simple. **Please remember NOT to send snacks made with peanuts or peanut oil because of those with allergies.**

Please coordinate this simple celebration with the teacher at the first of your child's birthday month. Children with summer birthdays may choose to celebrate before school is out.

If you wish to invite children from your child's class to a party outside of the preschool, invitations may be handed out as long as the whole class is being invited. If you are not inviting the whole class, you will need to mail your invitations and an address list may be obtained from the office upon request. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Holiday Celebrations, Special Projects and Special Programs

We encourage parent involvement and support. For this reason, at various times during the year, parents may be asked to sign up to volunteer their time to assist their child's class with a holiday celebration or a special project. This is not required of parents and is done on a purely voluntary basis.

At special times of the year, such as Christmas and at the end of the school year, special programs may be held where the children will perform and their parents will be invited to come and watch.

Conferences

If you have any questions for the teachers, please feel free to ask for a conference. This will enable the teacher to lend her full attention to your concerns.

Also, it is not recommended that parents discuss behavior and sensitive issues about the children where others, especially other children, can overhear. Conferences may be held at the request of the parent, teacher, or the Director.

If a child's behavior continually disrupts the class and efforts to resolve the problem have failed, the child may be dismissed from the program.

General Information

Please feel free to visit the facility, ask questions about the program, and observe the activities. Also, you may come to the Director with any questions or concerns. Any complaints or concerns will be taken seriously and will be considered carefully.

Communication is an important part of a good program. Please read all materials given to you, and keep your child's monthly calendar and newsletter in a handy place.

Parent Handbook Agreement

I, _____, as the parent or guardian

for _____, _____, and

_____ acknowledge that I have fully read, understand, and agree to abide by the guidelines expressed in this parent handbook.

Parent or legal guardian signature

Date

Please keep the Parent Handbook as a reference. Sign and return this page to the preschool.