

HARLAN PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

Harlan Preschool, located within Harlan Elementary School, offers families a nurturing and enriching educational experience for preschool age children. The tuition-based, half-day programs are sponsored by Harlan Community Education, a non-profit, self-supporting organization operated under the auspices of the Birmingham Public Schools. The preschool programs are licensed by the State of Michigan's Department of Human Services.

PHILOSOPHY

The Harlan Preschool staff is committed to providing a nurturing, secure educational setting for young children. In a safe, age-appropriate and engaging environment, children learn and explore as they experience their world and its challenges. Our play-based program encourages the development of each child's unique potential. The programs enhance physical, emotional, social, creative and intellectual growth. Staff, children and families learn to value diversity and to foster individuality, self-confidence, love of learning and respect for themselves and others.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

What do children learn in Birmingham Public Schools' half-day preschool programs?

Using a play-based approach, Birmingham Public Schools' preschool programs rely on the High Scope Preschool Curriculum to teach developmentally appropriate skills. Children develop the confidence and competence that lead to success in school by practicing these skills. The curriculum is based on the State of Michigan's Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-K—2nd Grade. It addresses all areas of development including physical development, cognitive development, language/literacy/communication, interpersonal skills and relationships, creative arts, dramatic play, and construction.

What are the building blocks of a quality early childhood program?

The foundation of our early childhood program is based on the following principles:

1. All children go through the same stages of development.
2. Developmental rates vary from child to child, especially between the ages of 0—8 years.
3. Each child is unique.
4. Each child develops on his/her own timetable.
5. Frequently, one area of development within a child may be highly developed, and another area may be less developed.

How is the curriculum delivered?

1. The teacher structures the physical environment so that
 - Children feel welcome, safe and secure
 - The routine is predictable
 - Children take in new information through their senses
 - Visual cues indicate what should happen in each part of the room
 - Objects and areas are labeled to provide a print rich environment
 2. Teachers use "best practice" strategies to teach content that
 - Is multi-sensory
 - Provides child choice alternatives between active and quiet
-

CURRICULUM (continued)

- Stresses individual and small group activities
- Is meaningful and relevant
- Is concrete
- Provides for active, hands-on exploration
- Provides open-ended, process-oriented experiences
- Respects the cultures of the children in the classroom
- Integrates across the curriculum
- Relies on children's literature as a basis for teaching
- Provides oral language as the foundation of literacy development
- Is developmentally appropriate
- Allows for individual differences and learning styles
- Draws upon children's interests and background knowledge

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment in an early childhood classroom helps determine the way the curriculum is delivered. Classrooms are center-oriented and allow for flexibility and child choice. Activities are presented in both small and large groups as well as on a one-to-one basis. Each day a variety of challenge levels are included in center choice time. Time for children to explore and play both indoors and outdoors is available each day, weather-permitting.

DAILY ROUTINE*

Children feel secure and comfortable when they know what to expect. The High Scope Daily Routine is posted and includes the following components:

-Greeting Time: Announcements and things that are happening that day are shared.

-Large Group Time: Teachers and children get together for games, stories, music and movement and discussions.

DAILY ROUTINE (continued)

Small Group Time: Teachers meet with small groups of children to work on an activity planned and introduced by the teacher. This often includes science, math, or literacy skills.

-Planning Time: Children plan what they choose to do during work time. This typically focuses on what they plan to do *first*. This time encourages them to articulate their ideas, choices, decisions and promotes self-confidence and sense of control.

-Work Time: Children play with purpose with any of the materials in any of the interest areas. This time enables teachers to observe, learn from and support children's play.

-Recall Time: Children are encouraged to talk about what they did during work time. For example they may talk about children they played with, what they built, an imaginary setting they created, problems they encountered.

-Snack Time: Family-style nutritious snack, encouraging children to serve and pour for themselves

-Outside Time: 30-minutes of outdoor time is included in each day, weather permitting.

*Modifications may be made by individual teachers to meet the needs of their students. Teachers post their individual schedules and weekly lesson plans.

CLOTHING

When children come to school they should be dressed for play. We paint, experiment, and play outdoors. Children should wear gym shoes to school. When you are buying jackets, please make sure that there are no loose strings that could get caught on playground equipment. An extra set of clothing, including socks and underwear, should be labeled with the child's name and left in their backpacks. If the clothing is soiled, it will be sent home. The parent should wash and return a clean set to school the following school day.

The daily use of backpacks by preschool students is recommended.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Harlan Preschool encourages parents to be involved in their children's education in a variety of ways. Parents are welcome to visit the classroom but staff requests notification ahead of time if possible, to prepare children and staff. Parents wishing to formally observe a class should make an appointment with the director. If you want to speak with the teacher about your child, please make an appointment either before or after school.

Teachers communicate with parents in a variety of ways, including the use of email, newsletters, calendars, schedules and sign-up sheets. Parent-teacher conferences are held once a year in the spring. If there is an issue that the teacher should be aware of, please communicate with the teacher. The information that you provide will help the teacher to better understand your child's needs. Parents may talk to the teacher in person, send a note, email or phone the teacher to keep in touch.

If a parent has a concern about something that has happened in the classroom, please discuss it with the teacher. If the parent brings the issue up with an assistant teacher before or after class, the assistant will refer the parent to the teacher. If, after talking to the teacher, the parent is still concerned, he/she should talk with the CSO. The goal of preschool is for parents and staff to create a home/school partnership that insures the success and healthy development of each child.

PRESCHOOL FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

On occasion, teachers will plan field trips or special activities that reinforce the curriculum. Parents will be notified about these special events ahead of time so that they can plan to be part of their child's school experience. Most activities will occur on site, however occasional field trips will be planned. Consult the teacher regarding sibling attendance on field trips.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The Preschool classes meet from 8:30 — 11:30am and from 8:30 - 3:30pm. Please be prompt regarding arrival and dismissal times.

For arrival, and dismissal, please wait with your child outside the back door (first door) until the teacher picks up your child. Pickup/Dropoff procedures will be communicated and discussed at the Orientation Meeting. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized on the Child Information card. If a routine is going to be different from usual (a different pick-up time, a different person picking up, etc.), please notify the teacher in writing. Parents who arrive after dismissal may be charged a late fee.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please drive slowly through the parking lot. Hold your child's hand while walking to and from your car. Refrain from using cell phones and give your child your undivided attention for the last few minutes before dropping off and the first few minutes after picking up. Please remember that handicapped parking is reserved for those who have handicapped permits.

SNACKS

A nutritious snack is served during class time. If your child is on a special diet or is allergic to any type of food, please let the staff know in writing before your child attends class.

BIRTHDAYS

A simple age-appropriate celebration will take place in school when a child has a birthday. Parents should contact the teacher for schedule approval. If you would like to bring a simple treat (store-bought/ with ingredients listed) for your child to share with the class, we will be happy to serve it during snack time. Parents should ask the teacher how many to plan for, what kind of treat is appropriate, and if any child in the class has allergies to certain foods. No matter what the parent sends for the child's birthday, the classroom celebration remains the same. Please do not send in goody bags, party hats or favors. If your child has a summer birthday and will not be in school at that time, the teacher will designate a time to celebrate with the class.

CALENDAR AND HOURS

The Preschool program year will follow the calendar included with this handbook. Parents are invited to attend an Orientation/Curriculum Meeting prior to the start of preschool. Parents and children are invited to attend an Open House prior to the start of preschool so that the children become comfortable in the school setting.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

If Birmingham Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, Harlan Preschool will also be closed. When weather conditions make school closing seem likely, parents are advised to tune to major radio/TV stations for school closing announcements or to call the BPS information line at 248-203-3000 or any school. To access school closing information, press 4 then 1. If schools are open, but weather conditions in a child's neighborhood make the trip to school seem unsafe, parents are advised to keep their children at home. If threatening weather or mechanical failures require the closing of the school after students have arrived, every effort will be made to contact a parent. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, the Preschool will contact a person designated by the parent on the Child

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is handled on an individual basis with patience and understanding. Staff regard discipline as an opportunity to use positive reinforcement to teach appropriate and accepted interpersonal skills. Skills that we would like students to develop are self-discipline, appropriate peer interaction, and mutual respect for one another. Staff members use positive language to redirect. If it becomes necessary to implement a discipline plan, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will speak with the child or children
- Staff will redirect the child's activity
- Staff will separate playmates by assigning them to a different activity or play area in the room, if necessary
- Staff will give a short "time out"
- Staff will notify the parent if the inappropriate behavior persists
- Staff will work with the parent to create a consistent plan that will help the child
- Staff will remove a child from the classroom if his/her actions pose a threat to the safety of others. Parents will be notified.
- If unacceptable behavior persists, parents who are unwilling to work with center staff to create a consistent plan to help the child may be asked to make other childcare arrangements.
- If use of a consistent plan fails to address the unacceptable behavior, the child may be removed from the program.

WITHDRAWAL

The district reserves the right (at the suggestion of the director or CSO) to remove a child from the program if his/her presence is deemed harmful to the welfare of the other children. The parents will be responsible for the entire tuition for the year. If there are irreconcilable differences between the parents and the Preschool staff or policies, the CSO may give the parents a two-week written notice indicating that the child will be removed from the program.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All children attending Preschool are required by the State of Michigan's Department of Human Services to have a completed health appraisal form on file. The date on the physical must be within one year of the day the child starts school. All immunizations must be up to date and recorded, or a waiver must be signed. All 3 year olds and new 4 year olds to the program need a current physical form on file on the first day of Preschool.

All children attending Preschool are required to have emergency contact information on file before they attend class. Parents/guardians will complete the emergency card online when registering their child for Preschool. A review and signature will be requested on a paper copy of the emergency form. The emergency information is very important in case an emergency occurs at school and contact with parents is a necessity. Please notify us of any changes that may occur throughout the year. In the event of injury or illness, every effort shall be made to notify the parents/guardians or designated person indicated on the Child Information Record Form. If staff is unable to contact someone, instructions on the Child Information Record Form will be implemented.

MEDICATIONS & ALLERGIES

The Preschool program follows the Medication Policy established by the Birmingham Public Schools. Any requests regarding medication during Preschool hours should be directed to the Preschool Director. Forms for administering medication are available in the school office.

Please notify the Preschool Director of any allergies your child may have and any restrictions related to the allergies. Epipens may be stored in the Preschool room if they are provided by the parent/guardian along with a completed Care Plan.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

The Harlan Kids Club program's health care policy includes the following health practices and procedures:

- Children and staff wash their hands after using the restroom, before eating or preparing food, after outdoor play and as needed to prevent the spread of germs and disease.
- Children who are ill are asked to remain home. If a child develops symptoms of illness, parents will be called and asked to pick up the child.
- Surfaces used for food service are cleaned and sanitized before and after eating.
- Toys and equipment are cleaned and sanitized as needed.

The complete Health Care Policy is available for review in the Harlan Community School Organizer's office.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Young children in a group setting may have some accidents. If your child is hurt at school:

- First aid will be administered
- Your child will be comforted
- An accident report will be completed
- A copy of the accident report will be sent home with you and the original will be given to the director

If your child's injury is on the head or is significant, we will call a parent to discuss the injury. The director (or teacher in charge) may decide to send the child home for the rest of the day so that the parent can observe him/her more closely. If a child is seriously injured, we will implement our "Serious Accident/Injury Plan", which includes calling 911 and transporting your child to the hospital. All staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid.

ILLNESS

Your child will be more comfortable and will recuperate faster if he/she can stay home and rest when he/she is ill. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO PRESCHOOL IF THE CHILD DISPLAYS SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS.**

Symptoms of illness are defined as follows:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more
- Earache
- Sore throat
- Red or runny eyes, sneezing, or green and/or runny discharge from the nose
- Persistent cough
- Swelling and/or tenderness of the glands
- Nausea, vomiting
- Abdominal cramps and/or diarrhea
- Rash (any skin eruption, particularly if red, swollen and/or draining)

If a Director/Teacher or CSO determines that a child should be sent home, the child will be isolated and the parents will be called. If a parent cannot be reached by phone, the staff member will call the emergency contact on the child information card. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness. Children should stay home for 24 hours following vomiting or diarrhea. If antibiotics are prescribed, a child may not return to school until 24 hours after the first dose.

Parents will be informed if their child may have been exposed to a communicable disease while at school. The posting will include the name of the disease and the symptoms related to the disease. The above guidelines pertain to staff, as well as volunteers.

EMERGENCY PLANS

Emergency plans for fire and tornado are posted in each classroom. Periodic practice drills are held throughout the school year.

PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Harlan Preschool is covered by the Birmingham Public Schools' integrated pest management policy. If pesticide application will occur, advance notice of application will be provided via a notice posted at the school entrance doors and via a notice posted in the main office of the school.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Preschool registrations will be accepted online, beginning in January. A child who is enrolled in the Preschool program during the school year, as well as the child's sibling(s), will have first priority in registering for the following year. Registrations are accepted in the order in which they are received. In the event that all slots are filled, a waiting list will be maintained in the order drawn.

A nonrefundable, nontransferable \$100.00 per child registration fee will be required at registration.

TUITION AND TERMS OF PAYMENT

The tuition deposit (equal to one month's tuition installment) is due June 1. The balance of the tuition will be paid in nine monthly installments, according to the payment schedule provided. A late fee may be assessed for payments received after the due date.

All payments must be made online, or mailed to the address on the invoice. No payments may be accepted at the school.

There will be no refund or "make up" days for snow days, national holidays, sick days, power outages, water or heating problems or acts of God that fall on your child's school day.

SCREENING STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

All employees have been screened according to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs licensing requirements. If parents volunteer in a program on a regular basis, they will be asked to sign a “conviction and abuse” form as required by licensing.

LICENSING

Harlan Preschool is licensed by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs . As such, the program maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans. The notebook is available for review by parents during regular school hours in the Harlan Community School Organizer’s office. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Harlan Preschool Contact Information

Teacher:

Angie Righter
ARighte@birmingham.k12.mi.us
248-203-3290

3’s Assistant Teacher:
Karen Page

4’s Assistant Teachers:
Cindy Miner
Karen Page

Community School Organizer

Vickie Muir
VMuir@birmingham.k12.mi.us
248-203-3284

Contacting Teachers:

Please do not call during class hours unless it is regarding a dismissal change or an emergency.

Teachers will respond to voicemails and emails before or after class hours. During class hours they are responsible for children’s needs.

Thank you!