

Harrison Preschool

Parent Handbook



2026-2027 School Year

WELCOME

Welcome Parents,

The staff of Harrison Preschool would like to welcome you and your child to our program. We expect the experiences here will be happy, wholesome ones.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with our program and its philosophy. The information here should help you to understand our operating policies and procedures. Please read this book thoroughly and carefully. Your help is needed to make the most of your child's experience here. If you have any questions about the information contained in the handbook, or matters not contained in the book, please feel free to contact me.

As teachers, we see you as your child's first and most important teacher. Therefore, we cordially invite you to visit us at any time to ask questions and make suggestions. The best assurance for the success of your child's experiences is the close cooperation and understanding of parents and staff.

Thank you for entrusting your child to us and entrusting us to send home, with you, a happy child at the end of the day.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Adams

Stefanie Adams
Preschool Director

Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray. Proverbs 22:6

PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of Harrison Preschool is to provide a nurturing, Christian environment where children may grow, learn, and develop. The preschool adopts the philosophy that all areas of development are equally important and should receive equal emphasis. The following reflects what our curriculum will encourage:

- **Spiritual Development** by offering opportunities for children to experience understanding and love. To plan activities that allow the young child to make choices, be stewards of God's creation, solve problems, and get along and care about others.
- **Social Development** by providing opportunities for sharing, taking turns, making friends, resolving conflicts, solving problems, helping others, recognizing, and accepting others, cooperating on projects, and building self-esteem.
- **Emotional Development** through verbal expressions of thoughts and feelings, experiencing rules and limits, experiencing kindness, justice, and empathy, and recognizing and accepting emotions in others. To develop respect for other individuals.
- **Physical Development** of large motor skills through outdoor and indoor games and activities, as well as fine motor development using manipulative toys, blocks, puzzles, and other small tools and objects.
- **Cognitive Growth** by offering children many opportunities for active involvement with their environment. To allow them to learn what happens when they interact with materials and other people. To encourage spontaneous engagement in activities such as painting, collages, water play, block building, dramatic play, storytelling, singing, and dancing.
- **Linguistic Development:** by cultivating early literacy and communication skills through high-quality, everyday interactions. Actively expand children's vocabularies by narrating daily routines, reading aloud consistently, and singing interactive songs. By deliberately expanding on children's phrases and asking open-ended questions, we challenge them to think both critically and creatively.

Play is an important word at our preschool. We know that children learn best through play, and our role is to set up a variety of play experiences in which we can encourage your child to become engaged. Because play is a process, it is likely that you will not see a final, finished product to reflect what your child has learned. This is normal--Please feel free to talk to the teachers to discover the learning experiences your child is having. We will strive to provide a variety of opportunities for your child to grow spiritually, physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

PROGRAM HOURS

Our preschool day starts at 9:30am, Monday through Friday.

Dismissal starts at 1:15pm. In case of emergency where neither you nor your contacts can pick up your child, please call to let us know so that we can prepare your child. Being the last child can be a frightening experience.

A \$5.00 late fee will be charged for any child picked up at 1:31pm or after. \$1.00 will be added to each minute after 1:31pm. An invoice will go home noting the charges and is to be paid the next time you bring your child to preschool, with no exceptions. While we try to be fair and understanding of special situations, it is still necessary to compensate our staff for working overtime. Habitual tardiness may result in the child's removal from our preschool. You can use (1) one FREE Late Pick-up Coupon and apply it to a late pick-up bill. Coupons can be found on our website at <http://harrisonchurch.org/harrison-preschool/>.

Our 1-Year-Old classroom will operate from 9:30am until 12:30pm for the first (2) two weeks of preschool. After this two-week period, the classroom will follow our regular school hours. Exceptions may be made if a child is having difficulties adjusting to being at school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

We follow the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system schedule during inclement weather however; we may override any decision made by the school district. Please make sure you have secured proper communication, through Brightwheel, so we can keep you informed.

- If Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools close, we will close.
- If Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools have a 2-hour delay, we will have a 1-hour delay and begin school at 10:30am.
- If Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools close during the day we will close at 12:00pm. Anyone picking up after 12:00pm will be charged our normal late pick-up fee.
- Harrison Preschool does not make-up days missed due to inclement weather.

TUITION

Tuition is divided into 9 equal payments. The payment is the same September through May. Your tuition payment gives your child the right to attend preschool on the days he/she is registered. You may not make up days for any absences. Also, full payment is expected even if your child does not attend every day that he/she is registered. This policy allows us to reserve a space for your child throughout the year and pay our staff and other expenses. We do not reimburse for any closings for any reasons, and we do not make up days.

Tuition is due the **1st school day of each month** and will be considered late after the 10th calendar day of the month. There is a **\$15.00 late payment fee** if payment is received after the 10th of the month in which it is due. Of course, we will try to be understanding of special situations and hardships, but we ask that you communicate with the director so that we can work together. You can use (1) one FREE Late Payment Coupon and apply it to a late payment. Coupons can be found on our website at <http://harrisonchurch.org/harrison-preschool/>.

Tuition payments may be made by check and sent in your child's communication folder. You also have the option to make your payments with credit card through Brightwheel. There is a **\$10 charge** for any check that is returned because of insufficient funds.

Registered children may use our drop-in program. If you wish for a child to attend school on a day that he/she is not scheduled, you may bring the child for a fee of \$25 per day, space permitting. You may need to wait at the school to determine if there will be an opening available. If an expected child has not arrived by 10:00, his/her spot may be given up for a drop-in. Please call if you are going to bring your child after 10:00 so that we do not give his/her spot to a drop-in. Phone calls are appreciated if your child is out for any reason.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

The Preschool Director must be notified in writing one month in advance of withdrawal of a child. Tuition is due that month even if the child is not at school.

REGISTRATION

Registration is a **non-refundable fee** that holds a place in the program for your child and helps buy supplies. Once accepted into Harrison Preschool, payment of this fee ensures your child a place in the program.

INCLUSION POLICY

Harrison Preschool is not equipped to offer its preschool program to children with severe disabilities or special needs. A parent/guardian must discuss with the Director any special conditions or circumstances involving their child. This must be completed prior to registration, so that we can advise you as to whether we can make reasonable accommodations for your child.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

For everyone's protection, we require that all children entering the program have documentation of all immunizations recommended by the Center for Disease Control. The child's immunization record must be signed and dated by a licensed physician and must be turned in prior to the child's first day of school.

The only exemption that will be considered is a Medical Exemption. If a **physician licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina or South Carolina** (whichever state you reside) certifies that a required immunization is or may be detrimental to a child's health the school will take this under consideration as long as the proper forms are submitted prior to the child's first day of school.

HEALTH

We follow guidance from the NC Department of Health and Human Services and Mecklenburg Health Department. We will make every effort to observe good health practices at Harrison Preschool and ask that you partner with us to control the spread of communicable illness among the children by excluding ill children from preschool.

No child shall come to school visibly ill. **If your child is not well enough to play outside or needs over-the-counter medication to help him/her feel better, then he/she is sick enough to stay home.**

Our policy is as follows:

- **Fever:** Children should not come to school with a fever. If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or over the parent will be notified to pick up the child. **The child must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, before returning to school.**
- **Colds:** If the child comes to school with a cold, he/she should be able to follow

the daily routine, including time outside. If the staff determines that they cannot care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children in the group, the parent will be notified to pick-up the child.

- **Diarrhea:** Whenever your child has 2 loose bowel movements that are in the teacher's judgement a diarrhea type, the parent will be notified to pick up the child. **The child must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours, without the use of medications, before returning to school.**
- **Vomiting:** Whenever a child vomits at school the parent will be notified to pick up the child. **The child must be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.**
- **Discharge or drainage:** If the teacher observes any discharge or drainage from eyes, nose, ears, or open sores the parent will be notified to pick-up the child.
- **Communicable Illnesses:** If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness such as Covid, Flu, RSV, Strep Throat, Hand Foot and Mouth Disease, Lice, Conjunctivitis or Stomach Bug, please notify the director at stefanie@harrisonchurch.org. We will contact families via email if your child has been exposed. **Your child must remain home until symptom free without the use of medications.**
- **Undiagnosed skin rashes:** The parent will be notified to pick up his/her child if any unidentified skin rash appears on the child. A doctor's statement noting that the rash is not communicable, and the child can take part in the normal routine is required before the child can return to the classroom.

In case of an emergency, it is critical that the school has an up-to-date file with the correct addresses and phone numbers of both parents and two other contacts. An Emergency Treatment form must be signed by the parents and will be made available to you when changes are needed.

The health and wellbeing of everyone in our school is our priority, so while we will consider your physician's recommendations, ultimately, it is up to the discretion of the preschool administrators when your child may return to school.

ALLERGIES AND MEDICATIONS

The preschool will make reasonable efforts to work with individual families regarding allergies, intolerance to food, and medications. The preschool will maintain emergency medications for severe allergic reactions if provided by the parent(s) to the director with authorization in writing from the family physician. Also, the parent(s) must have on file a signed Authorization for Administration of

Medication form releasing the preschool of all liability.

If the preschool must administer the emergency medication to the child 911 will be contacted. The parent(s) will then be contacted and advised of the situation. Any expenses incurred must be borne by the parent(s).

Parent(s) will be responsible for ensuring that all medication is current and will not expire during the school year.

CHILD ABUSE

By North Carolina Law caregivers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. If such cases arise, the alerted teacher will report it to the preschool director.

SAFETY

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD: We do not allow your child to leave with any person not listed on the Authorization for Pick-up form. In emergency situations you may call the preschool and give notification that someone else will be picking up your child. However, he/she is not automatically added to the above form. This form will be made available to you when changes/additions are needed. We reserve the right to ask for picture identification from any person before allowing a child to leave the preschool. Minors (17 years and under) are prohibited from picking up a child. **No child will be released to an unauthorized person.**

PARKING LOT: Parking is only allowed in designated parking spots. Our biggest and foremost concern is for the safety of the children. Please take your child's hand so he/she doesn't dart in front of moving vehicles. Children are not to be left unattended in a vehicle at any time.

SCHOOL ACCIDENTS: In the event your child should suffer an accident at Harrison Preschool the following steps will be followed:

- The teacher and/or director will apply first aid to minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, etc.) and report the circumstances to the parent(s) at the end of the day via an accident report.

- The teacher and/or director will notify parent(s) if they feel the injury requires medical attention. If the parent(s) are unable to be contacted the emergency contact(s) will be notified.
- In the event of an emergency, the director will immediately contact 911. The parent(s) will then be contacted and advised of the situation. Any expenses incurred must be borne by the parents.

Drop-off/Pick-up GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are designed to ensure the safety of the children & staff.

PLEASE FOLLOW THEM AT ALL TIMES.

- Drop-Off will begin at 9:15am and end at 9:30am (or until the last car in line has gone through).
- Pick-up will begin at 1:15pm. The pick-up line will close when the last car in line is loaded. Any children remaining after this time will need to be picked up in the preschool. Any child picked up after 1:30pm will then be charged according to our late pick-up policy.
- Children will be unloaded and loaded on the driver's side only (3's & 4's only).
- We will begin loading cars when all classes are seated and ready to begin. This will keep confusion to a minimum and keep the line moving smoothly.
- After loading you are to **pull into a designated parking spot** to fasten your child's seatbelt.
- **No car seat = no service.** This is a North Carolina law.
- Remove your child's seatbelt while waiting in the line.
- Do not use your cell phone while dropping off or picking up your child.
- Always have your child's tag in view when picking up your child.
- Parents/adults are ALWAYS to remain in their cars.
- Children are not to hang out of the car windows.
- We will refuse service if there is a dog in the car. Please keep them at home.

- Anything you send with your child to school should be able to be carried by your child. Please do not expect the Staff to carry bags or supplies.
- Always watch out for runaway children that may be walking in with their guardian.
- **You may not walk your child to the drop-off/pick-up line at any time.**

CLOTHING & POSSESSIONS

WASHABLE CLOTHING: It is our philosophy to encourage children to learn through play and “hands on” exploration of the materials and equipment at school. For young children “hands on” typically means that all senses will be involved. Children often show their level of involvement in an activity on their clothing! Please dress your child in such a way that he/she will feel comfortable becoming involved with all materials. While teachers will make sure that children cover their clothing before painting, cooking, playing in water, etc., accidents can and do happen. Please help us assure your child that he/she will not be punished for getting involved in messy activities. Children should wear comfortable, washable clothing that they can manage.

MANAGABLE CLOTHING: For all children we recommend clothes that can easily be pulled up or down when trying to reach the toilet quickly. Whether changing diapers or going to the toilet, clothes needing to be unbuttoned, unsnapped, unzipped, or completely taken off slow the process.

SHOES: Shoes are required to be **closed-toed** with firm soles and **fit properly** on your child’s feet. Please do not send your child to school wearing **rain boots, sandals, or flip flops**. They are not safe for climbing and playing on the playground and are too easy to remove in the classroom. Therefore, they will not be allowed to be worn at school.

EXTRA CLOTHES: Your child should have at least one complete set of extra clothes at school including socks, underclothing, pants, shirt, and shoes if possible. All clothing items (including coats, jackets, and sweaters) need to have your child's name on them. **Make sure that you change clothes as the season's change and as your child grows.** For younger children who may have toileting accidents, providing more than one set is advised. If an extra set of clothes is not provided you will be called to pick up your child if an accident should occur.

DIAPERS: If your child requires diapers, please bring extra diapers in a bag with his or her name on the bag. **No cloth diapers or training pants**, please. (See "Toilet Training" for more details).

HARRISON PRESCHOOL TOTE BAG: Each child will receive a Harrison Tote bag when they start preschool. This bag will be used each year they attend preschool. Book Bags are not permitted. **Please wash the tote bags often as they begin to show spills and become dirty in appearance.**

TOYS: **No toys should be brought to school unless the teacher has requested or approved.** Guns, knives, and other toys that encourage rough and violent play are to be left at home. Any inappropriate items found at school will be collected and returned to parents at the end of the day.

CLASSROOM SCHEDULES

Classroom schedules will vary according to ages and developmental levels of the children. While each classroom for children two years of age and older will have a formal schedule, it will be used only as a guide. The schedule will provide a certain amount of order for the child's day but will be flexible as the teachers adapt to the needs of the children. Your child's teacher will provide you with a schedule and will notify you of any major changes.

Arrival: This sets the tone for the entire day. Always tell your child goodbye and assure him/her that you will return. Never attempt to sneak out to avoid seeing him/her cry--this only complicates the matter and reinforces the child's possible suspicions that you may not return. The teacher or assistant will help your child become settled in an activity.

Drop Off/Pick-up: All children except one-year olds will be required to participate in drop off/pick up. (See "Drop-off/Pick-up" Guidelines for more details).

Self-selected activity time: A large part of the day will be devoted to self-selected activities. The teachers will set up a variety of learning centers, which the children will experience at their own rate and at their own choosing. The teachers and assistants will guide your child in these activities to maximize his/her learning. Activities will include art, blocks, dramatic play, manipulatives (games and toys which involve use of the hands and fingers), physical play, music, and a variety of cognitive or intellectual activities (involving the concepts of literacy or language arts, mathematics, science, creativity, problem-solving, etc.). Children will also

have access to outdoor learning areas as weather permits. Children will be encouraged to participate in a variety of activities during self-selected time.

Group time: Time is provided each day for the entire class to share music, stories, books, movement activities, etc. Your child's teacher may wish to include a sharing time during group activities. Children are encouraged to participate in group activities.

Lunches: Parents provide lunch each day. Lunchboxes will be kept in tote bags, so please pack with ice if necessary. If your child has any food allergies, we must have notification in writing. There is a place for this on the Family Information form. We ask that lunches be healthy, with a minimum of junk food. **No carbonated drinks will be allowed.**

Outside time: Our playground will be used during all but the most extreme weather conditions (38 degrees and above). Please send your child dressed in appropriate clothing for the weather. Pediatricians feel that if a child is free of fever and otherwise well enough to attend school, he/she is well enough to go outside dressed in proper attire.

Departure: Many children need a few minutes to make the transition from school to parents and home. Allowing for this transition can make the end of the day more pleasant for parents and children. If the teacher needs to communicate with you about your child's day, she will do this through a written note or phone call. Please do not ask the teacher to talk about your child in front of your child.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES:

Birthdays: We will be happy to help your child celebrate his or her birthday at preschool. Your child's teacher will inform you of any plans she has for making that day special. You may send in a special snack if you wish that will be served at lunchtime. Parents are invited to join their child in the classroom to enjoy lunch. Finally, if you are planning on distributing party invitations at school all children in the classroom must be included.

Holiday Parties: Each class will have a room parent to help plan parties and coordinate activities with the classroom teacher.

Goodies to Share: Occasionally we have parents send in items/goodies to be sent home with each child in the classroom. Please read all labels on the items to make sure it is age appropriate before sending these to school to be distributed.

Please Note: Latex Balloons are not allowed in the school. They are a known choking hazard, and some individuals have allergic reactions to latex.

DISCIPLINE

Our goal in guiding children's behavior is not to punish, but to educate and to help children develop self-control. Our discipline strategies reflect this goal. We follow guidelines established by The National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our policy is as follows:

- Attempt to prevent problems before they occur by forming appropriate expectations for behavior, planning, and managing the classroom effectively.
- When trouble occurs, the child will:
 1. Be moved to another location where he/she can interact with other toys and children.
 2. Be allowed to experience natural and logical consequences of the behavior when feasible.
 3. Be redirected to appropriate behavior via positive phrases.
 4. Be praised for appropriate behaviors.
- If a child is out of control or is in danger of harming other children, he/she will be isolated for a short period of time under adult supervision until he/she calms down. During this time the focus will be on the child and not on the behavior.
- In cases in which a child exhibits extreme behaviors including, but not limited to, biting, aggression toward other children and/or the teacher, offensive language, destructive behavior toward property, or disruption of activities for the entire class, and the above procedures have been ineffective, parents will be called immediately to pick up their child. If the parents are called a second time a conference will be scheduled between parents, teacher, and director. On the third occasion, children who show a consistent pattern of aggressive behavior will be withdrawn from the program.
- We refrain from using corporal punishment with children. Parents are asked to refrain from doing so on the premises as well. Your cooperation is appreciated.

TOILET TRAINING

We do not require that children be toilet trained for admittance to our 1 and

2-year-old classrooms. Listed below is your child's classroom policy. Please remember we must do all we can to avoid the spread of any type of disease, such as E-coli. Your cooperation is necessary and greatly appreciated.

1 Year Olds – This classroom is not equipped to help with toilet training. Please send your child in with disposable diapers each day. Pull-ups will not be allowed to be worn in this classroom.

2 Year Olds – When you and your child are ready to begin toilet training the teachers will be happy to assist you with this process. We ask that while children are toilet training that they remain in pull-ups until training is complete, and your child is consistent at remaining accident-free. Teachers will remind children to use the toilet every hour during training, and occasionally after training is complete. If accidents occur regularly at school, you will be asked to provide your child with diapers.

3 Year Olds – These children must be *toilet trained for entrance into our program. Our 3-year-old classrooms are not equipped to change diapers.

4 Year Olds – These children must be *toilet trained for entrance into this program.

***A toilet trained child is a child who can do the following:**

1. Be able to TELL the teacher when they must go to the toilet.
2. Wear big girl/boy underwear all day, and able to dress and undress themselves in preparation of using the toilet.
3. Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
4. Be able to get off the toilet by themselves.
5. Be able to wash and dry hands.
6. Be able to postpone going if they must wait their turn.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have any questions or concerns about your child or events in the classroom, the first person to contact is the teacher. The director will be the next contact. If concerns are still unanswered, the Preschool Board will be the next contact.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Harrison Preschool does not discriminate against applicants, children, or staff based on race, color, national or ethnic origin.

WITHDRAWALS

The director reserves the right to withdraw any child under the following conditions:

- If a child has not been vaccinated according to the Center for Disease Control guidelines.
- If a fee is not paid by the parent.
- If the completed Physician Statement and/or Medical Form Update has not been submitted along with the up-to-date Immunization Records
- If a child is continuously disruptive in a class.
- If a child's behavior (i.e., physical, verbal, or emotional that is categorized as developmentally inappropriate) causes undue stress on either the teacher or the other students in the class.
- If a parent or caregiver directs rude or abusive behavior, verbal or nonverbal, towards any teacher, staff member, child, or parent.