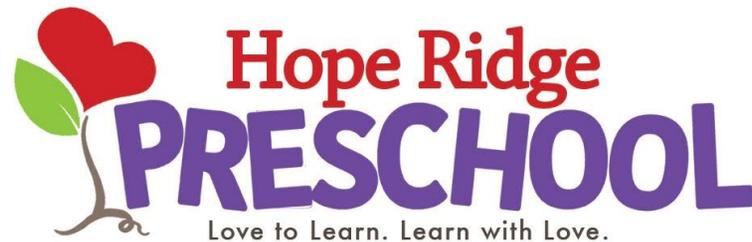


Hope Ridge Preschool, Inc.

“Where Children Love to Learn

and

Learn with Love”



Handbook for Parents/Guardians

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Commitment to Quality

Since 1967, Hope Ridge Preschool has remained committed to providing a high quality educational experience for children ages 3-5. We consistently strive to offer a wonderful environment for children to grow and develop.

Some benefits in choosing Hope Ridge Preschool include:

- *Smaller class sizes so your child gets more attention*
- *Administrators and teachers have high educational qualifications and complete 10 hours of professional development every year*
- *Students engage in planned learning activities based on Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.*
- *The program aims to build relationships with families.*

Our goal is to nurture children's self confidence, develop their social and emotional skills, and instill a love of learning that will follow them the rest of their lives.

WELCOME

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Hope Ridge Preschool family and our unique program. We have been a thriving preschool for 50 years and take pride in meeting the individual needs of our children with love and compassion.

Our nurturing teaching philosophy helps children develop a positive self image. By setting age appropriate guidelines presented within the curriculum, we model good character traits which help children develop respect and empathy for their peers.

Parents are an important part of our team and we welcome your input! We invite you to take part in the Parents of Preschoolers (POPS) group and all the accompanying activities offered by our preschool.

This handbook contains many of the answers to your questions about Hope Ridge. Please keep it handy until your child completes our program.

Thank you for joining us!

Sincerely,

Samantha Meunier

Preschool, Director

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide an environment where children *love to learn and learn with love*. We aim to encourage children's innate curiosity as they explore the world around them. The foundation of this learning comes through hands on activities. We will encourage children's social maturity through interactions with peers. Through activities and play children will learn respect, responsibility, accountability, and empathy for others.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We understand that your child comes to us with unique experiences, interests and learning styles. Our goal is to encourage children to explore areas that interest them. We will provide opportunities for them to learn, play, share, and socialize.

We encourage and welcome parental participation.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

Our preschool is open to children of any race, creed, sex, or national origin. Our annual registration is held in January or February of each year. Because we are a non-profit organization, we must charge a non-refundable registration fee for each child. Once we receive your registration fee, our administrator will assign a classroom space for your child. The required paperwork must be completed at that time.

Our enrollment is assigned on a first come/first served basis until we reach our maximum capacity.

Children wishing to be enrolled beyond our maximum capacity will be put on a waiting list (at no charge), and contacted as soon as a vacancy occurs. If your child is on a waiting list, no registration fee will be collected until your child has received a classroom assignment.

- Three (3) and four (4) year olds must reach those respective ages by September 30th of their entry year.
- Young 3's must reach that age by January 31st of their entry year.
- Fives (5) must reach that age by September 30th of their entry year.
- Early entry will be considered with teacher recommendation/screening.

All children must be potty trained prior to entry.

The official admission date for children in the three, four and five year old classes will be September 1st of each school year. The official admission date for children in the Young 3's class will be January 1st of the school year.

Required registration information includes child and parent/guardian information, including emergency contacts. **THESE ARE REQUIRED BY OHIO STATE LAW, AND THEY MUST BE COMPLETED ON THE ENROLLMENT FORM BEFORE YOUR CHILD MAY ATTEND SCHOOL.** Parents are responsible for keeping the school informed of any changes in this information.

A child must have an approved medical examination before entering school. The medical exam form must be **signed** by a physician or certified nurse practitioner. By Ohio State Law, no name stamps may be accepted. **This form is valid for thirteen (13) months from the date of the child's exam, as entered on the form.** Before the thirteen month expiration, your child must be reexamined and the new form must be submitted for the files in the preschool office.

TUITION

When a child is enrolled in our program, parents have contracted to pay for school time. Tuition payments may be paid in a lump sum or in monthly installments. A yearly materials' fee will be charged.

An annual non-refundable registration fee is charged. A child is not considered enrolled until the registration fee is paid. The first and last (Sept. and May) tuition payments are due by the first class day in September.

*Tuition payments are due by the **first class day of each month**.* Tuition fees will not be refunded for absence due to illness, vacations, or unforeseen occasions. Please contact the Director for extenuating circumstances.

A reminder (late) notice will be sent home after ten (10) days for non-payment. **It is important that the parent respond within 5 business days** after receipt of that notice -- with payment or by contacting the preschool office to make payment arrangements. If payment arrangements have not been made after the 15th day, your child will not be permitted to enter the classroom.

Tuition fees should be paid to the preschool office in person or by mail. Cash, check, or money orders are accepted in the preschool office. Checks should be made out to: *Hope Ridge Preschool, Inc.* Parents are required to pay the bank fee for any returned checks. If paying cash, please receive a receipt from the office. No payments should be handled by teachers or children.

Payments may be made on-line at <http://hoperidge.com/preschool-payments/>. Please note that a 3% convenience fee has been added to on-line payments to offset the cost of processing fees.

Our Tax ID number is available upon request.

STAFF/CHILD RATIOS & MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE

Hope Ridge Preschool will not exceed the following state required staff to child ratios:

1:12	3 year olds
1:14	4-5 year olds
1:18	school-age children (Pre K – 5's)

We do desire a higher quality of care and strive to maintain the following staff to child ratios in our classrooms:

1:7	3 year olds
1:9	4-5 year olds
1:10	school-age children (Pre K – 5's)

The maximum class group sizes are as follows:

14	3 year olds
18	4-5 year olds
20	school-age children (Pre K – 5's)

Maximum group size is defined by the number of children in one group that may be cared for at any time. Limitations do not include outdoor play or special activities.

HOURS & DAYS OF OPERATION

The school year will begin in the month of September and end in the month of May. Hours of operation will be 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. on Friday. A winter and spring break will take place each year, dates to be determined by the local school systems' calendars.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

On rare occasions it may be necessary to close the school due to poor weather conditions. If circumstances should arise, please check the local television and radio stations for school closings.

Our school will be closed, **due to weather**, if either Riverside (Painesville Township) or Mentor school systems are closed. On these occasions, regular payment is expected.



DAILY SCHEDULES

Our daily schedule is flexible enough to provide adaptability when we need it, but is structured enough to provide predictability for our students. We want our children to feel safe and comfortable at school. We work to provide a predictable environment where our children know what to expect and when to expect it.

The following schedule is a typical example of your pre-school child's day:

8:45 – 9:30 Arrival and Free Choice

Free choice learning stations include science; math -- such as measurement and comparison; construction -- such as building with blocks or arranging furniture in a dollhouse; dramatic play -- such as role playing with dress up clothes or in the kitchen; sensory motor -- such as playing with clay/finger-paints/sand/water, and more. Centers are limited only to the imagination of the staff!

9:30-9:45 Circle Time

Circle time is a time for learning about days and dates on the calendar, weather, counting with one to one correspondence, singing favorite songs, naming colors and recognizing ABC's (letter & sound).

9:45– 10:05 Snack Time

Snack break is a valuable time to learn how to wash our hands and stay healthy. Students will gather together at the table for a time to rest from play. This provides a

valuable opportunity to learn skills such as turn taking in communication and table manners. Snack time can also be adventurous for our children when they taste new and different foods.

10:05-10:15 Circle Time for Focus Story

This is the time that our children listen to a story which may be about the day's theme or what interests them. After the story there is time for discussion and then we move on to a planned activity.

10:15-10:30 Creative Activity, Art, Music

This activity may be related to the story of the day or another learning concept.

10:30-11:00 Gross Motor Play

Gross motor play can be outside on the playground, when the weather permits. The *Family Life Center* area of the church building provides a spacious area for indoor play when we are not able to go outdoors. Our children can run, balance, propel body boards, and play ball, games and more.

11:00-11:15 Closing and Dismissal

Closing can be a flannel board story, favorite songs or "Show and Tell". This is the time when we review the day, collect our things for dismissal and the children eagerly anticipate the arrival of their parents.

The time and order of these activities may vary from classroom to classroom, but the lessons taught in daily work and play activities incorporate the state early learning and development standards. We use a professionally developed and researched curriculum which meets Ohio state curriculum standards.

SUPERVISION POLICY

Our staff takes seriously their responsibility to insure the health and safety of each child in their care. Staff members are alert to the safety needs of our children. Our staff anticipates possible hazards in order to take the necessary and appropriate precautions and preventative measures.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

By state law, parents are required to bring their children to the classroom. Each teacher will greet both parents and children at the classroom door. Any special messages, pick-up instructions, or any other necessary communication may be given to the teacher at that time. **Children may not be dropped off at the entrance to the building or be sent into the building alone.** The staff must be aware of each child's presence before his/her parent departs.

At the time of pick-up, each parent or caregiver must sign his/her name on a classroom sign-out sheet, and then wait for a staff person to dismiss his/her child into their care. Your child's safety is our highest priority! **When entering and leaving the school/church building with your children, be sure that they are walking with you.** When children run ahead of their parents, there is great potential for a child to be injured due to the amount of traffic in the parking lot. There may be traffic from on-going church activities as well as the traffic from other preschool parents. **PLEASE BE AWARE**, keep your child with you at all times and help us keep your children safe!

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

By Ohio state law, all staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If the staff has suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST** make a report to the local children's services agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

RELEASE OF A CHILD

Staff will release children only to persons listed on the release form provided by the parent. If an emergency arises and a person not listed on the release form must pick-up a child, the parent must provide a written, signed note or call the preschool office authorizing release of their child to that person. Staff will check ID's of anyone they do not recognize. Please let caregivers know about this ahead of time so they bring a picture ID with them. The children's safety is our priority!

The preschool entrances will be locked 15 minutes after drop-off time.

In emergency situations, a parent may need to contact their child. Please enter the building through the preschool entrance door in the rear of the building. Use the door buzzer/intercom to announce your presence. If a parent is delayed at pick-up time, they should immediately contact the school, (440) 639-8817. Arrangements will be made for a staff member to stay with your child until you arrive. If the delay is prolonged, the child will be taken to the preschool office. The Director or the director's representative will supervise the child at that time. Chronic lateness will be addressed by the Director.

CUSTODY AGREEMENTS

If there are custody issues involving your child, you must provide the school with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. Without proper court documentation, the school cannot deny a parent access to their child.

FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN

EMERGENCY TRANSPORT

The school will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, the parent or the emergency squad will be contacted.

FIELD TRIPS

On rare occasions, a field trip may be taken. Before departing the school, a count will be taken of all of the children, which will be marked on a separate attendance sheet, specifically created for the trip. Upon arrival at the destination, another count will be taken to assure that all of the children have safely arrived. This process will be repeated upon leaving the destination, and returning to the school. During the course of field trips, each staff member will be assigned specific children that they are responsible for supervising. Before any child participates in a field trip, the school will obtain written permission from the parent or guardian.

Transportation will be provided by parent volunteers who are licensed & insured drivers. Drivers must show documentation of a current license & insurance. We will adhere to **Ohio State Law** regarding child seat restraint devices. If a proper restraint seat is not provided, the child **WILL NOT** go on the trip.

- A first aid kit and trained staff will be present on each trip.
- Each child shall wear an identification tag with name, school's name, address and phone number.
- The children's emergency transportation information, medical authorization and special health records and supplies shall be taken.

GUIDANCE POLICY

Our staff believes that helping children learn self-control is vital to their success in school. Our hope is that each child will learn self discipline through careful guidance. Your child will be treated with love and respect. If children are treated with respect, they in turn learn to respect the teachers and their friends. Our expectations will be kept within the child's capabilities and the child will be made aware of these expectations. Positive reinforcement (commenting on children doing the "right" thing) and positive redirection (removing the child and giving them an appropriate activity) will be used.

A child may be asked to sit for a short period of time to give the child a chance to regain control if they are having a difficult time. Time outs will be age appropriate in length and done within the classroom. Staff will not impose punishments for failure to eat, rest, or for toileting accidents. This discipline policy applies to all staff and parents while they are at the school.

If a situation arises where a child consistently endangers himself, peers, and/or staff, it may become necessary to guide that child to a school environment more suited to his temperament and/or learning style. Before this would happen, every attempt would be made to correct the behavior and help the child learn strategies to cope. However, the safety of all of our children in their learning environment must be our primary concern. The director would be in communication with the parents before we would look at relocating a child. If a child demonstrates behavior that requires frequent "extra attention" from a staff member, we may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan. This plan would be developed in consultation with the parents and would be consistent with the requirements of Rule 5101:2-12-22 OAC (Ohio Administrative Code).

SNACKS

A light snack will be offered daily in each class. A typical snack would be a glass of cool water and an age appropriate portion of crackers, pretzels, fruit snacks or cookies. Parents will be asked to help furnish snacks for their child's classroom. A snack may be sent in to celebrate a child's birthday. The classroom teacher will discuss the procedure with parents. Please inform the classroom teacher if your child is not permitted to have any types of foods due to allergies, philosophy or religious beliefs.

MEDICAL CARE PLANS

If your child requires a food supplement or modified diet, you must secure written information from your physician regarding this, and a Medical Care Plan must be completed. Please speak with the administrator for more details.

Medications will not be administered by staff members without a Medical Care Plan and Request for Administration of Medication forms on file in the preschool office.

Prescription medications must be in their original container and will be administered in accordance to the instructions on the container label. Over the counter medications must also have Medical Care Plan and request for Administration of Medication forms on file in our office. Over the counter medications will only be administered in accordance with the written instructions of the physician on a Request for Administration of Medication form.

ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCIES

Hope Ridge has developed an Emergency Action Plan to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is in the school's care. In the event of a fire or tornado, staff will follow the written instructions posted in each classroom describing emergency evacuation routes and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the school does conduct monthly fire drills and periodic tornado drills. Should we need to evacuate due to fire, our emergency destination is the Concord Plaza business center across the street. A sign will be posted on the church office door indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. In the event of loss of water, power, or heat, parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information form.

In the unlikely event of an environmental threat, Hope Ridge students will be evacuated to South High School, 5000 Shankland Rd, Willoughby, Ohio unless we are instructed to shelter in place. Detailed instructions will be posted at each door of the church building. The school also practices quarterly lock-down drills in preparation for a threat of violence.

There is always at least one staff member present, during school hours, that has received training in First Aid/Communicable Diseases and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid and TLC. If the injury is more serious, first aid will be administered and the parents contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury is life threatening, the EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or EMS will transport.

It is our policy not to accept students whose parents refuse emergency transport by EMS in life threatening situations.

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS

Hope Ridge Preschool provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first group experience, it is possible that they may experience more frequent illnesses at the beginning of the school year before their immune system becomes more active. We observe all children as they enter the program to quickly assess their general health.

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or emergency contact:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F
- Diarrhea
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine or grey or white stools
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Vomiting
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in school activities, the parent will be called to pick up the child. Anytime a child is isolated, they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member. The cot and any linen used will be washed and disinfected before being used again.

Parents will be notified by a sign on the classroom door if children have been exposed to a communicable illness. Children will be readmitted to school after at least 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If they are not symptom free, a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

MEDICATIONS

Medications will not be administered by staff members without a Medical Care Plan and Request for Administration of Medication forms on file in the preschool office.

Prescription medications must be in their original container and will be administered in accordance to the instructions on the container label. Over the counter medications must also have a Medical Care Plan and Request for Administration of Medication forms on file in our office. Over the counter medications will only be administered in accordance with the written instructions of the physician on a Request for Administration of Medication form.

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS OR MODIFIED DIETS

If your child requires a food supplement or a modified diet, you must secure written information from your physician regarding this. Please speak with the administrator for more details.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are invited and encouraged to participate in classroom activities, parties and/or special events at our school. Hope Ridge Preschool was founded in 1967 as a community outreach ministry of Hope Ridge United Methodist Church. In celebration of this relationship, each year our children are invited to perform a song as a part of a church service held at Hope Ridge United Methodist Church. The church welcomes your presence and that of extended family members at these services

Parents of preschool children will have unlimited access to all areas of the preschool wing during the hours of operation. For the safety of the children and the staff, all entry doors to the building will be locked 15 minutes after the class arrival time and unlocked 10 minutes before the dismissal time of the children. The church office door and rear preschool door will be available for entry when the other doors are locked. The rear preschool entry should be used by late arrivals or early pick-ups. Please use the buzzer to announce your arrival.

CONFERENCES

Each child will have a scheduled parent/teacher conference at the beginning of the school year and another before the close of the school year. At other times during the year, our teachers will gladly make themselves available to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have. We ask that you make an appointment with the teacher so she can be prepared to answer your questions and a satisfactory discussion will be the outcome. Arrival and dismissal times are not good times for lengthy discussions. Teachers have safety responsibilities and a schedule to adhere to so that the demands of the curriculum can be met. Also, the teacher is unable to give you her full attention. Your child's teacher will want to focus on the needs of only your child when discussing progress and/or concerns.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As children move from class to class, there are often adjustments required for different teaching and communication styles. When issues arise, please discuss your needs with your child's teacher in an attempt to find a resolution. The teacher wants to work with you, but can't do so if she doesn't know there is an issue. If you have attempted to reach resolution with the teacher, but are not feeling successful, the next step in the process is to contact the director. If you are not able to reach resolution with the director and your classroom teacher, please feel free to contact any council member for assistance. Contact information will be furnished, as needed, by the preschool office staff.

Our goal is happy, successful children!

WE ASK THAT:

- Children wear comfortable play clothing, easily managed by the child. Paint shirts are provided by the school.
- Names/labels must be on ALL possessions and items of apparel.
- Each child should bring a book bag/backpack, labeled, for transporting work and communications.
- Toys, other than for "show 'n tell" should remain at home. The Preschool cannot be responsible for valuable and/or breakable items. For safety and programmatic reasons, toy guns, knives, war toys, and/or toys requiring mouth usage will NOT be permitted.

**PARENTS MUST KEEP THE SCHOOL INFORMED
OF ANY CHANGES OR UPDATES IN INFORMATION.**

**INFORMATION REQUIRED BY
OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing child care are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, ORC to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

Rosters of the names and telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of the children attending the facility are available upon request. The parent roster will not include the name or telephone number of any parent who requests that his/her name or telephone number not be included.

The licensing record, including compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, are available for review upon request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32. 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

*This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians, and employees as required in 5101:2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code. JFS 01237 (09/2006)

