



Holly Springs Academy

Parent Handbook



Holly Springs Academy

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Mission.....	3
Goals.....	4
Enrollment.....	4
Tuition	4-5
Vacation/ Withdrawal	6
Curriculum.....	6-7
Staff.....	7
Field Trips.....	7
Discipline.....	8-9
School Calendar.....	9
Snack Philosophy and Menus.....	9-11
Clothing and Care Needs.....	11
Family Engagement.....	11
Child Abuse.....	11
Sexual Harassment.....	12
Fire Drill.....	12
Parental/Guardian Concerns.....	12
Sick Children.....	12-13
Medication.....	13
Hand Washing.....	13-14
Classroom/FacilityCleaning.....	14
Arrival and Departure.....	14
Inclement Weather.....	14
Shelter-In-Place.....	14-15
ParkingDropoff/Pickup.....	15
Parent Acknowledgement Form.....	16



Holly Springs Academy

Dear Wonderful Parents, Guardians and Caregivers,

Welcome to Holly Springs Academy! We are very excited you have chosen Holly Springs Academy (HSA) as the childcare center for your child(ren). We look forward to developing a vital partnership with you as we share daily learning opportunities with your child(ren).

Our school is open to children ages twelve months through five years old, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. (with Early Drop Off from 6:00 a.m-6:30a.m).

After you have read your handbook, please sign and return the Parent Acknowledgement form on the last page and give it to an Administrator to put in your child's file.

We can't wait to spend time with you and your child!

Melisa Harrison, Director

MISSION

To provide quality, affordable care with abundant opportunities for children to Explore! Create! Play! Learn! through a vital partnership between families and staff.

GOALS

- *To engage children in their learning environment
- *To enable children to develop in a stimulating, nurturing, secure setting
- *To recognize the individuality of every child
- *To encourage children to Explore! Create! Play! Learn!
- *To provide integrated experiences for social, emotional, creative, intellectual and physical growth

ENROLLMENT

When you enroll your child at HSA, the following forms must be completed and on file:

HSA Childcare Application
Immunization Record
Physician signed Medical Record
Parent Acknowledgement Form
Parent Authorizations Form
North Carolina Childcare Law and Rules statement
Signed Tuition Rate Sheet
Emergency Contact Information Sheet
Nutrition Opt Out Form

These documents must be completely filled out and remain current while your child attends HSA. There is an annual, nonrefundable registration fee that must be paid at the time of enrollment and renewed each school year.

It is extremely important for parents to keep Emergency Contact Information sheets up to date at all times during the year. If your address, home/work phone or mobile numbers change, please notify the office immediately. Also, please inform us if the information for your emergency contacts change.

TUITION PAYMENT

There are three payment schedules offered to HSA families: weekly, semi-monthly or monthly. All payments are due on the first day of the payment period. For a weekly payment schedule, payment is due no later than drop off Monday of the week of service. For a semi-monthly payment schedule, payment is due on the 1st and 15th. For a monthly

payment schedule, payment is due on the 1st. Once a payment schedule is established, it cannot be changed until the Director is notified and has approved the new payment arrangement.

A late fee of \$25 will be charged if tuition is not paid by pickup on Monday for those paying on a weekly schedule. For parents utilizing the online payment option, the payment must have a “Completed” status by midnight on Monday of the week of service. Balances not paid by the end of the week of service may result in the suspension of care until the balance is paid.

For parents paying monthly, payments are due on the 1st of the month. If the first of the month falls on a weekend, balances are due the first business day of the month. A late fee of \$25 will be charged if tuition is not paid by pickup on the first business day of the month for those paying on either a monthly or semi-monthly schedule. If payment has not been received by the end of the first week, it may result in the suspension of care.

For those paying semi-monthly, if the 15th falls on a weekend, the balance is due on the following Monday. A late fee of \$25 will be charged if tuition is not paid by pickup on the 15th (or the first business day after the weekend if the 15th falls on a Saturday or Sunday). If payment has not been received by the end of the first week, it may result in the suspension of care.

For both monthly and semi-monthly payment schedules, parents using the online payment option should submit payments so they have a “Completed” status by the above referenced dates. Balances not paid within these timelines may result in the suspension of care.

Alternate arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Center Director. There will be a \$45 service fee on all returned checks.

Please keep in mind that tuition is subject to change annually; however, you will receive notification if such change becomes effective.

*HSA will give a \$50.00 credit toward tuition for any referral you make that completes enrollment and remains enrolled for at least 3 months. Credit for the referral will be applied to your account after the third month.

VACATION/WITHDRAWAL

Tuition is continuous throughout the year. There are no deductions for absences, illness, inclement weather closings or delays, or holidays that occur throughout the year. If you have been enrolled in our program for one year, you will be entitled to a one-week Tuition Vacation Credit each year thereafter. This excludes times when the school is already closed. A vacation request must be given in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of the vacation.

If a parent wishes to withdraw a child from the school, a 30 day written notice must be given to the administrator.

In the event a student has behavior(s) we do not have adequate resources or educational expertise with which to meet the educational, medical or physical needs of the student (in our sole discretion), the parent will be given adequate notice and the child will be unenrolled from the program.

CURRICULUM

Explore! Create! Play! Learn!

Young children learn in an integrated process that builds across social, intellectual, creative, emotional and physical domains. At Holly Springs Academy, we provide abundant opportunities daily for our youngsters to **explore** ideas and possibilities, **create** art, architectural, science and dance/music masterpieces, use **play** as the basic building block for all activities, and **learn** using the philosophical guidelines of the state approved curriculum, Explorations With Young Children.

We have created a daily schedule that provides opportunities for our students to be curious learners in a structured, nurturing setting. Our qualified teachers help children expand their understanding of themselves and their surroundings through curriculum that builds on the children's questions and concerns while teachers thoughtfully add their own questions to enrich and deepen the children's curiosity.

Snack time features fresh, healthful (often organic) foods that are part of daily discussions with students about the importance of nutrition, diet and exercise. The “Let’s Move” curriculum and materials are a resource for teachers.

The Holly Springs Academy outdoor Little Sprouts Sensory Garden is chock full of perennials, ferns and vines for the children to touch, smell rest in their midst on benches or run along the footpath down the middle. The 900 square foot Vegetable Garden, the orchard of peach and apple trees, our fig and blueberry bushes and insectary of sunflowers, marigolds, cosmos and milkweed provide integrated lessons in sustainable environments, nutrition, gardening, planning, diverse ecosystems, sharing, teamwork and responsibility.

Our Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) is thoughtfully designed to encourage imaginative play in a natural setting. Gardens and outdoor centers promote the importance of the natural environment in the daily experience of all our children. Through our partnership with the Natural Learning Initiative, (N.C. State School of Design, www.naturalearning.org), we are implementing their advice in designing, planning and managing an amazing early childhood OLE. From a Loose Parts Area for imaginative building, planning and socializing to our Bamboo Teepee wrapped in Chocolate Vines to the Mexican Reed Grass Pathways, Sandbox, Art Boards, Rubber Mats Stage and HS Raceway, the children explore the outdoors twice a day for 45-50 minutes each session. All aspects of the indoor and outdoor classroom experiences can be integrated to stimulate curiosity, develop a broad awareness of relationships and build community across domains.

STAFF

HSA adheres to all state requirements for licensed childcare facilities. Lead teachers are required to have a two or four-year degree in a child related field and are hired according to their education, experience within the field, and their genuine love for children. Our teachers continue their education by attending professional development workshops and enhancement activities. They are warm, caring individuals dedicated to the education of young children. HSA adheres to the established highest voluntary enhanced child/teacher ratios.

FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the year, staff will plan field trips that will enhance the Preschool classroom learning. Teachers will provide notice of the planned trips; parents will be asked to sign the appropriate travel forms, and may be requested to chaperone. The HSA bus may be used to provide transportation on Field Trips. It meets all safety requirements and is fully insured.

Children must follow the rules below while riding in the vehicle:

- * Remain seated at all times, facing the front of the vehicle
- * Wear seat belts at all times
- * No eating or drinking in the vehicle
- * Loud noise or distracting behavior is not allowed
- * Dangerous objects will not be allowed
- * Fighting and pushing is not allowed
- * Doors shall be opened and closed by an adult
- * Children may not extend any part of their body from the vehicle

All school rules and regulations will be followed while attending field trips.

DISCIPLINE

At HSA, we practice Conscious Discipline (positive reinforcement) for behavior in the following ways:

We:

1. DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. DO reason with and set limits for the children.
3. DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. DO listen to the children.
6. DO provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. DO provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. DO treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. DO ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. DO explain things to children on their levels.
11. DO use short supervised periods of “time-out”
12. DO stay consistent in our behavior management program

We:

1. DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. DO NOT make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. DO NOT shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. DO NOT deny food or rest as punishment.
5. DO NOT relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. DO NOT leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. DO NOT place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. DO NOT allow discipline of children by children.
9. DO NOT criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

HSA will post a school calendar of holidays and closings on the bulletin board by the kitchen and on the website. This calendar will be distributed at the time of enrollment and can be accessed via our website at www.HollySpringsAcademy-NC.com.

SNACK PHILOSOPHY and MENU

As a childcare center, we are very mindful of the nutrition we provide our children. We serve fresh fruits and vegetables (often organic) and buy good quality, whole foods. In order to make an informed decision about what we serve and when, we have researched how the body responds to the food it takes in and what the implications are for our children's health and well-being.

Research has shown all food has to be broken down in the digestive system into a form that can be absorbed into the blood stream and utilized by the body. The different nutrients of sugar, carbohydrates, proteins, and vitamins and minerals, are not all digested or absorbed into the blood stream at the same rate. A variety of those foods eaten at one sitting will provide hours of different nutritional benefit.

- Refined sugar such as cupcakes and dried fruit is broken down almost immediately and provides quick energy to the body. The quick energy can be a lift for children in the very short term and even help them to cope better. But

when sugar is eaten without other foods or in big quantities, there comes a crash in energy and good spirits as the sugar quickly leaves the blood stream.

- Carbohydrates take longer to break down and the more complex the carbohydrate, the longer it takes and the more sustained energy it will provide. Carbohydrates consist largely of fruits and vegetables, bread, rice, beans, and pasta.
- Protein take the longest time to break down and is absorbed into the body as amino acids which are very sustaining.

Our daily snacks are served in the morning and afternoon. They are created to provide two forms of carbohydrates and a protein. We offer a fruit or vegetable carbohydrate, a complex carbohydrate such as whole wheat crackers, and a protein such as strong cheese, sunflower seed butter or hummus. Our goal is to provide food that offers near-term, mid-range, and long-term nutritional benefit to our children. We serve foods that have 7gm of sugar per serving or less. We also monitor sodium and fat content when selecting foods for our creative and innovative Healthy Snack Menus.

On their child's birthday, a parent may bring in a store bought healthy snack or treat. We will maintain our practice of a snack having 7gm of sugar or less. Cupcakes with high content sugar and fat frostings may not be brought into the school.

A copy of the current weekly snack menu is available in the front lobby on Monday mornings and is posted weekly on the website. We welcome suggestions for fresh, healthful snack ideas.

Please inform us of any special dietary needs or allergies your child may have. Children may bring peanut butter sandwiches. We check all lunches and seat children with peanut allergies with friends who don't have peanut products in their lunch that day.

Suggestions for your child's lunch might include:

- Cheese, hummus, greek yogurt, cottage cheese,
- Any meat sandwich including chicken, ham, fish, hard-boiled eggs
- Cut up vegetables including broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, squash, lettuce, mushrooms, etc.
- Whole grain dry cereal, bran muffins, bagel, whole wheat pita bread, naan, whole wheat tortillas

- Fresh fruits including: apples, oranges, bananas, pineapples, kiwi, raisins, etc.

Your child's lunch should include a protein, carbohydrate and fruit.

CLOTHING AND CARE NEEDS

Please send a complete change of labeled clothes (including socks) to be kept at the center in case of emergency/accident. Please label all outerwear. Your child will need a crib sheet for nap time and any special "lovie" they may want.

For eighteen months through two year olds, diapers, diaper cream (if needed), , and two changes of clothes are required. A child must be fully potty trained on their third birthday to move to the three year old classroom.

Please do NOT send medication in your child's lunch box or back pack.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We encourage every parent/guardian to join his or her child's classroom at any time. We welcome parents/guardians to join us on field trips and in school activities as often as possible. We welcome all feedback from families on their child's experience at Holly Springs Academy.

CHILD ABUSE and NEGLECT

North Carolina Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Laws require that HSA will report any suspected child abuse and neglect as follows:

- *Notify the Department of Social Services and report the suspected abuse and neglect.
- *Department of Social Services must investigate within 24 hours of taking the report. At this time, the Department of Social Services may meet with the child one on one. HSA will work in cooperation with the Department of Social Services. The North Carolina Division of Child Development will also make a visit to HSA
- *The Department of Social Services will notify the parent or guardian.
- *Information will remain confidential and will be treated as such.
- *If a parent decides to move a child from HSA, the staff will make every effort to

help place the child in a new childcare setting.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Holly Springs Academy believes that everybody, including our employees, are entitled to work in an environment that is free of sexual harassment. To this end, Holly Springs Academy prohibits employees, parents, contractors, and volunteers from engaging in sexual harassment and advises employees that when evidence of sexual harassment is established, disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal (for employees) and suspension or expulsion (of any student whose parent violates this policy). Our Sexual Harassment policy mirrors that of the Wake County's Public School System. Please refer to the following link for specific details on what defines sexual harassment: <http://www.wcps.net/policy-files/series/policies/6415-bp.html>.

FIRE DRILLS

As required by law, HSA will have monthly fire drills. It is required for all students, parents, volunteers and staff to participate in such drills while on campus. Please talk with your child about the importance of these drills.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONCERNS

At any time throughout the year, HSA welcomes any suggestions or concerns that you may have. We strive to have an open door policy between parents/guardians and staff. Parents/guardians are asked to bring classroom concerns to the attention of the Director if they have been unable to satisfactorily resolve concerns through conversation with the classroom Lead Teacher.

SICK CHILDREN

Parents will be contacted to pick up their child if they have any of the symptoms below. A child who is sent home must be free of these symptoms for a 24-hour medicine free period before they may return to school. This enables all students to fully recover from an illness, as well as, reducing the spread of an illness within a classroom.

These symptoms are:

- * A fever of 101 degrees or more.
- * Vomiting within the previous 24-hour period.

- * Diarrhea within the previous 24-hour period.
- * A heavy nasal discharge indicative of infection.
- * A constant cough or sore throat.
- * Fussy, cranky behavior-generally not him/herself.
- * A skin rash, other than diaper rash.
- * Head lice.
- * Symptoms of a communicable disease.

HSA is not equipped to accommodate sick children. A sick child will be removed from the classroom and placed under the care of the front office staff while waiting for their parent to pick them up.

HSA is dedicated to the well-being of each child in our care. We maintain our sick policy to reduce the spread of illness to other children, to prevent constant spread of colds, flu, and diarrhea, as well as, to enable the child to fully recover from a sickness before it develops into a serious illness.

MEDICATION

- * HSA cannot administer over the counter or prescription medication to any child. (this includes hand soaps, ointments, lip balms, etc.) The only exceptions to this rule are Epipens, Benadryl, and Inhalers for life-threatening allergies per a physician's signature, and, diaper cream in the 2 year old room.
- * One bottle of sunscreen may be used for every child after the parent has signed a written permission form.

HAND WASHING

Rigorous handwashing practices are followed. Staff are trained that hand washing is the BEST defense in preventing transfer of infections and bacteria.

Hand washing procedures must include:

- (1) Using liquid soap and tempered water;
- (2) Rubbing hands vigorously with soap and tempered water for 15 seconds;
- (3) Washing all surfaces of the hands, to include the backs of hands, palms, wrists, under fingernails and between fingers;
- (4) Rinsing well for ten seconds;

- (5) Drying hands with a paper towel or other hand-drying device; and
- (6) Turning off faucet with a paper towel or other method without recontamination of the hands. (Per NC DCDEE)

CLASSROOM/FACILITY CLEANING

Throughout the day, teachers are required to dispose of trash into an outdoor dumpster, sweep, mop, and sanitize tables after lunch, as well as, make sure their room is neat and orderly. Other general cleaning and sanitizing duties are divided among staff daily. The floors are professionally cleaned, waxed and buffed weekly.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

HSA requires that children be escorted to their classrooms by their parents after gaining entry from the center's lobby. If a parent cannot pick up their child from school, a prior phone call or notification that a person listed on the Emergency Information Sheet will pickup must be given to the Director in order for the child to be released to anyone other than the parent.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

During inclement weather, parents may check the HSA website, watch WRAL TV station ORgo to WRAL.com and view Delays and Closings. Or, you may listen to the recorded message on the HSA phone to determine if the weather has affected the school's hours of operation.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE PLAN

The front lobby is secure from intruders by means of the magnetic door lock on the lobby entrance and the reversed door lock on the Office door. All outside doors are locked from the outside at all times (except for the main front door). In the event there is an immediate threat to the occupants of Holly Springs Academy, the Director or other Administrator will immediately call 911. Children in the Toddler Wing will be calmly and quickly removed from their classroom to the inner hallway. Classroom doors will be closed. The children will be escorted to the Carrot Tops classroom in the Preschool Wing (last door on the left of the hall). Children in the 4's and Pre-K classrooms will be calmly and quickly removed from their classroom to the inner hallway. Their doors will be closed. They will move

into the Carrot Tops classroom. This classroom was recommended by the Holly Springs Police as the gathering site because there is only one window in the classroom. A landline phone is in this classroom along with copies of student contact information.

If a teacher believes she cannot safely exit her children from the classroom, she will close and lock the door and slide a red piece of paper under the door into the hallway. This will help first responders quickly identify an area under threat.

In the event a shelter-in-place is needed due to emergency warnings from the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant, the children will again be evacuated to the Carrot Tops classroom. The doorway will be sealed and parents will be notified. From that point, directions for evacuation routes and public safety instructions should be followed by parents from wherever they are located.

PARKING-DROPOFF/PICKUP

Parking spaces are marked and traffic flows up the hill for drop off and pick up.



Holly Springs Academy

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

Please sign and return this page to the office.

HSA encourages parents to refer to the handbook (paper copy) or on our website: www.hollyspringsacademy-nc.com to review the contents.

I have read Holly Springs Academy Parent Handbook. I understand the enclosed policies and procedures and agree to adhere to these policies while my child is enrolled at HSA. I have received a copy of the NC Childcare Law and Rules summary sheet and have read it thoroughly. I have read and understand HSA's Discipline Policy that is located on pages eight (8) and nine (9) in this Parent Handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Director Signature: _____

Date: _____