



**MISSION HILLS
EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION HILLS
EARLY LEARNING CENTER

a ministry of Mission Hills Church

620 SouthPark Drive
Littleton, Colorado 80120-5675
Phone 303.798.1481
Fax 303.798.9373
preschool.missionhills.org

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to Mission Hills Early Learning Center! We recognize that it is a BIG day for you and your child when he/she begins preschool. We count it an honor and a privilege to share in this special part of your child's education. Looking at the many years that children spend in school, we understand the importance of giving them a healthy and positive start. We commit to you that we will do our part in providing a great preschool experience for each and every child that we are blessed to serve. With parents and teachers working together as partners in education, everyone benefits – especially the children!

This booklet is designed to provide you with a general understanding of the MHELC program. It has been written to describe our program, goals, policies, and procedures that are important in making each preschool day happy and successful. As you read through the following pages, may you find it informative and helpful in making this experience meaningful and fulfilling for both you and your child! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 303-798-1481, or send me an e-mail at sgibson@missionhills.org.

Sincerely,

Shelley Gibson
MHELC Director
sgibson@missionhills.org

OBJECTIVES, STUDENT OUTCOMES, AND CORE VALUES

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To provide the setting, the experiences and the guidance that will promote optimum development of children.

STUDENT OUTCOMES AND CORE VALUES

- **To promote emotional growth.**
- To build self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by allowing choices within limits and to build on successful experiences.
- To provide a warm accepting environment for the children to work and play.
- To encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder with emphasis on self-motivation.
- **To promote social growth.**
- To promote and instill a sense of caring for, and sensitivity towards others.
- By recognition of group needs versus individual differences.
- **To promote intellectual growth by teaching conflict resolution so children can learn to be confident problem solvers and how to ask for help**
- To instill a sense of curiosity.
- To provide an atmosphere where children discover, explore and gain independence through daily routines.
- To provide a wide variety of activities where cooperative play is encouraged while learning in curriculum areas of art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, practical life, dramatic play and language arts. Through these activities, children are learning to trust their own feelings about what they learn, hear, see, and do, and to begin sharing these experiences with others.
- **To promote physical (motor) development.**
- To promote children to use their bodies in a variety of active ways by participating in fine and large motor activities both indoors and outdoors.
- **To promote spiritual growth.**
- To provide an atmosphere of Christian love and warmth.
- To develop in each child an awareness of God's love.
- To learn the true meaning of Christian holidays: Christmas, Easter, etc.
- To learn that God hears us when we pray.

IMPORTANT PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

CHILD'S AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Two-Year-Olds:	children turning two by October 1
Three-Year-Olds:	children turning three by October 1
Four/Five-Year-Olds:	children turning four by October 1

PRESCHOOL CLASSES

Classes consist of a four-hour session 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

2-3 Year-Olds

Monday / Wednesday

Tuesday / Thursday

3-4 Year-Olds

Monday / Wednesday

Monday / Wednesday / Friday

Tuesday / Thursday

4 - 5-Year-Olds – Pre-K

Monday / Wednesday / Friday

Tuesday / Thursday

Monday through Thursday

PARENT'S DAY OUT CLASSES

Classes consist of a four-hour session from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

2-Year-Olds Fridays

(Letters are mailed to parents/guardians in July regarding class assignments.)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

MHELHC is a non-profit Christian pre-school. Tuition payments are due the tenth of each month beginning in August and ending in April. Our preferred method of payment is Tuition Express, with AHC or credit card.

Please note the following fees:

- A \$10 late fee for first payment received after the tenth (10th) of the month.
- Additional fees for declined credit cards and insufficient funds will be passed on from the financial institution of origin.
- There is no reduction of fees when children are absent for any reason.

A 15% discount is given to families with more than one child in the preschool program.

A thirty-day written notice is required when removing a child from the program.

- All or a portion of the August pre-payment is refundable with a 30-day notice.

2022-2023 TUITION RATES:

Registration Fee \$150 annually (per child, per classroom)
due with application (non-refundable)

One-Day Program \$130 per month

Two-Day Program \$225 per month

Three-Day Program \$315 per month

Four-Day Program \$385 per month

PDO-Friday Only \$130 per month

All fees are set forth here in effect until a new agreement is signed by parent,

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Online registration is done through **MyProCare.com**. Visit the Mission Hills Early Learning Center website at **preschool.missionhills.org** to start the process. Priority registration for those families already involved in the preschool is held in January. Open registration begins February 1 for the coming school year. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we willingly accept any child with special needs provided we can offer sufficient care for that child while effectively overseeing a classroom of children. Registration is granted without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, or creed.

STAFF

Our staff is carefully selected based upon their spiritual commitment, special gifts, abilities, and training as well as their desire to make a difference in the life of children. Each staff member plays an important part in creating an outstanding educational environment for children. Together we strive for excellence based on respect, patience, honesty, loyalty, friendship, and a love for children. All of our staff members are Christians and are required to sign a statement of faith assuring their belief and a personal relationship with Christ. Our ratio of teachers to students is as follows:

2's to 3's - 1:6 maximum

3's to 4's - 1:8 maximum

4's to 5's - 1:9 maximum

SCHEDULE

ARRIVAL

Children arrive at 9:00 AM. Please use the main Mission Hills Early Learning Center entrance for drop off and pick up of your child. For the purpose of safety, our exterior doors remain locked during the week. Children will wash their hands upon arrival prior to starting their daily activities.

CIRCLE TIME (10 Minutes)

Purpose: prepares child for the day

Attendance, introduce centers, weather, calendar and letters in four year olds

LEARNING CENTERS (75 Minutes)

Purpose: provides appropriate opportunities for meaningful play based on a child's need to explore, create, and exercise - reinforces concepts introduced in circle time

Nine centers are required:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Art - teacher-directed | 5. Manipulative Toys |
| Art - child-directed | 6. Music |
| 2. Blocks and accessories | 7. Quiet/Library Area |
| 3. Dramatic Play | 8. Science |
| 4. Large Muscle Equipment | 9. Sensory |

CLEAN-UP (2 @ 5 Minutes)

Purpose: reinforces cooperation and following directions

SNACK TIME (15 Minutes)

Purpose: reinforces healthy eating habits

All children are required to wash their hands before snack.

Parents are encouraged to bring nutritional snacks from two food groups.

MUSIC (15 Minutes)

Purpose: builds creativity and self-image

Action songs, fingerplays, rhythm sticks, piano, bells, etc.

PLAYGROUND (40 Minutes)

Purpose: reinforces large motor coordination and allows for socialization

The large muscle room will be used in the event of inclement weather.

LUNCH TIME (35 Minutes)

STORY TIME (15 Minutes)

Purpose: Develops attention span - stimulates creative thinking

TEACHER CHOICE (25 Minutes)

DISMISSAL

Thank you for picking up your children on time!

Please notify the MHELC office in advance if your child is going to be absent along with the reason for the absence.

GENERAL PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

ACCOUNTING FOR ALL CHILDREN

Close supervision of children is a high value. A Name to Face count is taken each time a class transitions from one location to another. Children are never allowed to go any place without an adult. Classroom doors are required to be closed while class is in session. The playground is fenced and the gate is always kept closed.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

Children will be released only to those persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian to pick up the child. MHELC must have written authorization for any changes. No exceptions will be made.

CHILD ABUSE

- Any staff member of the preschool who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, following consultation with the Director or Mission Hills Church Children's Director, shall immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department of social services or local law enforcement agency.
- Staff members of the county department of social services or a law enforcement agency that investigate an allegation of child abuse will be given the right to interview staff and children in care and to obtain names, addresses, and telephone numbers of parents of children enrolled at MHELC.
- Any report made to the law enforcement authorities or a county department of social services of an allegation of abuse of any child at MHELC will result in the immediate suspension of duties without pay. Such suspension of duties will remain in effect pending the outcome of the investigation by the appropriate authorities.

If you believe a child is in imminent danger, call 911;
otherwise use one of the following options:

Call Arapahoe County Child Protection 24/7 Hotline
303-636-1750

Call Colorado Child Abuse Neglect Hotline
1-844-CO-4-KIDS

CLOTHING

Children are encouraged to dress comfortably and suitably for the weather. We do engage in some "messy" activities that, despite smocks, can get our clothes dirty. We ask you to send your child in clothes that will not inhibit their participation. Art supplies are washable, however that does not guarantee they wash out of clothing! Keep in mind that the children will be playing outdoors. Tennis shoes are a good idea on the mulch and bike path. Please send appropriate outerwear for existing weather conditions.

OUTDOOR RECESS WEATHER GUIDELINES

Outdoor recess allows children to get fresh air, provides an opportunity for children to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity, and gives students more activity options than most indoor spaces. Outdoor recess is an important part of a child's school day and schools are highly encouraged to provide students with the opportunity to play outside whenever possible. The following guidelines will determine whether recess is held indoors or outdoors each day.

COLD WEATHER GUIDELINES

- » Above 32 degrees F with or without wind chill: Recess should be held outdoors.
- Precipitation: Snowy and icy conditions should be evaluated for student safety and attire.
- Student preparedness: Students should have appropriate outdoor attire to stay warm and dry during recess. Parents should bring all necessary outdoor attire; Boots, Gloves, Hats, Coats, Extra clothing in case students get wet.
- Playground safety: The playground equipment and surface should be evaluated to determine whether students can safely play outdoors.
- » Below 32 degrees F with or without wind chill: Recess should be held indoors.

WARM WEATHER GUIDELINES

- » Heat index of 90 degrees F or below: Recess should be held outdoors.
- Activity level: Students should participate in only light to moderate physical activity.
- Student preparedness: Students should wear appropriate attire during warm weather. It is recommended that students wear sunscreen when outdoors.
- Playground equipment: The playground equipment and surfaces should be checked prior to recess (e.g., slides, swing seats, and other playground equipment could get very hot and burn students). Supervisors should ensure that students do not play on equipment that is extremely hot to the touch.
- Water access: Students should have access to water before and/or after recess. Additionally, students who show any signs of heat exhaustion or a heat-related illness (e.g., heavy sweating, weakness, muscle cramps, nausea, weak pulse, clammy skin, etc.) should be provided with immediate access to water.
- » Heat index above 91 degrees F: Recess should be held indoors in a cool location.

CURRICULUM

A developmentally appropriate curriculum is planned and implemented with attention to the different needs, interests, and developmental levels of the children. MHELC Curriculum is a blend of play-based learning and creative curriculum philosophies. We use additional language, alphabet, phonics and handwriting tools to supplement school readiness.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

The Public School's Early Childhood Child Find Team conducts preschool screenings upon request by the child's parent and/or teacher. Child Find screens the four major areas of child development: social/emotional, motor, cognitive, and speech/language. Parents are provided with written results. There is no charge for this service. To find out more, you can contact your neighborhood Public School District.

GUIDANCE

- At MHELC, we view discipline not as a means of punishing a child who has acted inappropriately, but rather as a means of teaching a child. Positive redirection and guidance teaches children where the limits are set, how to maintain control over their bodies, and how to problem solve in the event of conflict.
- Redirection is most effective when it follows logical consequences. The consequences for behavior need to make sense to the child.
- More verbal children should be encouraged to talk to their peers when conflict arises. This helps children to empathize with one another's feelings, and really see the results of their actions. We do not ask a child to apologize for their actions but will talk with them about how to handle the situation better the next time.
- Limiting a child's choices of activities due to inappropriate behavior is an effective means by which to teach children to respect property and one another.
- Separation of children may become necessary in the case of two or more children having extreme difficulty playing together without conflict. The teacher will assign appropriate play areas for the children, with the message that they may try playing together again if they do well on their own. The use of a time-out shall be very limited. A time-out is an opportunity for a child who is out of control and at risk of harming himself or others, to calm down and gain control once again. A time-out is never to be used as a punishment. A time-out shall never be demeaning and will be followed up with guidance on how to rejoin the group. When talking to children about their behavior, seek input on what they feel is an appropriate consequence for their actions. This works especially well as children get older. The child stands to gain the most if he/she makes retribution on his/her own terms.

- Inappropriate behavior shall be viewed as exactly that. Children shall never be referred to as naughty or bad. Behavior will be addressed as the problem, not the child. Whenever possible, children are given a choice letting them own their actions by choosing what they will do differently.
- Each child is an individual and will be treated with special loving care. Children must not be subjected to physical or emotional harm or humiliation.
- Discipline is not to be associated with food, rest, or toileting. No child will be punished for toileting accidents.
- Verbal abuse and derogatory remarks about the child are not tolerated.
- Children are encouraged to make wise choices and to work out their own solutions. A parent will be contacted if a problem persists.
- At MHELC we will teach conflict resolution consistently from classroom to classroom.

CHRONIC DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

We will make every effort to work with the parents of children having difficulties MHELC. We are here to serve and protect all of our children; therefore, children displaying chronic disruptive behavior that has been determined to be upsetting the physical or emotional well being of another child will require the following actions:

- 1. Initial Consultation** – The director may require the parent(s) of any child who attends MHELC to meet for a conference. A plan of action will be defined on paper. Goals will be established and the parent will be involved in creating approaches towards solving the problem.
- 2. Second Consultation** – If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent(s) will again be required to meet with the Director. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem, outline new approaches to the problem, and discuss the consequences if progress is not apparent.
- 3. Suspension** – When the process attempts have been followed and no progress has been made toward solving the problem within a reasonable period of time, the child may be suspended from MHELC indefinitely. The Director may immediately suspend a child at anytime he/she exhibits a behavior that is harmful to himself/herself or others. A parent may be called at anytime the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by MHELC staff. The parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. Suspensions from MHELC may vary from a few hours to an indefinite period.

DISCHARGE POLICY

MHELC reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child including, but not limited to the following reasons:

1. Non-payment or excessive late payments of fees.
2. Not observing the rules of MHELC as outlined in the parent handbook.
3. Child has special needs, which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns.
4. Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by a parent.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

• **MHELC PHONE NUMBER: 303-798-1481**

This phone number is listed in the public telephone directory. Emergency numbers for police, fire, rescue, poison control, and the health departments are posted by each telephone in the preschool.

The Mission Hills Church office number is 303-794-3564. Please direct preschool related calls to the MHELC number.

• **ILLNESS, ACCIDENT, OR INJURY**

Emergency information forms must be on file before your child can start school. In the event that an illness, accident, or injury occurs while a child is in our care, we will first attempt to notify the parent or guardian. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the person listed as an emergency contact. Failure to reach the emergency contact will result in us either keeping the child at the preschool in isolation or calling the child's physician. This will be determined by the nature of the problem. If necessary, paramedics will be called.

• **FIRE / SEVERE WEATHER LOCK-DOWN / REVERSE EVACUATION AND/OR SHELTER-IN-PLACE EMERGENCY SITUATION**

- ◆ When the fire alarm sounds –
 - Teachers will begin the immediate, orderly evacuation of children to an area well away from the building as designated on the fire evacuation map.
 - When safe within the evacuation area, all children will be accounted for.
 - The teachers will reassure the children of their safety.
 - The children will not re-enter the building until a staff member gives the all clear.
- ◆ When the tornado warning has been issued for our area –
 - Teachers will begin the immediate, orderly relocation to the inside hallway of the building.
 - The children will remain situated by an inside hallway until cleared.
- ◆ When a lock-down order is given –
 - Children and staff are to remain in their classroom/bathroom with doors locked, blinds closed, and lights off.
 - All children and staff are to be hidden and quiet.
 - Staff are also trained to adapt to a different plan if it is safer.

FIELD TRIPS

MHELC does not offer field trips involving transporting children off-site.

HAND WASHING

Frequent hand washing with soap, running water, and paper towels is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Children and adults need to wash their hands before and after preparing or eating a snack, before and after tactile play, after handling animals, using the toilet, coughing, and wiping noses. Children are required to wash their hands for 20 seconds.

HEALTH AND ATTENDANCE *(Please refer to Covid Protocol in the Handbook Addendum)*

Please **DO NOT** bring your child to preschool if they have had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours.:

- fever
- diarrhea or are complaining of abdominal pain
- watery, inflamed eyes
- a bad cold or heavy nasal discharge
- an unexplainable rash or skin eruption
- a sore throat
- a cough

If, in the opinion of the teaching staff, your child is observed to be sick, we will call you to come and pick up your child. The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or more
- more than one incident of diarrhea
- abdominal cramps
- bad cold and/or heavy nasal discharge
- inflammation of the eyes
- unexplained rash or skin eruption
- sore throat and/or swollen neck glands
- dizziness and/or headache
- cough
- unable to go outside for playtime
- vomiting
- communicable disease

Any communicable disease (hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, chicken pox, head lice, diphtheria, salmonella, tuberculosis, giardia, shigella or positive covid case) needs to be reported to MHELC. MHELC will then notify the local health department, all staff members, and all parents and guardians of children of MHELC. Children's confidentiality will be maintained.

In the event that your child is exposed to an illness while at preschool, you will be notified.

HOLIDAYS AND OTHER CLOSURES

All observed holidays are noted on the MHELC School Calendar. A parent or guardian will not be reimbursed for closures due to holidays, weather, teacher work days, or parent-teacher conferences.

HOW TO CONTACT SOCIAL SERVICES

If you have any concern about MHELC, we welcome your questions or feedback. We desire to serve you well. If you have reason to contact Social Services in any respect, you may do so by sending correspondence to the following:

Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Childcare
1575 Sherman Street, 1st Floor
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
303-866-5958

This information is also posted outside the director's office.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Due to allergies, or personal or religious beliefs, some families choose not to immunize their child. MHELC does not discriminate against non-immunized children and accepts them into our program.

LOST CHILD

In the event that a child is lost, the police will immediately be contacted. All adults in support roles will be alerted and will assist in locating the child.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

Parents are responsible for bringing a nutritional snack and lunch for their child each day. Please provide:

- a protein item such as cheese, yogurt, meat or alternative.
- a fruit and/or vegetable cut into bite sized pieces.
- a carb such as bread, crackers or pasta.
- limit sweet treats and candy.

We ask that all foods are prepared, in child-sized portions, cut-up/sliced/peeled and in non-breakable containers for easy and safe eating. All lunch boxes need to contain ice packs and be labeled on the outside with the child's first and last name. Due to potential food allergies, children will not be allowed to share lunches.

ALLERGY POLICY

Health and Safety are top priority at MHELC and we take food allergies seriously. We train our entire staff how to recognize and respond to allergies, anaphylaxis, and the use of epi-pens in emergencies. In addition, all teachers are trained in basic First Aid and CPR. MHELC's programs are NUT AND ALLERGY AWARE. We DO NOT exclude nuts or other foods packed in individual lunches not intended for sharing.

PARTIES AND TREATS – At this time we are not allowing any shared foods or birthday treats to be brought from outside the facility due to COVID. We encourage non-food items brought in for parties or birthday treats.

In any classroom, if food items brought in to share with other students for birthdays, holiday parties, other celebrations they must be NUT FREE, prepackaged with the ingredient label attached. The label will be posted by the teacher to ensure any guests of the classroom such as siblings or other relatives will be aware of the ingredients.

An individual classroom will be designated as a PEANUT/TREE NUT FREE ROOM when a student of the classroom has a severe allergy and a doctor's note stating so on the child's Health Care Plan. When a class is designated as PEANUT/NUT FREE all parents of the class will be notified by the teacher and will not be allowed to pack nuts, nut products or products processed in a facility that processes nuts. This holds true of other severe allergies as well.

When teachers are planning cooking or science projects with foods when children with allergies or food restrictions are in their class they will have a list of ingredients available for the parent of the child to review and sign off before the child can participate in the activity. The alternative to this is to have the parents to provide a similar food so their child can participate.

If there is approved shared foods in the classroom for parties or activities these foods must be consumed within the classroom and will not be allowed to be taken out of the classroom.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication will be administered to a child only upon written request from a parent and physician. Medication must be in its original container bearing original pharmacy label that shows prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name, and directions for dosage. Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in a covered container that is clearly labeled. All medication will be securely stored in a locked cabinet inside of the classroom. Each child's teacher will administer medication to the children in their own care and keep a record of the medication given. The written record will include the child's name, date and time medication was administered, name and dosage of the medication, and name of the staff person who administered the medication. The storage and administration of medication is in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act.

- Sunscreen and Diaper Ointment – MHELC will apply sunscreen or diaper ointment only with a parent or guardian's written consent. We are only permitted to apply diaper ointment if a child's skin is broken, and we have a doctor's note.

DAILY SIGN-IN / SIGN OUT

Parents are required to sign their child in and out each day through the ProCare App. If you are not able to use the ProCare App, the teacher will have you sign a paper form for drop off and pick up.

Since the avoidance of worry is important to your child's well being, we urge you to pick your child up on time. If for some reason you are running late, please notify the school. When you pick your child up more than 10 minutes after dismissal, you will need to come to the Director's Office to pick up child. **A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be due at the time your child is picked up.** Any child left in the care of the Director will remain in the Director's care until the parent or guardian comes for the child. The Director or Assistant Director will remain at the MHELC facility until all of the children have been picked up. A child will only be released to an adult for whom prior written authorization has been granted and is part of the permanent record at MHELC. If an individual who does not have written authorization attempts to pick up a child, the parent or guardian will be immediately contacted. If a child is not picked up within one hour following dismissal, the Department of Human Services will be contacted.

TELEVISION AND VIDEO VIEWING

Rarely, on a special occasion, a movie or video will be shown in the course of a preschool day. MHELC will notify parents and have them sign a permission form prior to any television or video viewing.

VISITORS

(See COVID Addendum)

If you wish to review a copy of the Colorado State Rules and Regulations for Childcare Centers, visit the following website:

- Colorado Office of Early Childhood
www.ColoradoOfficeOfEarlyChildhood.com

MISSION HILLS CHURCH

Mission Hills Early Learning Center has been a ministry of Mission Hills Church since 1981. Church attendance and membership are not required for participation in the preschool. If you do not currently have a church home, we would like to invite you to attend weekend services.

Worship Services at Mission Hills

Saturdays | 5:00 PM

Sundays | 8:00 AM (*acoustic*) | 9:15 AM | 11:00 AM

Kids Program

Saturdays | 5:00 PM

Sundays | 9:15 AM | 11:00 AM

For more information, please call the Mission Hills office at 303-794-3564 or visit the church online at www.missionhills.org.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE

It is the policy of MHELC to notify parents in writing of significant changes to services, policies, procedures, fees, and staffing changes.

PARENT EVALUATION

Parents or guardians will receive an evaluation form each February that allows for input and feedback.

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES

Evaluation of each individual child serves the purpose of tracking developmental growth in relationship to the child's general age group. Individual consideration is given to each child's stage of development in the natural unfolding of what should be that child's natural abilities. Teachers recognize this as an excellent opportunity to communicate about your individual child's progress. Together, we can determine mutual strategies, decide on goals, search for answers, and discuss your child's "glow" and "grow" areas. Conferences are held twice each school year. Classes will not be held on conference days.

Exception: Two-year olds will still be in session.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Each child admitted to MHELC must submit annually a dated, written statement of the child's current health status and an immunization record signed by an approved health professional that has seen the child during the last twelve months. A Statement of Health Status and current immunization record must be submitted to the Center by the first day of school. Any child who has allergies/special needs shall supply information and instruction for care.

POTTY TRAINING

An extra set of clothes is recommended for those still potty training. Staff will work with each child's needs for potty training, but not before the child is 18 months of age or is showing interest. Diapers should be sent for those who are not fully potty trained. Diapering procedures follow the standard precautions. Children four years and older must be potty trained unless a medical issue is present; in which case a doctor's note is required.

RECALLED TOYS

It is the policy of MHELC to remove any toy from our center upon notification from a manufacturer or potential defect or safety risk.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

MHELC follows the closure and late start schedule for both Douglas County School District as well as Littleton Public School District. If **EITHER** of the districts are closed, we will be closed as well. MHELC reserves the right to close, regardless of the above district closings, if we feel the safety of our staff and MHELC families will be at risk.

CLOSURE INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED:

- via a text message/email sent to parents through the ProCare App.
- Mission Hills website – preschool.missionhills.org

LATE START:

If Littleton Public Schools or Douglas County has a late start (due to weather), we will start late as well. We will start classes at **10:00 AM** for our late start.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual preschool and class pictures are taken in early fall. The cost is reasonable and the memories are great!

SHOW-AND-TELL

Show-and-tell is a great delight for most children. Teachers will notify you about the class' particular schedule. Encourage your child to take part. This is a great way to develop a child's confidence and language skills. With the exception of show-and-tell items, we request that any other toys or belongings be left at home. This eliminates the distraction and the potential for loss. We appreciate your support in this matter.

SECOND HAND SMOKE

MHELC does not permit smoking of any kind in our facilities or on school grounds.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

- ◆ We dedicate ourselves to faithfully serve in an effort to be truly transformational as we teach young children about Jesus in a safe, engaging environment that allows them to experience God's love. (Proverbs 22:6)
- ◆ We value a philosophy of child development that recognizes (Proverbs 22:6):
 - each child as a gift from God in need of being taught with discipline
 - a respect for the uniqueness of each child's growth patterns.
 - a broad definition of a child's cognitive, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual needs.
 - the importance of constructive, supportive, and honest communication between school and home.
 - the understanding of one's own strengths, weaknesses, and preferences.
- ◆ We value a teaching environment that fosters (1 Timothy 5:10):
 - a safe, stimulating, and investigative atmosphere.
 - a comfortable, nurturing environment.
 - the joy and challenge of learning.
- ◆ We value a process of learning that allows for (1 Corinthians 13:11):
 - integration of learning – making connections.
 - experimental learning.
 - guided-discovery learning.
 - the ability to think critically.
 - the spontaneous inclusion of a child's idea.
 - age-appropriate centers and goals.
 - a balance between independent creativity and structured learning.
- ◆ We value a curriculum that includes (Titus 2:7):
 - each child's learning of developmentally appropriate core skills.
 - an understanding of individual learning styles.
 - opportunities for children to think, reason, question, and explore.
 - opportunities for each child to maximize potential.
 - developmentally appropriate materials and equipment.
 - respect for cultural diversity.
 - balance in times of active and quiet play.
 - a variety of teaching strategies and resources.
 - options for individual, small group, and large group play.

Mission Hills Church believes that marriage is a holy covenant before God, and biblical marriage is limited to a relationship between one man and one woman. When the subject of family is taught in the classroom, MHELC will teach that a nuclear family is composed of no more than one husband, one wife, and child(ren).

- ◆ We value staff and parents who support (Luke 2:52):
 - partnership in learning.
 - open communication between home and preschool.
 - the integrity and acceptance of each individual.
- ◆ We value a preschool community that believes in (Micah 6:8):
 - respect, consideration, and empathy for others.
 - governing concepts of democracy.
 - striving together to reach our common goals.
 - an awareness of our role in the community.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Mission Hills Early Learning Center exists to influence a child's world for God by creating experiences for preschoolers to grow spiritually and developmentally.

MISSION HILLS STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that he concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of each person, that he hears and answers prayers, and that he saves from sin and death all who come to him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in his virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in his substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for his people, and personal visible return to earth.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that he is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.

Regeneration

We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

The Church

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

STATEMENT OF FAITH (continued)

Christian Conduct

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that Christian conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that the preferred expression of Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of his death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Religious Liberty

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that, therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

Church Cooperation

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization, like Converge. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference such as Converge is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary and independent basis.

The Last Things

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of his kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

APPLICATION OF DOCTRINE

Section 1. Human Sexuality & Marriage

We believe that before sin entered the world, God created male and female and established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman. We further affirm, based on multiple Scriptural references, including Jesus' own statements on God's plan for marriage, that all intimate sexual activity outside this lifelong, exclusive heterosexual marriage relationship is sinful and will fall far short of what is ultimately God's intent for the fulfillment and joy of each individual.

COVID-19 Parent Handbook Addendum 2021-22 School Year

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INTRODUCTION

Dear MHELC Parents,

We are looking forward to the upcoming school year! Last year we had a very successful school year due to our partnership with families and all of us doing our part to stay safe and healthy.

As we are getting ready to reopen for the new school year, I want to make sure we are all on the same page regarding COVID-19 safety standards. It is important that we all follow all procedures and mandated requirements set forth by the State Health Department and our Licensing Agencies. The health and safety of the children and staff has always been our highest priority. We hold our preschool to the highest standards of safety and cleanliness while maintaining a caring and nurturing place where children can thrive, grow and learn.

The leadership team of MHELC is continuing to stay up-to-date with the latest state and local guidelines, licensing requirements, and CDC guidelines regarding the safety and well-being of the children and staff.

I can assure you that of the requirements set forth, many of them have been previously in place at MHELC. There are some new procedures being put in place that are for the safety and well-being of all, which will feel completely different.

This COVID-19 Addendum to our Handbook will lay out specific procedures as we continue to serve families during the COVID-19 pandemic. During these unprecedented times things are constantly evolving, therefore all changes included in this addendum will be part of our policies and procedures until further notice. We also want to have a disclaimer, as we are doing the best we can in creating these policies with the possibility of continued updates. We will strive to make these changes as realistic and feasible for staff and children and families as possible while following CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines as well as those put forth by the Colorado Office of Early Childhood.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the policies and procedures that are outlined in this addendum. They are in place to ensure that MHELC is a safe and enjoyable place for your family and the staff.

Shelley Gibson
Director
Mission Hills Early Learning Center
sgibson@missionhills.elc

EXISTING HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES

We are continuing to do the following normal daily health and safety practices.

- Frequent hand washing by staff and children which are embedded within our daily schedule: As soon as students arrive to the classroom, they will wash their hands properly. Hands will also be washed throughout the day and more frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will not be permitted in the classrooms as there will always be soap and water available throughout the day.
- Sanitizing stations are located at the temperature check-in tables and at the front desk available for parents and staff.
- Sanitizing/Disinfecting: All hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day, before and after use as well as at the end of each day. Any toys that go into a child's mouth will be put into the disinfecting process like usual. All toys and supplies are sanitized daily and weekly.
- Extra sanitation of classroom carpets, floors, offices, and teacher workspaces will be sanitized using a large-scale disinfectant sprayer at least once a week, more if necessary.
- Requiring children with fevers to stay home and not return until fever free without fever reducing medication for at least 24 hours following the criteria spelled out in the illness policy.
- Maintaining low teacher-child ratios.
- Continually instructing the children about appropriate health and hygiene practices.
- Training teachers to identify children with an illness, health and safety protocols and first aid and CPR.

ENHANCED HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES

We have implemented enhanced health and safety procedures to limit the spread of COVID-19. Depending on the circumstances and guidance by local and state authorities include;

- All staff will wear masks, vaccinated or not, when required by the local or state health department.
- Universal signage has been posted in the preschool outlining the policies and procedures for face masks, social distancing, hand washing/sanitizing and directional signage to help inform all visitors, staff and children.
- Illness policies have been enhanced to include strict COVID-19 Protocols (see COVID-19 Protocols section)

ENHANCED HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES (continued)

- Parents will answer health screening checks as they check in their child through the Procure App.
- Parents and visitors will be allowed into the building as long as they are symptom free.

EXISTING ILLNESS POLICIES

PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO PRESCHOOL IF THEY HAVE HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST 24 HOURS;

Fever (100.4 degrees or higher), diarrhea, vomiting, green runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease or contagious medical condition (e.g., ringworm, head lice, pink eye, etc). Children showing signs of illness will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our facility. If you have any doubts about your child's health, please call us at 303-798-1481 to be sure they may attend. If your child appears to be sick or has any of the above while at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification.

Please make sure your AUTHORIZED PICK-UP PERSONS are up-to-date and accurate.

If a sick child has been seen by a physician and diagnosed with something besides COVID, they will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication, on antibiotics for 24 hours and no more signs of illness.

MHELC will be following "Return to Learn" guidelines set forth by the Colorado Department of Public Health.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

If a child is showing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, headache, body aches, diarrhea or vomiting which are included in the list above) OR if has been in close contact with a person positive for COVID- 19, **YOU MUST KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME** throughout the infection period and cannot return to preschool until all three of the following criteria are met;

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications)
- The child has improved symptoms
- At least 10 days have passed since the symptoms have first appeared

In the case of a child who has COVID symptoms and who has NOT been evaluated by a medical professional or been tested such child will be assumed to have COVID and may not return to preschool until they have completed the same three step set of criteria as above.

In the event your child is sent home with probable COVID or tested positive for COVID, they will not be permitted back to MHELC without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.

We ask that all families and staff let us know of any potential exposure immediately. A potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact within six feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes. The time frame for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform Tri-County Health Department, and all MHELC parents as per HIPPA guidelines.

When and if there is a confirmed case of COVID present in the childcare center, we will follow the instruction of the Colorado Health Department on what actions should be made regarding isolating or closing of a classroom.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURES *(subject to change)*

Ideally, we ask that as much as possible, the same parent or authorized pick-up person do all the drop-offs and pick-ups.

There will be two assigned entrances, one outside the gate at the Green and Pink Classroom, (Red/Green/Pink). The other entrance is at the main ELC doors. All other classes will enter there.

- Parents will check in their child(ren) and answer Health Screening Questions through the ProCare App upon arriving to the parking lot. Parents will not be required to wear masks during drop-off and pick-up times. Families will enter through the main ELC doors which will open shortly before 9:00 AM. MHELC Staff will greet the children and welcome them into the classroom. Parents will remain in the hallway.
- If you need to get a message about the day to your child's teacher, you can use the App (the teacher will see it on an ipad in the classroom right away), or you can contact the school:
Main number 303-798-1481
Director-Shelley Gibson cell 303-807-6295.
If the message is not urgent, you can email your child's teacher.
- Please monitor and check your child's temperature before arriving at school. Any child with a temperature of 100.4 degrees will not be allowed to enter the facility. Children with a temperature of 99 to 100.3 degrees reading will be monitored throughout the day and will be sent home if it reaches 100.4 degrees.

PICK-UP PROCEDURES *(subject to change)*

At the end of the day, the main doors will open shortly before 1:00 PM. Parents will line up outside the classroom, and teachers will dismiss students one at a time.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children may not bring in any personal belongings aside from what is on the approved items list. No toys from home will be permitted at this time. Children should bring to school the following approved items;

- Personal backpack
- A filled water bottle, labeled with child's first and last name (water bottles will go home each day and must be sanitized between uses)
- Snack and lunch from home (pre-packaged when possible following the classroom's guidance regarding any allergies present in the classroom)
- Extra change of clothes
- Appropriate outerwear for recess

GROUP EVENTS

Special events, parties, or gatherings will be planned with care to avoid overcrowding. We will announce these events as the year progresses based on current Health Guidelines.

FEE AND PAYMENT POLICIES

Mission Hills Early Learning Center enforces the following policies and procedures for tuition payments:

1. Tuition is automatically deducted on the tenth of the month August through April.
2. Additional fees for declined credit cards and insufficient funds will be passed on from the financial institution of origin.
3. A 30-day written notice is required when removing a child from the program. Otherwise you will continue to be billed for your monthly tuition. (No reimbursement of tuition will be granted without the proper notice).
4. **As long as MHELC is open for regular business all tuition is due regardless of sickness (COVID related or not), behavioral/disciplinary removal, vacations, weather-related closings or holidays.**
5. **School Wide Emergency-related closings mandated by the state/local government / Department of Human Services, including Pandemic reasons will be handled in accordance with the following;**
 - **If the CDC, State Health Department or Tri-County Health Department requires MHELC to shut down entirely for a period and reopens we will prorate (as a credit) for the time students did not attend. This also, holds true if Mission Hills Church is mandated to close to the point that the Early Learning Center cannot operate.**
 - **If the Department of Health requires MHELC to close an individual classroom due to a confirmed COVID case, we will prorate tuition at 50% and offer virtual learning activities for the time mandated to close.**

PARENT HANDBOOK AND COVID-19 ADDENDUM ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Parents or Guardians,

Please thoroughly review the Parent Handbook and COVID-19 Handbook Addendum for the school year, which contains the COVID policies and procedures for Mission Hills Early Learning Center while in the process of reopening. After reading the handbook, please complete this form and return it to the school via email as soon as possible. This form will be kept in your child’s file for the duration of the school year.

Thank you in advance for your partnership and cooperation in keeping our school safe and healthy for the students, staff and families.

Sincerely,

Shelley Gibson
Director

I, _____ (print your name), the parent/guardian
of

_____ (print child’s name), hereby
acknowledge receipt of

Mission Hills Early Learning Center Parent Handbook and COVID-19 Addendum. I have read and agree to adhere to all the policies and regulations set forth in this Parent Handbook and Covid Addendum. I agree and consent to MHELC providing education, care and training for my child consistent with the Parent Handbook

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____



MISSION HILLS
EARLY LEARNING CENTER

a ministry of Mission Hills Church

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preschool.missionhills.org