

Mars Hill Church Preschool

-PARENT HANDBOOK- 2020/2021



Mars Hill Church Preschool

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Table of Contents

Purpose_____	2
Objectives_____	2
Sponsorship and Administration_____	2
Enrollment Policy_____	3
Registration Procedures_____	4
Registration and Tuition Fees_____	4
Late and Returned Check Fees_____	5
Withdrawal From the Program_____	5
Scholarship Fund_____	5
Fees_____	6
Custodial Rights Policy_____	7
Confidentiality_____	7
Office Hours_____	7
Health Reminders_____	8
Emergency Medical Procedures_____	9
Toilet Training_____	10
Insurance_____	10
Conferences/Assessments_____	10
Classroom Visitation/Parent Volunteers_____	10
Arrival and Pick-Up_____	11
Emergency Pick-Up_____	12
Visitors_____	12
Birthdays_____	12
Parties_____	12
Book Bags and Clothing_____	13
Newsletter_____	14
Biting_____	14
Discipline_____	14
Security and Toy Items_____	15
Separation Anxiety_____	15
Snacks_____	15
Lunch Bunch_____	16
Inclement Weather Days and School Calendar_____	16
Safety Plan_____	16
Things to Remember_____	17

PURPOSE

Mars Hill Church Preschool, here in after referred to as the Preschool, in response to the needs of the church and community, is committed to quality education in a loving Christian setting for children ages 24 months to 5 years old.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a positive, safe, happy environment where a child will be able to experience success.
2. To provide hands-on learning with a Bible/theme based curriculum through art, music, creative play, Bible stories and verses.
3. To build skills for kindergarten readiness.
4. To satisfy a child's need to find out, the need to belong, and the need to feel secure in God's plan for us.
5. To foster the vision/mission of Mars Hill Church by:
 - a) Bringing people in our community to Jesus through their children.
 - b) Educating children about God's love.
 - c) Ministering to our church and community through the children's programs.
 - d) Having our children spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the community.
 - e) Having our children worship together with their families and community.

SPONSORSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

The preschool is operated, maintained and governed by Mars Hill Presbyterian Church. The Preschool Board administers general oversight of the Preschool. The Preschool Board consists of the Pastor and/or Assistant Pastor, a representative from the Session, a representative from Christian Growth, the Preschool Director (herein after referred to as the Director) and three at-large congregational members. The congregational members represent the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

The Preschool is open to all children in the community ages sixteen months through four years of age by September 1st of the school year. A birth certificate is needed for classroom placement. Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis with the following considerations taken into account:

- 1) priority will be given to families already participating in the program
- 2) second priority will be given to Mars Hill Presbyterian Church congregation members
- 3) third priority will be given to the community in general

The Preschool admits students of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, athletic and other school-administered programs.

Upon enrollment, families need to recognize that this is a Christian based program and both the New and Old Testaments of the Bible will be used in our lessons and activities.

In the event there is insufficient enrollment to keep a class open, the parents will be given a two-week notice and given the option of placement in another class provided there is an age appropriate available opening. If no opening exists, the parents will have the option of being placed on a preferred waiting list for the next available opening or having the registration fee refunded.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registration forms are available from the Preschool Office. In order to be admitted into the Preschool, each child must have a completed set of forms on file including, but not limited to:

- 1) Registration form- including emergency release information and permission to release the child
- 2) Child's Health Record form- including emergency medical care and insurance information
- 3) GA Form 3231 (immunization record, must be this exact form from the state of Georgia)
- 4) Birth Certificate
- 5) Release Form- including Parent Handbook Agreement, Student Directory Agreement, Permission to Photograph Form and Notice of State License Exempt Form

You have 30 days from date of enrollment to produce the Form 3231 issued by the State of Georgia.

If space is available, the child will be enrolled and placed in the appropriate class when the parent/guardian pays:

- 1) The non-refundable registration fee
- 2) First month's tuition (refundable with a 30 days written notice)

If there are no vacancies, the child will be placed on a waiting list, and the parent/guardian will be notified as space becomes available.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION FEES

A Registration Fee is due at the time of registration and is non-refundable. Fees cover: classroom supplies to start the school year, insurance, equipment and teacher training. Also due at the time of registration is the first month's tuition; this payment is refundable with a 30 day written notice.

Tuition is a yearly amount and may be paid in full or in **ten equal monthly payments**. Checks should be made payable to Mars Hill Church Preschool. If you chose the ten equal payments option, your **first payment is due at the time of registration**. For every month thereafter, tuition is due by the **1st of each month**, starting September 1st and ending May 1st. Because tuition is an annual fee, no refunds are given for illness, vacations or snow days.

LATE PAYMENT AND RETURNED CHECK FEES

After the 7th day of each month, if you have not paid your tuition payment, you will be charged a late fee of \$20 and your child will not be permitted to return to school until tuition is paid for the month. Failure to repeatedly pay tuition in a timely manner will result in your child being dismissed from the preschool.

All returned checks will be charged a \$12.50 fee.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

If the need arises to withdraw your child from our program, a 30 day written notice or one month's tuition is required.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Scholarship funds are available for those students who qualify on the basis of need. Applications may be obtained from the Director.

General guidelines are as follows:

1. Scholarships are available only to PreK students.
2. Scholarships are considered on the basis of need and are available for a portion of the yearly tuition.
3. The names of the scholarship applicants and recipients are confidential.
4. Scholarships depend on the availability of funds. Funds are limited.
5. The applicant must submit an application to the Director for consideration by the Preschool Board.
6. Scholarships are not given in exchange for services.

FEES

Classes	Size & Ratio	Days	Tuition	Registration	Hours
2's 24-35 months	10 children 2 teachers	Tuesday, Thursday	\$175/ month x 10	\$175	9:00am- 12:00pm
3A 3 years	12 children 2 teachers	Monday- Thursday	\$230/ month x 10	\$230	9:00am- 1:00pm
3B 3 years	12 children 2 teachers	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday	\$205/ month x 10	\$205	9:00am- 1:00pm
PreK 4 years	12 children 2 teachers	Monday- Thursday	\$230/ month x 10	\$230	9:00am- 1:00pm

Class placement is based on the child's age on September 1st of the school year for which he/she is enrolling.

A non-refundable Registration Fee will hold your class spot and is due at the time of registration. If you chose the 10 equal payments option for your yearly tuition payments, the first month's tuition is also due at the time of registration. For every month thereafter, tuition is due by the 1st of the month, starting September 1st and ending May 1st. Payments not received by the 7th of each month are late and will be charged a \$20 fee.

If you chose to pay for the year in full, you may pay one month's tuition cost as listed above at the time of registration; the remainder of the yearly tuition may be paid on September 1st. A discount of \$100 is given to all families that pay the yearly tuition in full.

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS POLICY

In the event that a student at the Preschool has custody arrangements involving a court order, one or both of the following conditions must be met:

1. Copies of legal court documents establishing the custodial rights of the parent or guardian must be submitted to the Director
2. Copies of legal court documentation denying custodial rights to a parent must be submitted to the Director.

In cases where custody to a parent is denied, we will be unable to uphold a verbal or written request that has not been ordered by a judge. Legal documentation must be presented to the Director.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Children's records are open only to the child's teachers, the Director, and the child's parent(s) or legal guardian. Any request for a copy of the child's records must be made in writing and signed by the parent or legal guardian.

OFFICE HOURS

The Preschool office will be open from 8:30am until 1:30pm, Monday through Thursday. Any messages received after 1:30pm will be held until the next school day. You may contact the director at 770-974-8481 or jlpehel1013@gmail.com.

HEALTH REMINDERS

Preschool is a place for a well child; sick or recuperating children cannot enjoy themselves and have a potential for spreading illness to other children. Please be a responsible parent and keep a sick child at home. Do not bring your child to school if he/she has had any of these symptoms ***within the last 24 hours***:

- Diarrhea
- Temperature above 100 degrees F
- Rash or open lesion
- Serious chest congestion or continuous cough with mucus
- Discharge from the eyes
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose
- Vomiting
- Head lice

If your child becomes sick at school, you will be notified immediately and your child will be sent to the Director's office until a parent or approved adult arrives. The school needs to have a phone number for the parents/guardians and at least one other authorized person at all times; we need to be able to reach someone when we call these numbers.

If your child develops a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately. Your child will not be allowed to return to preschool until the period of contagion has passed. Communicable diseases include but are not limited to: Strep Throat, Viral Diarrhea, Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis, Meningitis, Rosella, RSV, Hand Foot & Mouth, Hepatitis A, Fifth Disease, Ringworm, Pinkeye, Impetigo and Scabies. In some cases, a doctor's note may be required.

It is the policy of the preschool not to administer over the counter medication. Please make arrangements to give any medications to your child before or after school. If your child must have medication during school hours, please let the Director know. You will need to complete a form giving permission to administer the medication. This form includes the date, length of authorization to administer the medication, and instructions regarding dosage. The medicine will need to be in the original prescription bottle and include the original prescription from the physician on it. Do not leave medication in your child's bag; all medication must be delivered to the Director by the parent/guardian. You will also be required to sign a hold harmless agreement.

If an inhaler or EpiPen is necessary, you will need to complete the authorization to administer medication form, and we will need a copy of the original prescription. The inhaler and/or EpiPen will need to be left at school in a secure location that the teacher chooses.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Every precaution is taken to keep the children safe and well at school. Parents must sign an Emergency Release Form in order for us to provide your child optimum care while at school. The school will make every reasonable effort to contact a parent and the physician named on the Emergency Release Form. In the event an injury or illness does not appear serious, but medical treatment is deemed necessary, the school and/or hospital to which the child is transported will give necessary emergency treatment. In the event an injury or illness appears serious and medical treatment is deemed necessary, paramedics will be contacted immediately. The paramedics will decide whether they can administer treatment at the school or whether the child should be taken to the nearest hospital for emergency care. A Mars Hill Church Preschool staff member will accompany your child. Should this be necessary, the paramedics and/or hospital to which the child is taken will give emergency treatment.

TOILET TRAINING

We recognize that all children progress differently and may not be toilet trained by age three. While we do not require toilet training for admittance to our 3-year old program, the child will not be changed unless he/she experiences a bowel movement or has soiled his/her clothes. Therefore, children should be dressed appropriately. 3-year-old students who are not potty trained must wear a Pull-Up with Velcro sides; no diapers. Underwear may only be worn by children who are fully potty trained. The preschool reserves the right to require Pull-Ups with Velcro sides for 3-year-old students. All 4-year-old children (Pre-k class) must be fully toilet trained.

INSURANCE

Each child enrolled as a student at the Preschool is covered by a health and accident insurance program. The cost is included in the registration fee. The church maintains liability insurance.

CONFERENCES/ASSESSMENTS

Open, honest communication is a key to any successful relationship. A parent-teacher conference can be arranged as a phone conference, an in-person meeting, or by written report. Morning and afternoon car line are not appropriate times for you to speak with your child's teacher about classroom or individual issues. If you need to speak with your child's teacher before or after school, you should call the preschool between the hours of 8:30-9:00am or 1:10-1:30pm or email your child's teacher or the Director. If you need to meet with a teacher, you can set up an appointment during these times.

Mid-year and end of year assessments will be completed by teachers for 3 year old and PreK classes.

CLASSROOM VISITATION/PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Although we do allow you to visit your child's class during the year, we do require that you schedule ahead of time. This is a time to observe your child, but not to discuss your child with the teacher. All parents are welcomed as volunteers in each classroom. Please contact your child's teacher with regard to her classroom procedures for parent volunteers.

ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

ARRIVAL is 9:00am-9:15am. When dropping off your child, teachers will be in front of the school to assist getting your child out of the car. We ask that you remain in your car to facilitate a smooth flow. We will begin car line at 9:00am and end at 9:15am. In the morning, you are welcome to walk with your child to the school lobby, but you will not be able to go back to the classroom area. Should you arrive later than 9:15am, you will need to bring your child to the preschool office. After signing in your child, the Director or a teacher will take him/her to the classroom. If the Director is not in the office at that time, please ring the bell and wait until someone arrives to help you. Please be on time. Remember it is your child who misses out on activities when you are late, and **lateness is disruptive to the entire class.**

PICK-UP time will begin at 11:50am in front of the school for the 2's class; car line for Lunch Bunch, 3's and PreK classes will begin at 12:50pm. The number card that we will provide to you should be hung from your rear-view mirror. (A child's pant hanger works great for this.) We will seat your child in your car using the number system that we have; this system is set up for your child's protection. If you need for someone else to pick up your child, you must provide written notice to the Director. Once your child is in the car, we ask that you pull over in the main parking lot to buckle your child. For legal reasons, we will not be able to secure your child into his or her seat. PLEASE PULL AHEAD TO THE MAIN PARKING LOT TO BUCKLE YOUR CHILD. Do not get out of your car or buckle your child in front of the school.

After 12:10pm, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for students in the 2's classes. After 1:10pm, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for Lunch Bunch, 3's and PreK students. If someone is habitually late, the child will be dismissed from the program.

If you know in advance that you will be picking up your child early, please let the teacher know so that she can prepare your child for an early departure.

If someone other than the parent/guardian picks up your child, a written note is required to release your child to that person if he/she is not on your list; please give the note to your child's teacher ahead of time. We will check photo ID before releasing a child to someone other than the parent/guardian.

EMERGENCY PICK-UP

In the case of an emergency where you are not able to pick up your child, please contact the Director as soon as possible to furnish the name of the person picking up your child, if at all possible. Without contact from the parent/guardian, we will not release a child to anyone not on the approved list. We will check photo ID before releasing a child to anyone other than the parent/guardian.

VISITORS

All visitors must check in with the Director in the preschool office prior to admittance to any classrooms. No one is allowed to enter the classroom area without checking in with the Director. Parents who choose to walk their children into the school building rather than use car line will not be allowed to take them to the classrooms: drop-off is in the lobby where a teacher will meet you and walk your child to the classroom.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a fun time at school for the children. If you would like to send in a special treat, please talk with your child's teacher to determine if there are any food allergies involved and to make arrangements. The special birthday treat takes the place of their normal snack. Please do not exchange presents or pass out party invitations in school. We also ask that you do not send in balloons, flowers or stuffed animals; this is a distraction to the class.

PARTIES

Our preschool celebrates some holidays and special events with class parties. If you work outside the home and cannot attend the party, please volunteer to send in refreshments or another item as needed. We encourage parent involvement with our celebrations throughout the year.

We encourage, but do not require that you leave other siblings at home so your preschool child can have your full attention.

BOOK BAGS AND CLOTHING

Your child will need to bring a book bag to school that is large enough to contain a change of clothing (kept in a labeled Zip-Loc bag), artwork and folders. It should be tote bag style with open top; **no backpacks**. The child should be able to easily manage this bag. The Preschool has canvas tote bags available for purchase at a reasonable price.

Please label all of your child's belongings (book bag, jackets, sweaters, lunchboxes, etc.). **Be sure to go through your child's bag with them each day** to see what they have been doing, as well as to look for notes from the staff. Do not let your child bring toys to school unless it is a designated day on your child's classroom calendar.

Young children are very active, both in playing outside and experimenting with art and science projects. Their dress should allow for running, jumping, climbing, painting, potty time and general messiness. Also, remember to dress your child appropriately for outside weather. The children go outside during the school day and need proper garments. Tennis shoes and socks are the best to wear and highly encouraged; cowboy boots, Crocs, and flip-flops aren't practical for school and are **not permitted**. Please tie shoelaces twice for security. Children may not wear costumes, capes or hats to school unless it is a designate dress-up day. Hats and sunglasses may only be worn outside on the playground. Sunscreen must be applied at home before coming to school; we will not be able to apply it at school. Please remember to always have a complete change of season appropriate clothing kept in a labeled Zip-Loc bag in your child's school bag (including underwear and socks) in case of an accident. Make sure all clothing is labeled with your child's name. If your child wears diapers, please have an adequate amount of diapers in their bag each day.

COMMUNICATION

Newsletter: Each month you will receive a newsletter via email to keep you informed of scheduled events and activities. We use the Constant Contact program to send out our newsletters.

ClassDojo: Teachers and administration use ClassDojo as a communication platform to inform parents and communicate important information to parents and to share pictures. This is our primary form of communication and it is a private platform that only our school/parents can see.

Monthly Calendar: At the beginning of each month you will receive a paper copy of the monthly calendar in your child's folder. This calendar will list both school-wide dates and dates specific to your child's class.

Facebook: We will post special dates and announcements on our Facebook page. www.facebook.com/marshellchurchpreschool.

Church Website: There is a school year calendar and detailed information about the preschool at www.mhchurch.com/marshell/preschool.

BITING

Children bite for a number of reasons. When this occurs, it is frustrating for all involved. We will deal with this issue on an individual basis, with discipline occurring in the classroom. If it reoccurs frequently, the biting child may be asked to leave the program. Please understand that we have a commitment to all families to work out the best solution for all of the children involved.

DISCIPLINE

We will allow the children the opportunity to resolve conflicts with as little adult direction as possible. The staff will always use positive reinforcement and never corporal punishment. When the need arises, we will take the following course of action:

1. Discipline the behavior, not the child.
2. Discuss the situation with the children involved.
3. Take time out away from the situation (no more than one-minute for every year old).
4. Parental contact, if necessary.

SECURITY AND TOY ITEMS

Children in the preschool age group may be attached to a "blankie", stuffed animal or other security item. Please label your child's security item and inform the teacher about it. All other toys should be left at home unless you have cleared them with the teacher first.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

We are aware that children often cry at first, but usually by the time you have left the parking lot, they have become interested in what's going on in the classroom and have stopped crying. If a child is indeed very upset and continues to cry and disrupt the class, we will call the parent to come get the child. If after a few weeks the child is still very upset over separation from the parents, we reserve the right to make a decision concerning the child's enrollment. Sometimes a little one is just not yet ready for school at such a tender age.

SNACKS

Each teacher decides how they want to schedule snacks. In some classrooms, parents will provide snacks on a rotating basis. The teacher will send home a calendar with a schedule showing each child's snack day. We ask that you provide a healthy snack of fruit, crackers, cheese etc. In other classrooms, each child will be responsible to bring his/her own daily snack. Again, we ask that you provide a *healthy snack*. Your child's teacher will notify you of her choice for snack procedures.

Please let us know if your child has any dietary restrictions. If your child suffers from a severe food allergy, special forms must be filled out and posted in the preschool office as well as the classroom. It is up to the parents to notify the preschool of your child's allergies.

LUNCH BUNCH

If you elect to have your child participate in Lunch Bunch (2 year old classes), there will be a charge of \$4 per child each time. You are to provide a lunch for your child. The lunch needs to be foods your child would normally eat at lunch. We are unable to heat food items in the microwave, so please do not send things that require heating or that are from a fast food restaurant. Also, please do not send foods that are a choking hazard.

Pick-up from lunch bunch is at 1:00pm in car line. Late fees will be assessed as stated previously in the handbook.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS AND SCHOOL CALENDAR

In general, we follow the Cobb County School schedule; there are a few differences.

Our first day of school will be Monday, August 10, 2020, and our last day will be Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

The last day before Christmas Break will be Tuesday, December 15, 2020 and we will return Wednesday, January 6, 2021.


For inclement weather days, listen to the radio or television; if Cobb Schools are closed or delayed 2 hours or more, *we will be closed*. If Cobb Schools are delayed 1 hour, we will start school at 10am. You may also check the preschool Facebook or ClassDojo for updates. *We will not make up canceled days*.

SAFETY PLAN

1. All visitors, including parents, must sign in at the Preschool office and sign out when they leave.
2. The hall doors to enter the classroom areas and double doors to enter the multi-purpose room will remain locked during school hours. All other doors leading out of the building will be locked from the outside.
3. The parent/guardian will need to contact the school if someone other than he/she will pick up the child. Photo ID will be checked before the child will be sent home with someone other than the parent/guardian.
4. All staff must pass a criminal background check.
5. Teachers receive training in CPR, First Aid and Emergency Preparedness.
6. We will conduct a once a month fire drill.
7. We will practice tornado, severe weather and emergency procedures.
8. In case of an emergency that requires evacuation from the premises, our students will be transported by Cobb County Emergency Management to Acworth United Methodist Church at 4340 Collins Circle NW, Acworth.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- See that your child attends preschool regularly and arrives on time. Parents who practice punctuality help our program and are setting a good example for their children.
- Make sure you check your child's bag daily; a lot of very important communication comes home in your child's bag.
- NO CELL PHONES during car line!
- Always be positive about this new experience for your child. Assure them that we will take care of their needs at school. Children have a way of picking up on negative feelings.

TRAIN UP a CHILD
in THE WAY he SHOULD GO;

even when HE IS OLD
he WILL NOT DEPART from it.
PROVERBS 22:6